



**SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS’
PERCEPTION ON INCLUSION OF KNOWLEDGE BASED
ON SEX EDUCATION AND TEACHER’S ATTITUDE
TOWARDS BIOLOGY CURRICULUM IN LOKOJA
METROPOLIS
BY**

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Abstract

The study examined senior secondary students’ perception on inclusion of knowledge based sex education and teachers’ attitude into Biology curriculum in Lokoja metropolis. A descriptive survey design was employed with a target population of all senior secondary Biology students and teachers in Lokoja metropolis. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to involve 150 students and 50 teachers that participated in the study. A researcher developed questionnaires, validated by experts from measurement and evaluation and science education department yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.82 and 0.73 which was used for data collection. Simple percentages and mean were used to answer the research questions. The study found that senior secondary school students possess good knowledge and perception of sex education and their teachers have good knowledge on how to teach sex education if included in the curriculum by the developers. The study recommended that sex education should be taught at all levels of education especially secondary level across state and teachers should be trained on regular bases to maintain the tempo.

Keywords: Knowledge, based, perception, curriculum, inclusion, sex, education

Introduction

In the Nigerian today, issues of sex are hardly ever discussed with secondary school students. Parents in most cases, appear to be



seriously opposed on passing such information to their children. This is because they assumed that such issues might make students/youth to be morally loosed but in recent times, as a result of technological advancement. Students have on their own acquired such concealed information from the social media and this seems to have exposed some of the youths to sexual promiscuity which could affect their academic performance generally. This is because they want to experiment on anything new they see around them whether negatively or positively. There appears to be increase in teenage pregnancy, contracting of sexually diseases such as gonorrhoea, syphilis, Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV), and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). This is where the teaching of sex education comes in with its inclusion into the curriculum at the secondary school level and to be taught by the secondary school teachers with positive attitude. Attitude is a feeling or opinion about something or someone or a way of behaving that is caused by it. The effective attitude and actions employed by teachers ultimately can make a positive difference on the lives of their students. Teachers can discuss what they should or should not do with a class of students (Subburaji Manoji & Sasikaka(2017). Teachers are role models and credible sources of information for students (Onoyase, 2018). It is therefore desirable that sex education is integrated into secondary school curriculum to assist students in comprehending crucial aspect of human sexuality.

Toor (2020) stated that sex education is a lifelong process of building a strong foundation for sexual health through acquiring information and forming attitudes, beliefs and values about identity, relationships and intimacy. Toor (2020) stressed that sex education encompasses about reproductive health, reproductive rights and responsibilities, sexual abstinence, anatomy of human sex, reproduction and other aspects of human sexual behaviors. The concept of sex education and its introduction to students and adolescents has witnessed many controversies and misconceptions by many teachers, parents, society, and students Sevanemner, Amina, Robles & Greene (2015). Sex education is seen as education about human sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexual intercourse, reproductive health, emotional relations, reproductive rights and responsibilities, abstinence, contraception, family planning, body image, sexual orientation, sexual pleasure, values, decision making, communication, dating, relationships,



sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and how to avoid them, and birth control methods.

There have been a lot of challenges in the introduction of sex education in senior secondary schools in Nigeria. These challenges may not be unconnected with the socio-cultural beliefs and religious dogmatism especially in the Muslim's dominated areas with the northern part of the country (Mustapha, Abdullahi & Kawu, 2018). Mustapha, et.al. (2018) further explained that sex education has not been directly introduced in Nigerian schools but some courses dealing with sex education were introduced at the tertiary institutions in Nigeria only and are modified to be called family life issues. It is indisputably true that rapid population growth among this group of students, who are virtually young adolescents with a high level of sexual desire demand urgent attention (Mustapha, et.al., 2018).

Onoyanse (2018) stated that, issues of sex are hardly ever discussed with children. Nigerian parents in most cases, appear to be seriously opposed to passing such information to their children early. This is because they believed that such issues might make youths to be morally loosed. But in recent times, as a result of technological advancement especially in the area of information and communication technology (ICT) the secondary school teachers have on their own acquired such concealed information from higher schools, social media and this seems to have exposed some of the youths to sexual promiscuity Zulu, Blystad, Haaland, Michelo, Sasikada (2019). This is because they want to experiment on anything new. There appears to be an increase in teenage pregnancy, contracting of sex-related diseases such as gonorrhoea, syphilis, human immune deficiency virus (HIV), and acquired immune deficiency syndrome, AIDS (Onoyanse, 2018). Students at the secondary level lack the necessary support system when passing through certain information about sex education especially when they could not get someone to always encourage and listen to them; they are quickly being compelled to consult the internet which is a readily available companion. As good as the internet is, there is also harmful, misleading, and ambiguous information there. Secondary school Students should be given adequate information's about sex education, gone are the days when sexual matters were hidden from students. Questions posed by the students should be answered by teachers to open a wide range of communication because silence or lie telling may cause injury as they assume that



