

KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE OF SEXUALITY EDUCATION AMONGST ADOLESCENTS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OREDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, EDO STATE

***OSIAN, E.A.,¹ EMINA, A. ¹ AND OMOROGBE E. M. ²**

¹Department of Nursing Science, Faculty of Allied Health and Medical Sciences, Benson Idahosa University, Benin City, Nigeria

²Hospital Management Agency, Stella Obasanjo Hospital, Benin City, Nigeria

*Corresponding author: eosian@biu.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

This research was designed to study the level of awareness of adolescent secondary school students towards sexuality education in Oredo local government area, Edo State. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. Population of the study comprises of all public Senior Secondary School Students in (SS 2) schools in Oredo local government area of Edo State, Taro Yarmane formulae was used to calculate the sample of the study which is 133. Questionnaire was administered to the respondents which were analyzed, grouped into frequency, computed and arranged in tables for easy understanding. The study findings showed that students have good knowledge of the signs and symptoms of STI's. Gonorrhoea, syphilis, and candidacies, these symptoms include swollen glands, persistent cough, bleeding after sex, burning sensation during urinating, body discharge, skin rashes, itching in the vagina, etc. Based on the findings, the study therefore recommends that health educators should mobilize resources and take measures to improve young people's awareness and knowledge about STIs prevention through educational training and guidance to maintain active and healthy lives.

KEYWORDS: *Adolescents, Attitude, Sexuality Education, Knowledge, Public, Secondary School*

INTRODUCTION

The importance of effective sexuality education has been documented especially since 2016 in London, when the Department for Education Employment (DFEE, 2016), provided legislation to support secondary schools with guidance detailing the effective methods to teach sexuality education as a tool for promoting good practice. Sexuality education is a vital aspect of health education

curriculum. It provides factual knowledge to assist parents and teachers, children and adolescents to avoid sex related problems. The knowledge also includes ways of helping children develop self-respect, sexual understanding, define the values of interpersonal relationships and strengthen communication skills in sex and education. This promotes a wholesome and stable sex life (WHO, 2018). It is necessary for parents and teachers to

acquire scientific, social, and psychological understanding of the need for sexuality education. Such instructions, as was given, were traditionally left to a child's parents, and often this was put off until just before a child's marriage. As part of each country's effort to reduce the incidence of teenage pregnancies, sexuality education was instituted, initially after strong opposition from parents and religious groups. Jorgensen (2016) maintains that contemporary adolescents in secondary schools in China have access to formal sexuality education

BIU Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences Vol. 9 No.1 2024

economics and social studies. They also acquire substantial knowledge about sex and love from literature, books, novels, media and the Internet. It would therefore be naïve for adults to object to instructional need for sexuality education for adolescents in schools. Sexuality education is taught informally, such as when someone receives information from a conversation with a parent, friend, religious leader, or through the media.

The sexual behaviour of adolescents in most cases is influenced by their orientations, and these issues of social control such as age of consent laws. In humans, mature sexual desires begin to appear with the onset of puberty, sexual expression can take the form of masturbation or sex with a partner. Human sexual behaviours encompass the search for a partner or partner's emotional intimacy, and sexual contact (WHO, 2018). In Nigeria, the evolution of sexuality education and its introduction in Nigerians' schools became apparent as there was an urgent need to address adolescents' reproductive health, sexual rights, and sexuality issues (Adepoju, 2015). The increasing need for sexuality

education is also premised on the increasing health risk of adolescents who constitute over 36% of the Nigerian population. By nature, adolescents are susceptible to unplanned sex, unprotected sex, sexual coercion, sexual violence, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV because they are uninformed or poorly informed about the implications of their reproductive behaviour and health risk especially from underage sexual practices and other anti-social practices. The Nigerian government approved the inclusion for comprehensive sexuality education (Madunagu, 2015).

Esu (2015) and Isangedighi (2015) noted that the teaching of sexuality education to adolescents has continued to pose as a problem in Nigeria because both literate and illiterate parents share the same cultural and religious beliefs. Both Christian and Islamic religion as well as some ethnic groups in Nigeria forbids the teaching of sexually related matters to adolescents who are not married because they believe that discussing sexuality related matters will make them promiscuous since they might want to experiment what is been told to them. However, Sipalan and Majawat (2016) in their survey indicated that students do not know how to protect themselves from sexual predators, reckless behaviour, and sexually transmitted diseases (STD), as they obtain inadequate information about sexuality in public schools, which generally only teach basic facts about reproduction in science courses. Sexuality education is very important to adolescents and our secondary schools is the place where young boys and girls are trained both in character and in learning (Herman, 2017) but suffice is to say that sex,

abortion, teenage pregnancy, and other juvenile delinquent behaviours have made the above objective unrealistic considering the likelihood that adolescents in secondary schools in Benin City may not be an exception.

