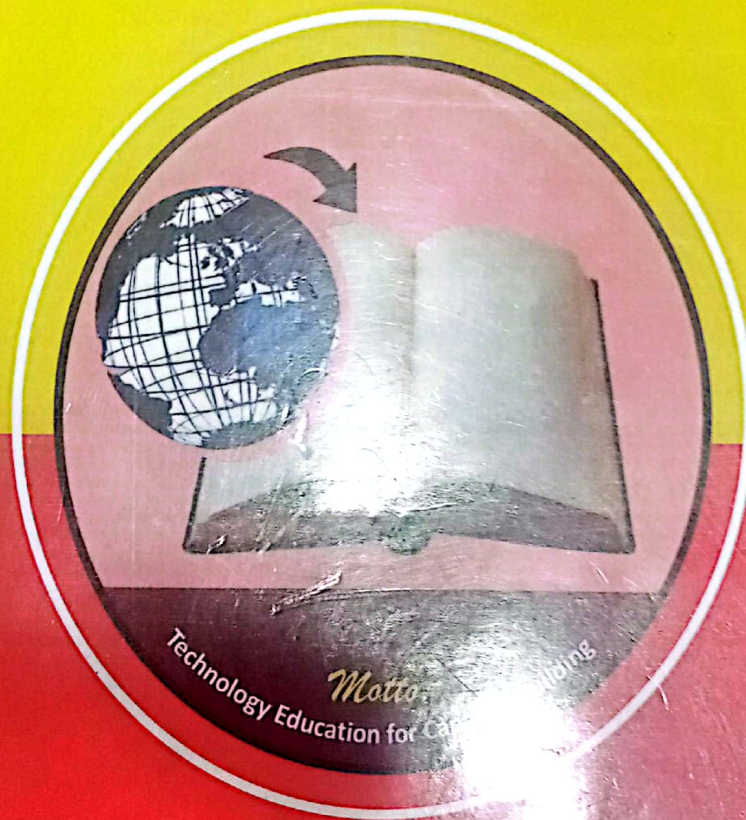


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PARENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE INTRODUCTION OF SEX EDUCATION IN MORO LOCAL GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOLS KWARA STATE.

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Abstract

This study looked at the parent's attitude towards the introduction of sex education in Moro Local Government secondary schools Kwara State. The target population for the study comprised all parents in Moro L.G.A in Ilorin, Kwara State. The researcher used stratified and simple random sampling technique to select two hundred (200) respondents from Moro LGA, Kwara State. The parents were stratified based on gender and age. The researcher then selected two hundred respondents from each of the stratum using simple random sampling technique, a total of two hundred parents from ministries, churches, mosques, markets and schools were selected for the study. Data were collected using a researcher designed instrument tagged "Attitude towards Sex Education Questionnaire" (ATSEQ). The data were analyzed using percentages, mean, t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through test retest method. A reliability coefficient of correlation of 0.88 was obtained. The findings of this study showed that there was a significant difference in the parent's attitude towards the introduction of sex education in Moro LGA secondary school on the basis of gender, age and educational qualification. However no significant difference was found in the attitude of the respondents based on their religion and economic status. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that Community and counsellors should carry out health promotion programmes in communities. This will empower and educate parents on the importance of timely sex education, its contents and how it can be taught in secondary schools without encouraging promiscuity.

Key Words: Parent, Attitude, Education and Sex

Introduction

Attitude is an effect towards an object which involves positive or negative evaluation towards an object and they are combination of beliefs and feelings that predisposes a person to behave in a certain way (Alabi, 2006). Cunnighman, Zelazo, Packer and Van Bavel (2007), defined attitude as relatively stable mental positions held towards ideas, objects or people. Attitude represents one's disposition towards an object, event or group of persons (Haddock 2004). The parents attitude towards sex education differs from one group to another depending on many factors like social belief systems, religious factors, family socialization and cultural set up within which learners grow up (Ajzen, 2005). The stakeholders at the International conference on population and development which was held in 1994 in Cairo advocated for the inclusion of sex education in the curriculum. This was done with the aim of giving young people factual information about sex related issues (Busari, 2004). Sex education is the type of education or learning experience provided about human sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, abstinence, contraception, family planning, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) (Forrester, 2009). Osei (2009) defined sex education as 'a lifelong process of acquiring information and forming attitudes, beliefs, and values about identity, relationships and intimacy. This is a comprehensive curriculum of instruction addressing the growth, anatomy and physiology of human reproductive health system (Sanders, 2008). Sex Information and Education Council of the United States SIECUS (2010) suggested that sex education should address issues such as personality, values, decision-making skills, peer and social pressures, affection, intimacy, body image, gender roles, communication strategies, and various sexual behaviours. The inclusion of sex education in the curriculum has been a topic of discussion among teachers, parents and the community as a whole. The researchers argued that it is important to teach adolescents about healthy and positive sexual situations as well as life skills.

