

SEXUALITY EDUCATION AND ITS IMPACT ON THE REDUCTION OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY AMONG STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN CALABAR SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA.

Eze Offiong, Lukpata Felicia , Bassey Rita , Nsa Glory , Oshie Francis, Ukata Bassey , Tatey John, Ikara Mary, Itam Winifred, Iboh Joan .

Department of Pharmacy, Department of Community Health, College of Health Tech. Calabar. P. M. B 1324

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The study examine "Sexuality education and its impact in the reduction of teenage pregnancy among students in public secondary schools in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria". To achieve the objective of this study, three specific objectives were developed from which the research questions and three hypotheses were formulated in line with variable of the study. The study adopted a survey research design and the instrument used was questionnaire instrument to gather information. The sample of the study consisted of 200 subject technique. The result of the findings revealed that there is significant influence of sexuality education on teenage pregnancy .Student's perception of sexuality education significantly influence the reduction of teenage pregnancy, student's attitude towards sexuality education significantly influence the reduction of teenage pregnancy and the impact of sexuality education for student reduced teenage pregnancy. The study recommends that the government should re-evaluate the existing sexual health services and should make them more young-people-friendly. Adequate counselling programmes should be provided for pregnant students. They should be discouraged from abortion, except in case of medical necessity.

Keywords: Sexuality Education Impact and Teenage Pregnancy Reduction Among Students

INTRODUCTION

Sex education in public secondary schools has witnessed much controversies and misconception by many teachers, parents, students and the society. The concept of sex education which is sometimes called sexuality education or sex and relationship education attracts a plethora of definitions from different people. According to Frimpong (2010), sex education is "the systematic attempt to promote the healthy awareness in the individual on matters of his/her sexual development, functioning, behaviour and attitudes through direct teaching". Similarly, the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) in Njoku (2008), sees sex education as "a planned process of education that fosters the acquisition of factual information, the formation of positive attitudes, beliefs and values as well as the development of skills to cope with the biological, psychological, socio-cultural, and spiritual aspects of human sexuality".

It is important to note that sex education was not just incorporated into social studies for knowledge acquisition but to help young people develop attitudes, values, goals and practices that are based on sound knowledge which will enable them to express their sexual and mating impulses in a manner that is socially and ethically acceptable as well as personally satisfying (Abdu 2006). sex education in Nigerian schools is not a new concept in Nigeria. Adepoju (2005) and Abdu (2006) postulated that traditional form of sex education and family life education has been in existence where kinship systems, age grade and coming of age ceremonies or initiation ceremonies where the youths were tutored about manhood and womanhood. It was purely biological and cultural, while various methods of contraceptives were just kept at the domain of married people and kept secret. Many young people were kept in the dark as they were not opportune to be properly educated on family life and sex education because their training was on "dos and don'ts". Traditionally, sex

education was to be given to every child and adolescents by his/her immediate family but these practice has been eroded by the influence of modernization, western civilization, and collapsing family life; thereby leaving the young ones at the mercy of the wider society and other socializing agents who may not give accurate information that can assist the young ones in their transition to adulthood (Onwuezobe and Ekanem, 2009). This became necessary in order to prepare adolescents for their adult roles in line with acceptable societal standard, and to also empower young people to have greater control over their sexuality and reproductive life to their own benefit both socially and economically. It is also a means of safeguarding or protecting the youths against the consequences of sexual ignorance as well as preparing them for responsible life (Njoku, 2008). Since the family which is the primary agent of socialization where sex education ought to be taught seems not to help the adolescents in this regard, as issues that have to do with sexuality is oftentimes not discussed with them, owing to the belief that keeping them in perpetual ignorance about their sexuality will prevent them from immoral behaviour (Abdu, 2006), many adolescents have resorted to confiding in their friends and school mates who often mislead them knowingly or unknowingly (Udemezue, 2011). Apart from their friends, they also source for information from the internet, television, pornographic films and materials which often mislead them and cause more havoc and confusion. In Nigeria, many studies have been conducted since the introduction of family life and sex education into the school curriculum to ascertain its acceptability and people's perception of it. Within the area of study, a study conducted by Omale (2014) revealed that sex education was actually part of the school curriculum, and that the teachers actually teach it even though the aspect of contraception and social skills were not taught in the area