It is against this background that it becomes important to ascertain the knowledge of sexuality education amongst adolescents in secondary schools in Oredo local government area Edo State.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Research Design

A descriptive cross-sectional study was adopted for this study. Descriptive survey is aimed at collecting data specifically on the opinions, attitudes, and views of the subjects on sexually transmitted infections. A descriptive survey according to Nworgu (2016) are those studies which aim at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner, the characteristics features or facts about a given population.

Study Area

The study was carried out at Oredo local government area of Edo State which comprises of so many communities Oredo is a Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria. Benin City is the headquarter of Oredo L.G.A and also of Edo State. Benin City remains the capital city of the Benin Empire. The Oba of Benin Omo N'Oba Ewuare II's palace is also located here, and many historic palaces and buildings are located in this city. It has an area of 249 km² and a population of 374,671 at the 2006 census (National Population Commission, 2006). The postal code of the area is 300. The Executive Chairman of the Local Government Council is Hon. Evbareke Jenkins

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprise of all public Senior Secondary School Students in (SS 2) schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. Their population is about 2,150 students.

Sample Size

The sample of the study will be calculated using Taro Yarmane formular. Two hundred (200) senior secondary school students were randomly selected from (10) senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State using 20% base of total number of students in each class.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n = Sample size to be determined

N = Population

1 = Fixed Numerical Factor

e = margin of error usually 5%

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{200}{1 + 200(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{200}{1 + 200(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{200}{1 + 0.5}$$

$$n = \frac{200}{1.5}$$

attrition = 133

$$n = 133 + 10\%$$

Table 1: Distribution of sample secondary schools in Benin city

S/N	School	No. of Male Students	No. of Female Students	Total
1	Idia College	0	250	250
2	Emotan College	0	171	171
3	Imaguero College	0	158	158
4	Adesuwa Girls Grammar College	0	205	205
5	Edokpolor Grammar School	188	0	188
6	Akenzua Mixed Sec. Sch.	120	115	169
7	Immaculate Conception College	191	0	152
8	Ihogbe College	181	195	376
9	Lucia Secondary School	115	151	266
10	Oredo Girls School	0	215	215

Table 2: Distribution of students by gender

S/N	School	No. of Male Students	No. of Female Students	Total
1	Idia College	0	25	25
2	Emotan College	0	23	23
3	Imaguero College	0	23	23
4	Adesuwa Girls Grammar College	0	20	20
5	Edokpolor Grammar School	22	0	22
6	Akenzua Mixed Sec. Sch.	10	12	22
7	Immaculate Conception College	24	0	24
8	Ihogbe College	10	9	19
9	Lucia Secondary School	8	12	20
10	Oredo Girls School	0	20	19

Sampling Technique

Simple random sampling technique was used for this study.

Research Instrument

A structured questionnaire was used for collecting data for this study. The instrument is divided into five sections (A-E). Section A is on respondent’s demographic data like school, age, sex and class. Section B is on level of knowledge of sex education amongst adolescents, section C is on attitude of students towards sex education, section C is on the challenges of students towards’ sex education, while section D is on students perception of adolescents toward sex education in public secondary school. Section E is on the challenges of sex

education in public secondary school. Each of the section have questions, comprising of items with a Likert five-point rating scale thus, Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Undecided provided for the respondents to make their responses to the set questions.

Method of Data Analysis

The data was collected using questionnaires, analyzed using simple percentages, bar and pie charts to ensure adequate interpretation of data. The items on the questionnaire will be classified based on the responses given by the respondents and arranged easy usage of the chi square technique. Chi square technique will be used to test the hypotheses.

Ethical Consideration

The ethical consideration was based on the protection of the research respondents from any physical, mental or social harm and thus maintaining their integrity as well as the purity of the research work itself. Permission was taken from the ethical committee of the Ministry of Education. The respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity of information provided and was assured that

information collected was for academic purpose only and had the right to refuse participation at any stage of the study. All respondents gave their consent to participate before actual collection of data.