Nokwe (1991) discovered that the attitude of parents towards sex education is negative. This is because

there is always high level of discomfort and embarrassment when parents discuss with their children about sex matters. Most parents do not create time to discuss with their children on the importance of sex education. Ndlangiso (1999) advocated that parents should change their attitude and begin to open conversations with their children when they are young, well before they go into a relationship that could lead to sex. In a study carried out by Nyarko, Adentwi, Asumeng and Ahulu (2014) the researchers explained that parents are of the opinion that sex related courses should be taught in schools. Umoh (1986) remarked that most parents and guardian in Nigeria often react negatively and sometimes violently to the introduction of sex education in secondary school curriculum.

Markon and Mc'abe (1990) explained that parents who ought to be the primary educators of their children on specific values about sexuality play the least role in this area. Sieswerda and Blekkenhorst (2006) revealed that some parents considered sexuality education as being immoral, contrary to religious and traditional values and such information are likely to encourage pre-marital sexual activity among adolescents.

Busari (2004) stated that parents do not give the adolescents accurate and adequate information about sex because they tend to shy away from discussing such topics. This might be due to low educational level of the parents or influence of cultural background in discussing such issues with children. Experts like Jasmine-Sui (1994), Lim and Kui (2006), Majova (2002) believe that children should be exposed to sex education as early as possible and that young people whose parents discuss sexual health and safe sex with them have shown to engage in less risky sexual behaviours than those whose parents do not. Marie Stopes International (2008) and Pauluik, Little and Sieswerda (2001) observed that adolescent children whose parents had communicated with them about sex were more likely to delay sex than their peers whose parents had never mentioned such issues.

Kamalpreet (2012) noted that parents and teachers have to be very tactful so that their adolescents do not obtain wrong information on sex misconceptions may lead to much risky sexual behaviour and thus eventually contact sexually transmitted diseases. However, arguments are often raised on what, when and how the topics in sex education should be taught among the adolescents. Sex education help students to develop positive attitude towards sex, develop good interpersonal relationship with opposite sex, check the spread of sexually transmitted disease and reduces the dangers of adolescents pregnancy (Umoh, 1986).

Statement of the Problem

Parents are not forthcoming as expected when it comes to giving information about sex to their children while some feel that such issues should not be discussed. Educational institutions also provide little or no sexuality education for young people and as such children are left to source for information from uninformed peers. Lack of right information from parents, films, internet and mass media gives the adolescent child wrong ideas about sex and these encourages risky sexual behavior. This can lead to consequences of unwanted pregnancy, abortion, early marriage, parenthood and contacting Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) (Naidoo, 2001).

Parent's negative attitude towards sex education has been found to be associated with earlier onset of adolescent risky sexual behaviour. On the other hand, having educated parents, supportive family relationships, parental supervision on sex related matters and attending of religious centers frequently, can curb youth involvement in engaging in risky sexual behavior (Sieswerda & Blekkenhorst, 2006). The introduction of sex education into the curriculum had been trailed with controversy by stakeholders that teachers often expressed difficulties in teaching some topics related to sexuality education and that parents expressed open resistance to the teaching of some sex education topics. Some parents asserted that the teaching of sex education encourages immorality and this can lead adolescents to start sexual experimentation (Ankoruah, 2001). Parent's negative attitude towards sex education has bridged communication gap between their teeming populations of adolescent on sex related matters.

Previous studies of Busari (2004), Osei, (2009), Nyarko, Adentwi, Abiodun (1986), Asumeng, and Ahulu, (2014) were all on sex education. Although there have been several researches on issues relating to sex education but to the best knowledge of the researchers, no study has been carried out in the locale of the researchers (Moro LGA, Kwara State), hence, this study therefore tend to examine the parents attitude towards the introduction of sex education in Moro LGA, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

The study is mainly directed at investigating the attitude of parents towards the introduction of sex education in Moro Local Government, Kwara State. The study will among others:

1. Investigate parents' attitude towards introduction of sex education based on gender
2. Examine parents' attitude towards introduction of sex education based on age;
3. Assess parents' attitude towards introduction of sex education at secondary school based on religion;
4. Determine parent's attitude towards introduction of sex education at secondary school based on educational qualification;
5. Investigate parents' attitude towards introduction of sex education at secondary school based on economic status.