About 50% of the world's population is under the age of 20 years and are at the highest risk of sexual and reproductive health problem; thus making sexuality the root of most sexual and reproductive health problems (Briggs, 2005). According to a United Nation report, 56% and 15% of females within the age cohort of 15-19 years and 20-24 years respectively are unmarried out of which a total of 18 million people within the age group 15-24 years make 19% of Nigeria's population. About one million teenage girls annually get pregnant with resultant 44% births, 50% of these drop out of school and 50% are unmarried and young mothers placing infants at enormous health risk. A study carried out in Benin City, Nigeria revealed that 55% of secondary school girls have had sexual intercourse by age 16 years and 40% admitted to at least one previous pregnancy. In recent times, the youth who constitute ages 10-24 and 36.7 per cent of the Nigerian population, are found to be highly vulnerable to antisocial behaviours such as violent crimes, unsafe sexual activities and drug abuse among others. The Nigerian Association for the Promotion of Adolescent Health and Development, (NAPAHD) has also alerted that, a hospital based research has shown that, 80 per cent of patients with abortion complications are adolescents. This assertion was based on the fact that, over 16 per cent of teenage females reported first sexual intercourse by age 15 while 8.3 per cent of boys of age 15 have also had their first encounters. This adolescents' health dilemma has been attributed to their great lack of information and knowledge about the implications of their population behaviour on their sexual health and the general welfare of the nation. In this vain the introduction and institutionalisation of sexuality education became one of the immediate efforts made to address this problem to create awareness about these sexually based problems. The rational was to acquaint the youth with factual and accurate sexual information about the dimensions of sexual knowledge that will enable them understand and clarify their personal values, improve their sexual knowledge and sexual decision-making and promote their knowledge about how all these interact with socio-cultural and religious factors to affect personal well-being. (Adepoju, 2005).

However, several studies in Nigeria have reported conflicting interests of parents and teachers toward sexuality education in schools. In the context of Calabar south local government area of Cross River State, Nigeria, no document on Perception of students, teachers and parents towards sexuality education in schools have been found. Hence, it is with this context that this study was necessitated.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Specifically to:

1. Examine the relationship between sexuality education and reduction of teenage pregnancy among students in public schools in Calabar South Local Government Area.
2. Find out the perception of students on sexuality education in the reduction of teenage pregnancy in Calabar South Local Government Area.
3. Assess the attitude of the students on the use of sexuality education in reduction of teenage pregnancy in Calabar South Local Government Area.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

1. There is no significant relationship between sexuality education and the reduction of teenage pregnancy among students.
2. Students' perception of sexuality education does not significantly influence the reduction of teenage pregnancy.
3. Students' attitude towards sexuality education does not significantly influence the reduction of teenage pregnancy.

METHODOLOGY

Survey design was adopted for this study to ascertain if sexuality education has any impact in the reduction of teenage pregnancy among students.

The choice of survey for this study becomes necessary because the researcher was interested in the accurate assessment of the characteristics of the whole populations of people and observing what is happening to the variables under investigation without attempting to control or manipulate them. The population consist of students of all public schools in Calabar South Local Government Area.

It is situated in the southern part of Cross River State. Its headquarters are in the town of Anantigha. It has an area of 264 km² with an estimated population of 191,630 (NPC, 2006). Calabar south has 12 political wards and lies in the coastal area empty into the Atlantic ocean and located between latitude 4⁰55 and 8⁰30 East of the Green Meridian. It is bounded by Calabar river to the west, Akpabuyo local government area to the east, Odukpani local government area to the north and Atlantic ocean to the south. The three dominant ethnic groups are the Efiks, Quas and the Efuts which share common culture and religion. English and Efik are the languages widely spoken. Christians are predominantly across the area with few Muslims and traditional religious groups. Most occupants of the area are civil servants, businessmen, farmers and traders. Infrastructure such as schools, market, health facilities, etc. is built across the area.

The sampling techniques adopted in the study involved purposive sampling which was used in selecting the twelve (12) secondary schools and stratified sampling technique was later used in order to determine the total percentage of sample to be drawn from each school.

Table 1.

S/N	Name of schools selected	Population	Percentage from each school	Sample
1.	Government Secondary School Uwanse.	820	10%	82
2.	Atu government secondary school	789	10%	78
3.	Peak Margaret commercial secondary school	584	10%	57
4.	Government secondary school Anantigha	656	10%	65
5.	Idang Government secondary school	672	10%	57
TOTAL		3521	10%	350
			Total sample	350

Source: Field survey, 2016.

The instrument adopted for the study was a set of questionnaire which consist of 20 items questions. The questionnaire was divided into two sections; section A and B. Section A consist of six items questions demographic data, while section B consist of its questions on home based record and its effect on the health of the people of Ikom Local government Area.

The 200 copies of the questionnaire were personally distributed to the selected communities for completion.

Reliability refers to the degree of consistency that an instrument demonstrates in what it does. The reliability of the instrument was tested by the consistency of the respondents which was evaluated by repeated pilot testing. That is the researcher gave some group of the respondents in those communities the questionnaire to complete and after two weeks interval, the same questionnaire were given again to the same group of people to complete and the result was the same.

The scores for each set of questionnaire were collected and analysed.

Validity of the research instrument was determined in consultation with the project supervisor. The supervisor certified that the instrument was valid after some amendments or inputs

Two hundred copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents from the research area. The completed 200 copies of the questionnaire were returned, representing 100% success. Data were extracted from the questionnaire for analysis.

The data collected from the respondent were first represented in a tabular form to show the percentage responses from the questions.