RESULT

The socio-demographic characteristics of the responds for the study are shown in table 3 below.

Table 3: Demographic data of respondent

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	65	48.8
Female	68	51.2
Parental Marital Status		
Single	49	41.8
Married	40	30.5
Divorced	18	13.5
Widowed/Widower	26	20.5
Age		
13 – 15 years	46	34.5
16 – 18 years	69	51.8
18 - above	18	13.5
Social Class		
High	46	34.5
Moderate	35	29.4
Low	52	39.2
Educational Level		
SS1	35	27.2
SSII	70	49.2
SSIII	28	17.2
Source of Information		
Media	25	14.2
Parents	91	75.3
Others	17	10.5

The table above shows that majority of the respondents were male with 51.2% (68) and female 48.8% (65) while for the age categories 34.5% (46) of the respondents were between the age range of 10-13yrs old, 51.8% (69), 14-17yrs old and 13.5% (18) were between the age range of 18 and above. For marital status,

30.5% (40) of the respondents were married, 41.8% (49) of the respondents were single, 13.5% (18) were divorced and 20.5% (26) of the respondents were widows. This shows that majority of the respondents were single.

The table above also shows that 27.2% (35) of the respondents are SS1 students,

49.2% (70) are SS2 students, while 17.2% (28) of the respondents are students of SS3. This shows that majority of the respondents are SS2 students; for religion, all the respondents were Christians and for their source of information, the table shows that 14.2% (25) of the respondents get information from media, 75.3% (91) from their parents, while 10.5% (17) from

other sources like friends, pastors, etc. This shows that majority of the respondents get information from their parents.

Data Analysis on Psychographic Information

The analysis of the response of the students to all the psychographic information is shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: Psychographic information of respondents

Do you know about sexually transmitted infections?		
	Frequency	%
Yes	115	89.6
No	18	10.4
Undecided	-	-
HIV is the most common sexually transmitted infection		
Yes	110	85.8
No	23	14.2
Undecided	-	-
I know the signs and symptoms of STIs		
Yes	75	55.3
No	53	43.7
Undecided	-	-
Do you know that sexually transmitted infections may cause infertility?		
Yes	85	61.7
No	21	18.3
Undecided	27	22.4
Are you familiar with knowledge on use of contraceptives?		
Yes	98	73.9
No	35	26.1
Undecided	-	-
Sex education amongst secondary student helps students to know more about their sexual life		
Strongly Agree	35	26.3
Agree	78	58.6
Disagree	15	11.2
Strongly Disagree	5	3.7
Familiarity with TV shows that encourage abstinence		
Strongly Agree	54	40.6
Agree	62	46.6
Disagree	17	12.7
Strongly Disagree	-	-
Familiarity with subjects that enlighten one on changes that occur during puberty		
Strongly Agree	65	48.8
Agree	51	38.3
Disagree	9	6.7
Strongly Disagree	8	6.0
I have ideal about avoiding sharp objects		
Agree	75	56.3

Strongly Agree	42	31.5
Strongly Disagree	9	6.7
Disagree	7	5.2
Are you familiar with sex education on pregnancy and childbirth?		
Strongly Agree	35	26.3
Agree	78	58.6
Disagree	15	11.2
Strongly Disagree	5	3.7
Sex education helps promotes responsible sexual culture		
Strongly Agree	62	46.6
Agree	54	40.6
Disagree	17	12.7
Strongly Disagree	-	-
Sex education is very good in preventing sexually transmitted infections (STIs) because condoms are not effective at protecting against STIs		
Strongly Agree	72	54.1
Agree	48	38.3
Disagree	6	4.5
Strongly Disagree	7	5.2
Sex education make students knows that unclean toilets and bathrooms can cause STI's		
Strongly Agree	55	41.3
Agree	45	33.8
Disagree	21	15.7
Strongly Disagree	12	9.0
Sexual education sometimes encourages oral and anal sex as alternatives		
Strongly Agree	95	84.0
Agree	38	16.0
Disagree	-	-
Strongly Disagree	-	-
Sexual education discourages condom use and increases risk		
Strongly Agree	76	57.1
Agree	53	39.8
Disagree	1	0.7
Strongly Disagree	2	1.4
I am shy when I am being taught sexuality education		
Strongly Agree	37	27.8
Agree	56	42.1
Disagree	25	18.7
Strongly Disagree	16	12.0
Lack of proper teaching and in-depth study makes it difficult to learn about sexuality education		
Strongly Agree	58	43.6
Agree	61	45.8
Disagree	8	6.0
Strongly Disagree	6	4.5
Sexuality education most times exposes young adolescents to unprotected sexual activities		
Strongly Agree	75	56.3
Agree	41	30.8
Disagree	8	6.0
Strongly Disagree	9	6.7

