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IN-SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS SEXUALITY EDUCATION IN ILORIN METROPOLIS OF KWARA STATE

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Abstract

This study examined attitude of In-school adolescents towards sexuality education. Adolescence is a stage when sexual ideation and involvement in sexual activities are being experimented. It is a period of sexual development and maturity that needs to be guided otherwise can lead to sexual promiscuity and unwanted pregnancies. Descriptive survey was employed in the study. The population comprised the In-school adolescents in Secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis. 200 In-school adolescents were used as sample. One research question and three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Data collection was via the researchers designed questionnaire titled "Attitude Toward Sexuality Education Questionnaire (ATSEQ)". The instrument was validated by experts in test and measurement and reliability was ascertained through test retest method. The reliability coefficient of 0.74 was obtained by using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation to analyze data collected via the questionnaire administered twice to respondents who were not among the sample at two weeks interval. Mean, rank order, ANOVA and t-test were employed to analyze data. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. While all the hypotheses were retained findings revealed that the respondents showed positive attitude

towards sexuality education. Age, gender and religion did not make the respondents differ in their attitude towards sex education. Based on the findings the following recommendations were made: Sexuality education should be strongly taught as a subject in the Secondary schools. Age of the students, gender and religion should not be barriers to teaching sexuality education in secondary schools. The school counselors should organize a forum regularly in the schools where students are well counseled on the issues about sexuality education. Also parents should not shy away from discussing sexuality education with their children.

Key words: *Attitude, In-school adolescent, Sex education*

Introduction

Education is empowerment. It is the key to knowledge. It is the bedrock for good health, economic growth, social cultural and technological development. Sexuality education is education geared towards equipping humans with the knowledge of what sex in its totality means. It is education about sexual anatomy, reproduction, sexual health, sexual intercourse, emotional feelings, family planning, sexual orientation, values, decision making and sexually transmitted diseases and protection methods. The World Health Organization (WHO) (2002) explained sexuality education as encompassing sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. WHO (2002) further stated that sexuality is broadly defined as the social construction of a biological drive which often deals with issues such as whom one has sex with, in what ways, why, and under what circumstances. It is a lifelong process through which humans acquire knowledge about their sexuality. It provides the necessary information on sexual health, reproduction and life skills to avoid problems about sex. Through sexuality education young people get knowledge about sex and have opportunity to ask questions about sex, assess their own and other people's attitude about gender and sexuality, thereby exercising control on sexual relationships by addressing such issues like promiscuity, abstinence, masturbation, unwanted pregnancy and contracting of sexually transmitted diseases.

Collins (2008) submitted that sexuality education encompasses education about all aspects of sexuality which includes information about family planning, sexual pleasure, reproduction, dating, communication sexually transmitted disease, values among others. WHO (2004) said that sexuality is central aspect of being human throughout life. Sexuality education protects humans against sexual abuse and slavery as well as other sexual problems.

Adolescence is the stage between child hood and adult hood. It is the stage when sexual and reproductive developmental processes are going on in the adolescent. This is a stage that poses a lot of stress to the young individuals, hence

it is termed a period of storm and stress, Osarenren (2001). Individuals at the ages between 11-21 years are referred to as adolescents. Some adolescents at this age are in the secondary school, hence they are called In-school adolescents. These adolescents face myriads of problems in school. Some of the problems border on sex related issues and that has led to the introduction of sexuality education in the secondary school curriculum to tackle the sexuality or sex related challenges among school children.

Bayley (2003) argued that adolescents have reproductive health needs which need special attentions. He further stated that there is need for sexual and reproductive health services that are accessible and appropriate to meet the reproductive health needs of the adolescents. Muhammed (2014) opened that adolescence is a period of heterosexual awareness often accompanied by extreme degree of sexual drives. Sexuality education provides the needed critical information about sexual health and the life skills that will assist the adolescent avoid the problems and consequences of reckless sexual activity. World Health Organization (2004) submitted that sexual health is one of the five core aspects of the WHIO global reproductive health strategy. It is the central aspect of being human according to the WHIO.

Attitude is a construct that relates to like or dislike over a thing. Wikipedia encyclopedia defined attitude as a hypothetical construct that represents an individual's degree of like or dislike for a thing which can be event, object, information, place or person. Wikipedia encyclopedia asserted that attitudes are judgements that develop on the ABC model, 'A' for affect 'B' for behaviour and 'C' for cognition. The affective response represents emotional response which expresses the entity, the behavioural response is the typical behavioural tendency of the individual over the entity and the cognitive response is the cognitive evaluation of the entity which represents the individuals observational learning from the environment. Omotosho (2003) defined attitude as one's disposition towards people, situation or events in a particular way. He further stated that attitude usually leads to preferential response. This preferential response can be positive or negative. The attitude of In-school adolescents in Ilorin metropolis of Kwara state towards sexuality education may be positive or negative. This study is set to investigate the attitude of the In-school adolescents towards sexuality education in Ilorin metropolis of Kwara state.