Research Question

The question below guided the conduct of the study:

- (1) What are parents attitude towards the introduction of sex education?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance in order to carry out the study:

- H₀₁. There is no significant difference in parent's attitude towards the introduction of sex education in secondary school based on gender.
- H₀₂. There is no significant difference in parent's attitude towards the introduction of sex education in secondary school based on age.
- H₀₃. There is no significant difference in parent's attitude towards the introduction of sex education in secondary school based on religion.
- H₀₄. There is no significant difference in parent's attitude towards the introduction of sex education in secondary school based on educational qualification.
- H₀₅. There is no significant difference in parent's attitude towards the introduction of sex education in secondary school based on the economic status of parents.

Methodology

The target population of the study was all parents in Moro L.G.A Kwara State. The researcher used stratified and simple random sampling to select two hundred (200) respondents from Moro LGA, Kwara State. The parents were stratified based on gender, age, educational qualification and economic status. The researcher then selected two hundred respondents from each of the stratum using simple random sampling, a total of two hundred parents from ministries, churches, mosques, markets and schools were selected in all.

A self-adopted questionnaire tagged "Attitude towards Sex Education Questionnaire" (ATSEQ) was used to gather information from the respondents. It has two sections: A and B. The instrument comprised of twenty items. Section A has five items that elicits demographic information about the respondents. Section B comprised of information on attitude towards sex education. Section B requires the respondents to choose the response which applies to them on a Four-Point rating scale of: "Strongly Agree" (SA), "Agree" (A) Disagree" (D) and "Strongly Disagree" (SD). The content validity of the instrument was established by giving copies of the questionnaire to three (3) experts in the related field. The final draft was done in line with the suggestions of these experts who adjudged the instrument valid and relevant.

In other to ascertain the reliability of the instrument, test re-test method was adopted. The test was administered on the same group of respondents who were not part of the study at an interval of four weeks. The two set of scores obtained were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation co-efficient and a co-efficient of 0.88 was obtained. The instrument was therefore considered reliable and suitable for the purpose for which it was designed.

Results

Demographic Data

This section presents the results of data obtained from the respondents in frequency counts and percentages.

Table 1:
Distribution of Respondents Based on Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	136	68.0
Female	64	32.0
Total	200	100.0

Table 1 indicates that 200 respondents participated in the study out of which, 136 (68%) of the respondents were males, while 64 (32%) of the respondents were females.

Table 2:
Distribution of Respondents Based on Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 50 years	181	90.5
51 years and above	19	9.5
Total	200	100.0

Table 2 shows that 181 (90.5%) of the respondents were less than 50 years of age, while 19 (9.5%) of the respondents were 51 years and above.

Table 3:
Distribution of Respondents Based on Religion

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Christianity	24	12.0
Islam	176	88.0
ATR	-	-
Total	200	100.0

Table 3 indicates that 24 (12%) of the respondents were Christians, 176 (88%) of the respondents were Muslims, while none of the respondents were members of the African Traditional Religion (ATR).

Table 4:
Distribution of Respondents Based on Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Primary School Certificate	44	22.0
Secondary School Certificate	58	29.0
O.N.D/N.C.E	46	23.0
H.N.D/First Degree	40	20.0
Postgraduate Degree	12	6.0
Total	200	100.0

Table 4 shows that 44 (22%) of the respondents were having only primary school certificate, 58 (29%) of the respondents were having secondary school certificate, 46 (23%) of the respondents were having OND/NCE certificate, 40 (20%) of the respondents were having HND/First degree, while 12 (6%) of the respondents were having postgraduate degree.

Table 5:
Distribution of Respondents Based on Economic Status

Economic Status	Frequency	Percentage
Less than ₦40,000	38	19.0
₦50,000 – ₦100,000	155	77.5
Above ₦100,000	7	3.5
Total	200	100.0

Table 5 shows that 38 (19%) of the respondents were earning less than ₦40,000 per month, 155 (77.5%) of the respondents were earning between ₦50,000 – ₦100,000 per month, while 7 (3.5%) of the respondents were earning above ₦100,000 per month.

Research Question 1: What are parents attitude towards the introduction of sex education?