DISCUSSION

The results in tables showed that, majority of the respondents have heard about STIs. The types of STIs known to the respondents were gonorrhea syphilis, HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B, Chlamydia, and Herpes. Majority knew that sexual intercourse is the transmission route of STIs. This implies that the student in Oredo Local Government Area has a good knowledge of STIs. This may be attributed to the widespread use of technology, social media and schools. The results are in keeping with Ukwani (2013) that report high level of knowledge of STIs among secondary school students. Also, in line with the findings is study by Visalli et al (2014) where 74% and 60% of respondents gave correct answers about STIs. Also, in consonance with the study are findings of Al-Naggar and Al-Jashamy (2015) where 73% had knowledge of STIs and 65% knew causes of STDs. Also, in line with the study is Adeniyi and Okewole (2017) which reported that 93% of respondents had knowledge of STDs. Similarly, Fageeh (2018) reported that common sources of information about STDs were mass media and school.

Conclusively, the result showed that the knowledge of sexually transmitted infection among secondary school students in Oredo local government area of Edo State was high. There was no significant influence of gender and age on student's knowledge of sexually transmitted infection among secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. In consonance with the findings are studies by Oluyemi *et al.* (2017) which reported non-significant influence of age on knowledge of STDs. Similarly, Mwambete and Mtaturu (2016)

discovered that older age was associated with knowledge of STI among students in Dar es Salaam ($p < 0.001$). However, in contrast with the findings are studies carried out by Visalli *et al.* (2014) which reported that younger people had a limited knowledge of STDs. Similarly, Masaukar and Naikwadi (2016) reported that older students were more aware of STDs than younger students. In the same vein, Anwar *et al.* (2017) recorded a significant association between age and knowledge of STIs among students in Pulau Pinag ($P = 0.005$). The difference in results of the study may be attributed to the year in which other studies were carried out and advancement in learning and exposure to social media.

Implication of the Study

The study has implication for the students, health workers and parents. The study has shown that the students are not adequately informed on the signs and symptoms of some STIs like trichomoniasis, genital wart, genital herpes, and chancroid. Therefore, health workers will now know that more awareness need to be created in Oredo local government on STIs. Also, the study has implication for the students as has been shown, the study lacks knowledge of symptoms of chancroid, genital warts, genital herpes and trichomoniasis. The students should be careful so as not to be infected with some of these deadly STIs.

CONCLUSION

This study has been able to access the knowledge and attitude of sex education among senior secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The study was conducted among SS1, SS2 and SS3 students in public

schools in Oredo local government of Edo State precisely.

The study concludes that students in Oredo Local Government have a fair knowledge of sex education. It suggests that government and relevant organizations should reach out wider to schools and engage in mass enlightenment programmes for students in rural areas in other for them to have adequate knowledge of the problem. It also suggests that parents and the extended family should also intensify their efforts in educating their adolescents on this menace.

The result showed that the knowledge of sexually transmitted infection among secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State was high. There was no significant influence of gender and age on student's knowledge of sexually transmitted infection among secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the finding of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- Health educators should mobilize resources and take measures to improve young people's awareness and knowledge about STIs prevention through educational training and guidance to maintain active and healthy lives.
- Health care workers should intensify awareness campaign programmes on ways to identify situations that can increase susceptibility to STIs.
- There is the need for future interventions by stakeholders to re-strategize behaviour change mechanisms to curb the spread of STIs among adolescents and youths.

- It is also recommended that seminars and workshops should be organized, awareness through pamphlets and leaflets to intensify effort in assisting the students know the dangers of sexually transmitted diseases.
- More control methods for the STIs should be brought to the knowledge of the students.