Statement of the Problem

Adolescence is a stage in humans that is heralded with all round growth and development. It is a stage when sexual behaviours are greatly aroused due to the development of sex hormones. The sexual ideation and engagement develop in the adolescent. There is need for the adolescent to be abreast of the changes that take place in his or her body. Sexuality education is meant to equip the

adolescent with the information about what goes on in his/her body. These knowledge and information will likely save the adolescents from unpleasant and harmful situations. Some adolescents experiment with sex and indulge in premarital sexual activities without condoms which sometimes result in unwanted pregnancy, contracting of sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS Virus and other sexually transmitted diseases, abortions and dumping of new born babies at secret places. Unwanted pregnancy can make the adolescent to drop out of school and sometimes be forced to early marriage. These problems necessitated this study aimed at examining the attitudes of the In-school adolescents towards sexuality education in Ilorin metropolis of Lagos State secondary schools.

Research Questions

1. What is the attitude of In-school adolescents in secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis towards sexuality education.
2. Is there significant difference in the attitude of In-school adolescents towards sex education on basis of age?
3. Is there significant difference in the attitude of In-school adolescents towards sexuality education on the basis of gender?

Research hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the attitudes of In-school adolescents toward sexuality education in Ilorin metropolis on the basis of age

H₀₂: There is no significant gender difference in the attitudes of In-school adolescents towards sexuality education.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in the attitude of In-school adolescents towards sexuality education on the basis religion.

Methodology

Descriptive survey was adopted for the study. A total sample of 200 in-school adolescents from secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis participated in the study. Simple random sampling was used to select 4 schools that participated. Stratified sampling technique was used to select respondents based on age, gender, and religious groups.

Data collection was via researchers' constructed questionnaire titled "Attitude of In-school Adolescents towards Sexuality Education Questionnaire (AIATSEQ). The instrument has two sections, A, for demographic data of age, gender and religion, B, contains twenty items to be responded to on a four point Likert scale of SA: strongly agree (4), A: Agree (3), D: Disagree (2), and SD: Strongly disagree (1). All the items in the questionnaire are positive. The mean score was computed thus: $4+3+2+1=10/4=2.5$ which is the cut off mark. Any respondent whose mean score is 2.5 or below showed negative attitude towards sexuality

education. The instrument was validated and the reliability co-efficient of 0.74 was obtained using test re-test method. 200 instruments were administered to the respondents by the researchers and collected back. The data collected were analysed using mean, standard deviation and rank order for the research questions while t-test and Analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05-level of significance

Results

Research question: attitude of In-school adolescents in secondary schools towards sexuality education in Ilorin metropolis?

Table 1: Respondents' response to attitude towards sexuality education

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN	RANK
1	1 consider sexuality education as means of reducing sexually transmitted diseases	3.73	1 st
2	1 consider sexuality education important because it helps adolescent to abstain from premature sex.	3.56	2 nd
3	Sexuality education is a means of enhancing safe sex	3.52	3 rd
4	1 consider sex education as a means of avoiding unwanted pregnancy	3.54	4 th
5	Sexuality education reduces abortion among female students	3.52	5 th
6	Sexuality education prevents unhealthy sexual practice among adolescents	3.50	6 th
7	Sexuality education should be encouraged among adolescents	3.44	7 th
8	1 consider that sexuality education fosters good behavior among adolescents	3.45	8 th
9	Sexuality education reduces sexual experimentation among adolescents	3.43	9 th
10	I do feel that sexuality education helps in changing	3.42	10 th

sexual attitude and behavior

11	Sexuality education educates on sexual matters	3.37	11 th
12	Sexuality education is a means of imparting knowledge about sex to the adolescents	3.38	12 th
13	Sexuality education reduces negative effect of media on adolescents	3.35	13 th
14	I do not hate it when people are talking about sexuality education	3.33	14 th
15	I see sexuality education as a means of making decisions about sex	3.31	15 th
16	Sex education is a means of building emotional growth among adolescents	3.29	16 th
17	I consider sex education to be relevant to me	3.28	17 th
18	I feel comfortable when hearing sexuality education	3.20	18 th
19	I embrace any information on sex education	3.15	19 th
20	I do encourage my friends to embrace sexuality education	2.89	20 th

The responses in table 1 show that the students have positive attitude towards their knowledge of sexuality education because they scored above 2.5 cut off mark in all the items.

H₀ 1. There is no significant difference in the attitude of In-school adolescents towards their knowledge of sexuality education on the basis of age.