The data analysed using chi-square statistical test at 0.05 level of significance. The questionnaire was edited and data collected for complete eligibility and consistency

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Testing of hypothesis

The hypothesis formulated was tested using appropriate statistics. The result is presented below:

Hypothesis 1:

H₀: That sexuality education does not significantly influence reduction of teenage pregnancy among students.

Question: Does sexuality education influence teenage pregnancy reduction?

Table 2: Observed and expected frequency

Research Item	Is there any relationship between sexuality education and teenage pregnancy reduction?				Total
	Agreed	(E)	Disagreed	(E)	
Male	217	(208)	72	(81)	289
Female	35	(44)	26	(17)	61
Total	252		98		350

Source: Questionnaire, 2016.

X^2 calculated value = 8.39. X^2 tabulated value of 3.84,

Hypothesis 2:

H₀: Students' perception of sexuality education does not significantly influence the reduction of teenage pregnancy.

Question : Does the perception of students towards the use of sexuality education in the reduction of teenage pregnancy yield positive results?

Table 3: Observed and expected frequency

Research Item	Does the perception of students towards the use of sexuality education in the reduction of teenage pregnancy yield positive results?				Total
	Agreed	(E)	Disagreed	(E)	
Male	83	(122)	109	(70)	192
Female	139	(100)	19	(58)	158
Total	222		128		350

X^2 calculated value = 75.62 . X^2 tabulated value of 3.84,

Hypothesis 3:

H₀: Students' attitude towards sexuality education does not significantly influence the reduction of teenage pregnancy.

Question : Does students' attitude towards the use of sexuality education help in the reduction of teenage pregnancy?

Table 4: Observed and expected frequency in relation to question 18

Research Item	Does students' attitude towards the use of sexuality education help in the reduction of teenage pregnancy?				Total
	Agreed	(E)	Disagreed	(E)	
Male	201	(158)	37	(80)	238
Female	31	(74)	81	(38)	112
Total	232		118		350

χ^2 calculated value = 108.46 . χ^2 tabulated value of 3.84,

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Based on the findings of the study, it was shown in hypothesis one which states that there is a significant relationship between sexuality education and the reduction of teenage pregnancy among students. This findings is supported by Steinberg (1996), sexuality education aims to reduce risks of potentially negative outcomes from sexual behaviour such as teenage pregnancy and equips learners with life skills. Forrester (2009), sexuality education is a means by which students are being helped to protect themselves against abuse, exploitation, unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. Also, Orji and Esimai (2003) mention that a majority of parents, teachers and students supported that sex education should be introduced in school curriculum and it will help prevent unwanted pregnancies, parental transmission of HIV/AIDS infections and enhance healthy relationship between opposite sex. It would also provide the knowledge of sex interactions, consequences and responsibilities.

It was discovered from hypothesis two that Students' perception of sexuality education does significantly influence the reduction of teenage pregnancy. These point of view is further supported by Kirby D. (2005) and Agampodl (2008). Who from their study in revealed that lack of knowledge among youngsters results in low self-confidence and psychological distress, especially with regard to masturbation practices and menstruation periods, pregnancy all leading to improper perception in students.

Findings from hypothesis three revealed that Students' attitude towards sexuality education significantly influence the reduction of teenage pregnancy.

This finding is supported by (Eko, 2013), who asserted that the attitude of this young people is critical to the effectiveness of sexuality education in the reduction of teenage pregnancy. Adepoju (2005) expresses that accurate information enables the individual to think critically and make sound decisions rather than nurturing negative attitude and also take responsibility for sexual health.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and facts made in the course of this study, it is concluded that sexuality education influence the reduction teenage pregnancy effectively in Calabar south local government area .Also, perception, attitude of students are positive. Thus, the benefits of sexuality education aid the reduction teenage pregnancy in Calabar south local government area. In conclusion, it suffices to say that there is utmost need for the government, state ministry of health and the administration of Calabar south local government area, to vigorously make every attempt to identify such issues as; Inadequate enlightenment programmes, inadequate counselling, lack of good rapport between teachers, parents and students, sexual indiscipline, poor understanding and approach to sexuality education which are the stronger factors responsible for the ineffectiveness of sexuality education and proffer solution to the setbacks and failings associated with sexuality education in Calabar south local government area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made with a view to improve the effectiveness of sexuality education and consequently the sexual and reproductive health of students in secondary schools of Calabar south local government area:

1. Adequate enlightenment programmes should be provided on sexuality education and teenage pregnancy in all schools. Governments, NGOs and school authorities should therefore help strengthen enlightenment programmes on sex misuse and abuse.
2. Teachers responsible for sex education should be retrained for proper understanding and implementation of the best approach to sexuality education, taking into consideration the Nigeria cultural heritage.
3. Teenage sex is the most predominant students' problems. Propagandas of safe sex should be more concerned with educating adolescents and adults on the dangers of premarital sex than distributing condoms.
4. That the government should re-evaluate the existing sexual health services and should make them more young-people-friendly.
5. Adequate counselling programmes should be provided for pregnant students. They should be discouraged from abortion, except in case of medical necessity. The school authorities and their parents should help process them to deliver and continue their education.

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