Table 6:
Mean and Rank Order on the Attitude of Parents Towards Sex Education

Item No.	I believe that sex education:	Mean	Rank
12	should be core subjects in the school	3.92	1 st
4	prevents premarital sex among children	3.90	2 nd
11	should be taught in secondary schools	3.78	3 rd
3	is morally right for children	3.76	4 th
6	prevents teenage pregnancy	3.07	5 th
8	enhances children knowledge of effect of immoral behavior	3.02	6 th
10	enhances children's knowledge on family planning exercises	3.00	7 th
18	have many benefits	2.98	8 th
5	reduces cases of abortion among children	2.96	9 th
9	prevents sexually transmitted diseases	2.91	10 th
17	can expose students to the risks of venereal diseases	2.90	11 th
1	corrupts children	2.78	12 th
13	should be allowed to be learnt through personal experiences	1.36	13 th
14	should be handled by health personnel only	1.34	14 th
20	should be taught by only parents	1.32	15 th
7	prevents early marriage among children	1.30	16 th
19	should be taught by teachers only	1.28	17 th
15	should be taught to male children only	1.23	18 th
16	should be taught to female children only	1.21	19 th
2	is against the tradition of the society	1.15	20 th

Table 6 shows that Item 12 ("I believe that sex education should be core subjects in the school") had the highest mean score of 3.92 and was therefore ranked 1st. Ranked 2nd is Item 4 ("I believe that sex education prevents premarital sex among children") with a mean a score of 3.90. Ranked 20th is item 2. Since twelve out of the twenty items have mean scores that are above the mid-mean score of 2.50, then it can be said that majority of the respondents have a positive attitude towards the introduction of sex education.

Table 7:
Attitude of Parents Towards Sex Education

Attitude	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	184	92.0
Negative	16	8.0
Total	200	100.0

Table 7 shows that 200 respondents participated in the study out of which 184 (92%) of the respondents have a positive attitude towards introduction of sex education, while 16 (8%) of the respondents have negative attitude towards introduction of sex education. Any score above 50% is positive while scores below is on the negative side.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the parent's attitude towards the introduction of sex education based on gender

Table 8:
The t-test Showing the Attitude of Parents Towards the Introduction of Sex Education Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value
Male	136	48.53	3.63	198	2.82*	1.96
Female	64	50.54	6.43			

*Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 8 shows a calculated t-value of 2.82 and a critical t-value is 1.96. The calculated t-value is greater than the critical t-value. The hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference in the attitude of parents towards the introduction of sex education based on gender.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the parent's attitude towards the introduction of sex education based on age

Table 9:
The t-test Showing the Attitude of Parents Towards the Introduction of Sex Education Based on Age

Age	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value
Less than 50 years	181	48.36	3.46	198	8.71*	1.96
50 years and above	19	56.94	7.97			

*Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 9 shows a calculated t-value of 8.71 and a critical t-value is 1.96. Since the calculated t-value is greater than the critical t-value as such the hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference in the attitude of parents towards the introduction of sex education based on age.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference in the parent's attitude towards the introduction of sex education based on religion

Table 10:
The t-test Showing the Attitude of Parents Towards the Introduction of Sex Education Based on Religion

Religion	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value
Christianity	24	48.91	5.07	198	0.28	1.96
Islam	176	49.21	4.76			

Table 10 shows that calculated t-value of 0.28 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96. Thus the hypothesis is accepted. That means, there is no significant difference in the parents attitude towards the introduction of sex education

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant difference in the parent's attitude towards the introduction of sex education based on educational qualification

Table 11:
Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing the Attitude of Parents Towards the Introduction of Sex Education Based on Educational Qualification

Source	df	SS	Mean Square	Cal. F-value	Crit. F-value
Between Groups	4	568.983	142.24	6.93*	2.60
Within Groups	195	4000.537	20.51		
Total	199	4569.520			

*Significant, $p < .05$

Table 11 shows the F-value calculated of 6.93 and a critical value of 2.60. The calculated F-value is greater than the critical F-value. The hypothesis is not accepted. Hence, there is a significant difference in the attitude of parents towards the introduction of sex education based on educational qualification.

In order to determine the mean value(s) that led to the significant difference observed in the ANOVA results of Table 11, the Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) was used as a post-hoc test. The results of the DMRT procedure are displayed in Table 12.