Table 2: ANOVA on the attitude of In-school adolescents towards sexuality education on the basis of age

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F-tab	F-cal	SIG2-tailed	Decision
Between groups	12.527	1	12.527	2.68	0.328	0.568	Do not reject

Within groups	7570.093	198	38.23
Total		199	

Significant, $P < 0.05$

The analysis in table 2 showed that the calculated f-value of 0.328 is less than the table value of 2.68, therefore the hypothesis is retained. Hence it is concluded that there is no significant difference in the attitudes of the respondents toward sexuality education on the basis of age.

H02: There is no significant gender difference in the attitude of In-school adolescents towards sexuality education.

Table 3: t-test on the attitudes of In-school adolescents towards sexuality education on the basis of gender

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	Cal. value	t- Critical t-value
Male	105	68.591	6.8902	198	1.97	0.537
Female	95	68.126	5.294			

$p \leq 0.05$

Table 3 shows that there is no significant gender difference in the attitude of in-school adolescents towards sexuality education. This is because the calculated t-value of 1.97 is greater than the critical table value of 0.537. Therefore, the hypothesis was retained.

H03: There is no significant difference in the attitude of In-school adolescents towards sexuality education on the basis of religion.

Table 4: The analysis of variance on the attitude of in-school adolescents towards sexuality education on the basis of religion

Source	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-cal	F-tab
Between group	1	31.285	31.285	0.82	2.68
Within group	198	7551.335	38.138		
Total		7582.62			

$P \leq 0.05$

Table 4 shows that the calculated f-value of 0.82 is less than the f-tabulated of 2.68. Therefore the hypothesis is not rejected. This means that the religion of the

In-school adolescents did not make any difference in their attitude towards sexuality education.

Discussion of findings

The result of the research question in the study showed that the respondents have positive attitude towards sexuality education. This was shown through their various responses on the items in the questionnaire. All the mean scores of the items are greater than the cut off mark of 2.5 which showed that they have positive attitude towards sexuality education. Items 1-19 have mean scores above 3 while only item 20 is the least and yet is above the cut off mark. With this result, it can be concluded that in-school adolescents are very much willing to embrace sexuality education in secondary schools.

It is the duty of the curriculum planners to equip the in-school adolescents with the knowledge of sexuality education. This will go a long way in saving the adolescents from the problems of unwanted pregnancies, contracting of sexually transmitted diseases and they will not be a novice in matters relating to sex and human sexuality.

The first hypothesis showed that there was no significant difference in the attitude of in-school adolescents towards sexuality education on the basis of their ages. This showed that age did not make them to have different attitude towards sexuality education. The reason might be because they are experiencing the same development change in their bodies and they saw the need to be abreast with sexuality education which will make their transition to adulthood easier and without problems. This finding corroborated Ajala (2008) study that age did not make any difference in the attitude of religious leaders who were once adolescents towards introduction of sexuality education in secondary schools. Sexuality education is important to both sexes, hence they show the same attitude to it.

The second hypothesis also revealed no significant gender difference in the attitude of In-school adolescents towards sexuality education. The finding might be so because the phenomenon of sexuality and sex related issues are for both sexes. Sexuality and sexual issues have no respect for gender. This finding agreed with Tinley (2015) who discovered in his research on sexuality education that no much significant difference existed in the attitude of male and female students towards sex education. These findings revealed that gender of the respondents did not influence their attitude towards sexuality education.

The third hypothesis tested showed that there was no significant difference in the attitude of In-school adolescents towards sexuality education on the basis of religion. Hence their religion did not make them differ in their attitude towards sexuality education. The reason it is so might be because all the respondents irrespective of their religion are passing through the same developmental stages in

their sexuality and thus have the same or similar problems and stress. The finding of this study is in support of Gorden (1994) In Ajala (2008) who discovered in his study on sexuality education that religion of the respondents did not make them differ in their support of sexuality education in secondary school.

Conclusion

The study was carried out to examine the attitude of In-school adolescents in senior secondary in Ilorin metropolis towards sexuality education. The finding revealed that the adolescents have positive attitude towards sexuality education in schools. It was also discovered that the variables of age, gender and religion of the adolescents did not make them defer in their attitude towards sexuality education.

Implication for counseling/Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the study, the researchers are making the following recommendations:

1. The teaching and counselling on sexuality education should be strengthened in schools so that the adolescents will have firm grasp and knowledge of sexuality education. This will go a long way in solving the myriads of problems on sexuality matters the In-school adolescents are facing.
2. Parents should also teach their children issues about sex and sexuality.
3. Adolescents in secondary schools should be involved irrespective of their ages, gender and religion whenever the counsellor is giving counselling on sexuality education.
4. School counsellors should regularly organize forums for counselling about sexuality for students.

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