the answers should be contrary to those books and peers. Illicit Sexual desire could result in sexual immorality and pregnancy among secondary schools students hence the need for teachers to educate students on sex education to prevent a more disastrous impact on them. Since adolescent boys and girls deserve to know about sex education, there must be dedicated and knowledgeable teachers who can teach them sex education (Yakubu, Andrew, &Kolawole, 2015). It is necessary to examine the senior secondary students' perception on inclusion of knowledge based sex education in to Biology curriculum in Lokoja metropolis.

Purpose of the Study: The study seeks:

1. To examine Biology students perception of appropriateness on current secondary school curriculum on sex education in Lokoja metropolis
2. To determine the attitudes and perception of teachers on teaching sex education in Lokoja metropolis.

Research Questions

1. What are the senior secondary school Biology students' perceptions of the knowledge based sex education into Biology Curriculum?
2. What is the of knowledge on teaching sex education among senior secondary school teachers in Lokoja metropolis?

Methodology

A descriptive research type was employed by the researcher to collect data. The survey design was considered most appropriate for the study because it would enable the researcher to obtain responses from Biology students and teachers on the topic. The study was carried out in Lokoja metropolis of Kogi State. The target population of the study was all the senior secondary school students and teachers in Lokoja metropolis. Sample was made of 150 respondents from students and 50 from teachers using multistage sampling technique. This technique was adapted because; it involves drawing a sample from a population using smaller groups or units from a large population. Instrument used was a structured questionnaire" titled Secondary School Sex Education and Inclusive Curriculum"(SSSEI CQ), Cronbach Alpha method was used in computing the reliability which yielded 0.82.Simple percentages and mean were used to answer research question.



Results

Research Question 1: What are the senior school students' perceptions on inclusion of knowledge-Based sex education into Biology curriculum in Lokoja Metropolis?

Table 1

Knowledge of Inclusion Curriculum Sex Education on senior Secondary School students in Lokoja metropolis

S/NO		YES (n,%)	NO (n,%)
1	Learning sex education can lead to promiscuity among students	49(67.1)	24(32.9)
2	Discussion of sexual matters should be put off until marriage	48(65.8)	25(34.2)
3	Sex education is a strong strategy for promoting sexual desires	40(54.8)	33(45.2)
4	Sex education is a strong strategy for controlling the spread of sexually transmitted diseases	33(45.2)	40(54.8)
5	Sex education is about teaching students how to have sex without pregnancy	33(45.2)	40(54.8)
6	Sex education is a strategy for controlling overpopulation	73(100.0)	0(0.0)
7	Sex education should be focused on teaching on reproductive parts of the body and their functions	65(89.0)	8(11.0)
8	Sex education should be focused on teaching on pregnancy and birth	65(89.0)	8(11.0)
9	Sex education should be focused on teaching sexual health	33(45.2)	40(54.8)
10	Sex education should be focused on teaching on contraception, importance, and types of contraceptive methods	17(23.3)	56(76.7)
11	Sex education should be focused on teaching on abortion	25(34.2)	48(65.8)
12	Sex education should be focused on teaching on sexual intercourse	33(45.2)	40(54.8)



13	Sex education should involve teaching on puberty	73(100.0)	0(0.0)
14	Sex education should involve teaching anatomy and physiology of genital organs	65(89.0)	8(11.0)
15	Sex education should involve teaching safe sex practice	33(45.2)	40(54.8)
16	Sex education should involve teaching on sexual pleasure and orgasm	17(23.3)	56(76.7)
17	Sex education should involve teaching on abstinence	68(93.2)	5(6.8)

Above 0.60 is good

Research Question2: What are the attitudes and perception of secondary school teachers on teaching sex education in Lokoja metropolis?

Table 3

Attitudes and Perception of Secondary school teachers on Sex Education in Lokoja metropolis

S/N		SA (n,%)	A (n,%)	D (n,%)	SD (n,%)
1	I am familiar with teaching sex education	0(0.0)	41(56.2)	16(21.9)	16(21.9)
2	I can teach my students sex education	0(0.0)	33(45.2)	40(54.8)	0(0.0)
3	Societal attitude to sex education is negative	8(11.0)	57(78.1)	8(11.0)	0(0.0)
4	Sex education is contrary to the teaching of my religion	24(32.9)	49(67.1)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
5	Sex education should be included in the school curriculum	8(11.0)	33(45.2)	32(43.8)	0(0.0)
6	Sex education will expose students to sexual promiscuity	0(0.0)	49(67.1)	24(32.9)	0(0.0)
7	Sex education should only be taught to female students	0(0.0)	16(21.9)	57(78.1)	0(0.0)
8	Sex education should be taught irrespective of gender differences	0(0.0)	41(56.2)	24(32.9)	8(11.0)
9	Sex education is detrimental to the moral behaviors of the students	8(11.0)	48(65.8)	17(23.3)	0(0.0)



10	Parents should strongly oppose the teaching of sex education	0(0.0)	40(54.8)	33(45.2)	0(0.0)
11	I feel embarrassed when students ask me questions related to sexuality	0(0.0)	56(76.7)	17(23.3)	0(0.0)
12	I don't feel comfortable to mention the names penis and vagina when teaching sex education	16(21.9)	40(54.8)	17(23.3)	0(0.0)
13	I often skip topics that deal with the male and female reproductive system	8(11.0)	48(65.8)	17(23.3)	0(0.0)
14	I discouraged my students from asking questions related to sexuality	8(11.0)	40(54.8)	25(34.2)	0(0.0)
15	Religious leaders should strongly oppose the teaching of sex education	0(0.0)	56(76.6)	17(23.3)	0(0.0)
16	I don't like teaching sex education at all	16(21.9)	40(54.8)	17(23.3)	0(0.0)

Discussion of Findings

This study assessed senior secondary students' perception of inclusion of knowledge based sex education into Biology curriculum. About 26.7% of the respondents had poor knowledge about sex education, 30% had fair knowledge while 43% of the respondents had good knowledge. This finding agrees with that of Yakubu, et. al. (2015) which revealed that secondary school students in plateau state possessed a high level of knowledge on sex education. The perception of the respondents is poor as about 0.50-60.0% of the respondent has poor perception; also while 0.60% people were rated to have good perception towards the inclusion of sex education into the curriculum in Lokoja secondary metropolis. Also, the study shows that teachers showed a favourable attitude towards the introduction of sex education into the school curriculum with male teachers offering stronger support

Educational implications

Sex education is a strategy to enhance the quality of the sexual health of the students as it is a significant part of the secondary school students. At this stage, most adolescents are in secondary schools where they are in contact with other students and there is an increased risk of unhealthy sexual exploration as well as the exchange of unwholesome information predisposing the adolescents



to Sexually Transmitted Infections and Diseases, pregnancy, and unsafe abortion. Therefore, information regarding sex education must not be left in the hands of uninformed peers. Teachers, parents can play a role in reinforcing correct sex education at home as well, so that students can make informed decisions especially in Lokoja metropolis.

The role of teachers in ensuring the realization of this goal are is encourage parents as well as religious leaders to gain an understanding of the impact of the correct provision of sex education information, proper dissemination of the content of sex education, and techniques of delivering the education to students in understandable, age-appropriate, language. Teachers on the safety of providing sex education to children early in life as adolescents need to be aware of how to protect themselves from Sexually Transmitted Infections such as the Human Immunodeficiency Virus as well as unintended pregnancy and unsafe abortion.

Conclusion

In this study, the knowledge of the respondents was adequate among the majority but the perception of sex education was poor and inadequate. This may be a hindrance to the promotion of sex education among secondary school students and teachers in Lokoja attending secondary schools as this is hinged on effective sex education. Teachers must become more knowledgeable about sex education and be trained in ways to deliver this teaching without feelings of being embarrassed and without being biased.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made;

1. Sex education should be made compulsory at senior secondary inschools especially Lokoja metropolis.
2. Curriculum designers should include sex education as a compulsory course to qualify teachers to teach sex education at all levels.
3. Teachers in Lokoja should teach age-appropriate comprehensive sex education without any element of prejudice to any aspect of the content at the secondary school level.



4. Secondary school teachers should also strive to create a friendly atmosphere with the students so that they can be properly guided on sex-related issues
5. Secondary school teachers should be exposed to special training, workshops, seminars, and conferences on sex education to update their knowledge.
6. Inclusion and teaching of comprehensive sex education should be made compulsory in schools.

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