Table 12:
Duncan's Multiple Range Test (DMRT) Showing the Difference in the Parents Attitude Towards the Introduction of Sex Education Based on Educational Qualification

Duncan Groupings	N	Means	Group	Educational Qualification
A	42	50.15	5	Postgraduate
A	40	50.11	4	HND/First Degree
B	46	49.10	3	OND/NCE
C	28	48.52	2	Secondary School Certificate
C	44	48.00	1	Primary School Certificate

Table 12 shows the Duncan Multiple Range Test indicating the significant difference noted in the ANOVA on Table 6. Group 5 and 4 (Postgraduate & HND/First Degree) with mean scores of 50.15 and 50.11 differed significantly from Group 3 (OND/NCE), 2 (Primary School Certificate), and 1 (Primary School Certificate) with mean scores of 49.10, 48.52 and 48.00 respectively. All the groups differed from one another but the significant difference noted was as a result of the mean of Group 2 and 1, hence the significant difference noted in the ANOVA on Table 11 and thus, the hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis Five: There is no significant difference in the parent's attitude towards the introduction of sex education based on economic status

Table 13:
Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing the Attitude of Parents Towards the Introduction of Sex Education Based on Economic Status

Source	df	SS	Mean Square	Cal. F-value	Crit. F-value
Between Groups	2	110.351	55.17	2.43	3.00
Within Groups	197	4459.169	22.63		
Total	199	4569.520			

Table 13 shows the F-value calculated of 2.43 is less than the critical value of 3.00 as such the hypothesis is accepted. Hence, there is no significant difference in the attitude of parents towards the introduction of sex education based on economic status (less than N40,000 are low income group, N50,000 – N100,000 are middle income earners while those earning above N100,000 are in the high income group).

Discussion of Findings

Most of the respondents agreed that sex education should be a core subject in the school. This finding is in line with the submission of Nokwe (1991) that sex education should be included in the secondary school curriculum. This may not be surprising bearing in mind the submission of Oniye, Yusuf and Ahamed (2012) that a lot of misconceptions abound with respect to sex/ sexuality and this misconception arise as a result of wrong attitudes, traditions, taboos and myth.

This study also revealed that parents differ significantly in their attitude towards the introduction of sex education based on gender and age. The observation corroborates the view of Reis and Seidl (1989) that most mothers were reluctant in talking to their wards about sex. This finding agreed with the submission of Swan, Bowe, McCormick and Kosmir (2003) who discovered that the gender of parents does not affect their attitude as regard the inclusion of sexuality education in the school curriculum. Selven, Ross, and Parker (2005) revealed that irrespective of their age and gender most parents do not feel comfortable discussing about sex with their children. This was contrary to the findings of Kamalpreet (2012) who found a significant difference in the attitudes of fathers and mothers towards sex education. It was identified that fathers have more favorable attitude towards the teaching of sex education in schools than mothers. Price, Dake, Kirchofer and Telljohann (2003) noted that parents of different age groups believe that sex education will help give young people factual information that will help them become mature and responsible. On the other hand so many adult argued that sex education will result to promiscuity and as such it must not be discussed in public (Busari, 2004).

The respondents did not differ in their attitude towards the introduction of sex education in schools on the basis of religion. That is, their attitudes are the same. In a study carried out by Busari (2004) the researcher noted that the respondent's religious belief did influence their attitude towards the teaching of sex education in secondary schools. This might be due to the fact that sex issues are religious and culture laden. Most parents believe that sex education can encourage immorality and in fact, most religious leaders believe that sex must not be discussed in the public (Ankomah, 2001).

The educational qualification of respondents influenced their attitude. On the other hand Nyarko, Adentwi, Asumeng and Ahulu (2014) discovered that educational status does not have any impact on parents attitudes towards the inclusion of sexuality education in the school curriculum. The finding also supports Kamalpreet (2012) who in a study on the attitude of teachers, parents and adolescents towards sex education found that highly educated parents (graduate/postgraduate) have significantly positive attitude towards the introduction of sex education in secondary school than those who are not educated. Despite the economic status of parents, they were all indifferent in their attitudes. Busari (2004) found that the respondents salary grade level did not also influenced their attitude.

Counseling Implication

The findings of this study will enable the counselor to appreciate and accept the individual differences that exist in form of attitude. The trained counsellor can be of help to parents and children who have negative attitude towards the teaching of sex. They can enlighten the parents on the need for sex education in the secondary schools. This will enable the young generation to enjoy stable and harmonious sexual relationship in the future.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study revealed that majority of the parents have positive attitude towards the introduction of sex education in schools. Also, there is no significant difference in the attitude of parents towards the introduction of sex education on the basis of religion and economic status. However, a significant difference was found on the basis of gender, age and educational qualification. Based on the findings the following recommended:

- Community and counsellors should carry out health promotion programmes in communities. This will empower and educate parents on the importance of timely sex education, its contents and how it can be taught in secondary schools without encouraging promiscuity.
- Teachers should be equipped with relevant information and skills that will enable them to handle the subject well. This will put the students at an advantage of learning the right information about sex in the classroom setting. School-based sex education is an avenue for changing these misconceptions and getting answers to their confusing questions. Parents must support teachers in the provision of age-appropriate sex information at home and in the school.

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