REFERENCES

- Adeniyi, W. O. and Okewole, J. O. (2014). The influence of knowledge and awareness of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) in change in sexual behaviour of fresh undergraduates of the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. *World Journal of Education*, 4(3): www.science.ca/wje
- Adepoju, A. (2015). Sexuality education in Nigeria; challenges and prospects. <https://www.sennnatischolar.ng>corpus155076217>
- Al-Naggar, R. H. and Al-Jashamy, R. (2011). Perception of undergraduates university students towards sexually transmitted diseases (STDs); a qualitative study. *Journal of Men's Health Supplement* 587-90. [https://doi.org/101016/S1875-6867\(II\)60031-69](https://doi.org/101016/S1875-6867(II)60031-69)
- Anwar, M., Sulaiman, S. A., Ahmadi, R. and Khan, T. M. (2010). Awareness of school students on (STIs) and their sexual behaviour; a cross sectional study conducted in Ralau Pinang, Malaysia. *BMC Public Health*, 10: 47.
- Department For Education and Employment (DFEE, 2016). In: Riddel R. (2023). In schooling in a

- democracy. Bristol, UK policy press.
<https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447362951.bmoos>
- Esu, A. E. O. (2015). Sex education in Nigerian schools. In D. N. Nwachukwu (ed) (2010). Contemporary issues in Nigerian education and development. Enugu: Sam & Star Group of Company
- Fageeh, M. C., Stacks, J., Hutter, E. and Syster, L. (2010). Promoting implementation of a school district sexual health education policy through academic community partnership. *PH Reproductive Health*, 125(2) 352-358. doi: 10.1177/003335491012500227
PMCID:PMC2821868/PMID20297764
- Herman, E. (2017). National sexuality education standards. National school climate survey: the experience of lesbians, gay and bisexual. https://siecus.org>2020/03http://www.nst.com.my/Current_News/NST/articles/12bees/Article/index_html
- Isangedighi, A. I. (2015). Adolescents' sexuality in Nigerian society. In D. N. Nwachuka (ed) (2011). Contemporary issues in Nigeria education and development. Enugu: Sam & Star Group of Company.
- Jorgensen, J. (2016). The best of adult sexuality education. <https://www.pathos.com>
- Madunagu, B. E. (2015). Empowering Youths through sexuality education: the challenges and opportunities. Understanding Human Sexuality Seminar Series 3. Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Centre.
- Madunagu, G. C. (2005). Empowering youths through sexuality education; the challenges and opportunities in Africa. Regional sexuality resource centre. <https://citeserxist.psu.edu>
- Masawkar, S. P. and Naikwadi, A. M. (2016). Awareness of STDs in college students. *Journal of contemporary Medicine and Dentistry*, 4(2): 15-18
- Mwanbete, K. D. and Mtaturu, Z. (2006). Knowledge of STDs among Senior Secondary School in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. *African Health Science*, 6(3): 165-169.
- Nworgu, B. G. (2015). Educational research-based issues and methodology (3rd ed.) Enugu; University Trust Pub.
- Olusegun, J. A., Yinusa, M. A., Abdulateef, R., Kehinde, K. and Adegoke, J. (2017). Parental influence an adolescent sexual behaviour among senior secondary students in Ogbomosho, Nigeria. *African Journal of Social Work*, 7(1): ISSN online 2409-5605
- Oluyemi, J. A., Yinusa, M. A., Abdullateef, R. and Sunday, A. (2015). Knowledge of sexually transmitted diseases among secondary school adolescents in Asa local government area of Kwara state. *African Sociological Review*, 19(1): 63-76.
- Omolade, L. (2016), Prostitution and AIDS virus. Lagos: Vanguard News Papers. December 18 p. 26.
- Sipalan, J. and Majawat, E. (2009). Sex education as subject maybe in future, says D-G. Retrieved September 25, 2015, from
- Ukweni, A., Ezebuoro, U. F., Emuchang, N. K., Ibeh, C. C., Eluwa, J. R. and

- Onwere, S. (2013). Knowledge of STD among secondary school students in Osioma Ngwa LGA, Abia State, Nigeria. *Abia State University Medical Studies Association Journal*, 8(1): 2013/Article, African Journal online
- Vasalli, G., Picerno, I., Vita, G., Spatero, P. and Berticchio, M. P. (2014). Knowledge of STIs among younger subjects of the city of Messina (Sicily). *Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 55(1): 17-22.
- WHO (2018). International technical guidance on sexuality education; An evidence-informed approach. ISBN:978-92-3-100259-5
- WHO (2016) Adolescent Health Programme. Counselling skills training in adolescent sexuality and reproductive health – a facilitator’s guide. Geneva: