

# African Research Review

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*International Multidisciplinary Journal, Ethiopia*

*Vol. 5 (5), Serial No. 22, October, 2011*

ISSN 1994-9057 (Print)

ISSN 2070--0083 (Online)

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/afrrv.v5i5.32>

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## **Secondary School Students Preferences for Instructional Strategies for Sex Education (Pp. 404-411)**

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### **Abstract**

*Sex is a very sensitive topic and considered a taboo in the Nigerian society. Yet, value pertaining to discipline in sexual attitude among adolescent is gradually being eroded. There is a prevalence of illicit sex, homosexual behaviour and lesbianism, teenage pregnancy etc among our teenagers. These are pointers to the fact that there is need for emphasis on sexuality education. This study was conducted to find out the preference of secondary school students towards instructional and evaluation strategies of sex education. Using the multi- stage random sampling technique, 600 students between the ages of 13 to 18 years, were selected for the study. Data were collected using a questionnaire and analysed using descriptive statistical techniques. The analysis and findings revealed that subjects (79.3%) would prefer the multidisciplinary approach involving various professionals to the single subject teacher approach. More than 70% of the students want multimodal approach to assessment.*

### **Introduction**

Lack of the basic knowledge about sex education on the part of parents and their off- springs could result in sexual maladjustment and sex related crime in the society. Sex mania is a product of inadequate or ill-informed idea on the debts and purposes of sex (Burt & Meeks, 1975). Despite the many benefits of sexuality education, sex education in Nigeria, has continually

faced steep opposition. This is perhaps due to lack of a clear understanding of what sex and sexuality education mean. This stems from the widespread misconception that sexuality is all about issues related to sexual intercourse. The problem of low self-esteem and self-worth due to poor socioeconomic background and lack of sexuality information is another limiting factor in the current state of sex education. Effective sexual communication has remained difficult, elusive and almost unattainable in Nigeria. This is because free, open and relaxed communication about sexual topics between adults and the adolescent particularly, parents and their adolescent children are not permitted (Momodu, 2010) According to (Adepoju 2005) matters of sex are usually left for only specific occasions such as traditional ceremonies as the coming of age. Parents and guardians in most parts of the world often react negatively and sometimes violently to the ideal of introducing sex education into the secondary school curriculum. Such negative reaction cut across cultures, tribes, race and religious dispositions (Momodu, 2010; Adepoju 2005). In a pluralistic society like ours, attitude about adolescent sexuality differ not only by ethnicity, socio-economic, religion and geographic regions, but, also vary widely within individual families and communities.

Sex education also described as "sexuality education," encompasses education about all aspects of sexuality, including information about family planning, reproduction (fertilization, conception and development of the embryo and foetus, through to childbirth). It also centres on information about all aspects of one's sexuality which includes body image, sexual orientation, sexual pleasure, dating, relationships, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and birth control methods. This goes to show that sexuality is a natural part of life. It is about the way we are made, how we feel about ourselves, what roles we play in the society and how we procreate. It is in this vein that sexual education may be seen as providing individuals the knowledge necessary to liberate them from socially organized sexual oppression. Against this background, Momodu (2010) is of the opinion that the post primary school years of the growing child are not only just impressionable but quite inquisitive too. As a result, sex education at this level becomes more imperative and fundamental. This counters the schools of thought that hold the position that the adolescents will learn about sexual matters anywhere, anyhow not necessarily as a subject. Omatseye (2007) believes that a position like that could lead adolescent to gather wrong facts from misguided sources. The need for sexuality education becomes

imperative noting the wide spread rate of sex related diseases. According to the United Nations Population Report, today's generation of young people (15 to 24 years) is the highest in history, notably too, it is in the same group that increased rates of HIV infection is found. The alarming rate is a global concern for reproductive sexual health.

Specifically Momodu (2010), Omatseye (2007), Eruesegbefe (2005), have observed that obscene and pornographic materials are on sale in the open market, while sex is sold, bought and exchanged or as favours. This may account for the increased menace of poor sexual habits and sex related diseases and immoral acts. This high rate of moral laxity and sexual promiscuity in the society may be blamed on the home, the school and the community for their failure in meeting the needs of youths and adolescents. It is in this context that, it becomes very important for the government through the schools to intensify educational efforts in sex education. The crux of this study is what instructional approaches do students consider more or less effective for learning sexuality education? What assessment techniques are more or less favoured for sexuality lessons by students?

### **Methodology**

The study was designed to assess Secondary School Students preference for Instructional Strategies and evaluation techniques for sex education. A descriptive survey approach was adopted. The instrument employed in this study was a self administered- questionnaire.

### **Participants**

The population consist of 600 JSS3, SSS1 and SSS2 students in Benin City. These students whose ages are between 13 and 18 years are fair representations of the adolescents. The random sampling technique was used in the selection of students for this study. The purpose was to ensure equal chances of being selected for each student. However because school and classrooms were also involved, a multistage random sampling procedure was conveniently applied. Two all male schools, two all female schools and two Co- Education schools were thus selected from among all the schools in Benin City.

### **Instrument**

The instrument employed in this study was a self administered questionnaire. Section A to obtain personal information such as type of school, class, age, sex, home background (parents/guardians socio-economic). Section B

focuses on the methodology of instruction and Section C elicits information on how learners should be evaluated at the end of instruction.

### **Results and conclusion**

The study population of 600 students consist of 300(50%) male and 300(50%) female. The result showed that 476(83.5%) preferred being taught sexuality education by resource persons- nurses, medical doctors and psychologist. This most preferred approach may also be linked to the viewpoint on sex education historically inspired by sexologist like Wilhelm Reich, psychologist like Sigmund Freud and James W. Prescott holds that what is at stake in sex education is control over the body and liberation from social control, and these students perhaps may have a greater confidence in the resource persons due to their wealth of experience and provide knowledge to liberate the individual from social organised sexual oppression and to make up his or her mind. Instructional approach to sexuality education giving by health science/health education teachers is the second highly rated with 437(77.3%). This highly approved rating may be due to the fact that other things being equal these teachers, the students want to believed must have been trained and exposed to the methodology or instructional objective of sexuality education . Sexuality education as a part of health science lessons was third on the approval rating with 427(74.7%) and fourth as part of biology lessons 418(71.8%). The researcher is of the opinion that this high rating is due to the fact that, the students having confidence in their instructors.

As may be observed from the table, there is a difference of 2.6% between the valid yes of question 2 and 3 and a difference 2.95 between question 3 and 4. This slight difference may be due to the normal gender disposition. The result also revealed that, the students preferred the subject taught to a mixed class of boys and girls 398(69.2%) but data revealed that, in the male only 199(69.3%) rated sixth and female only 199(69.1%) rated fifth. This rating to a mixed class may be because these students see sexuality education according to International Planned Parenthood Federation [1987] as an educational process designed to assist young people in their physical, social, emotional and moral development as they prepare for adulthood, marriage, parenthood and ageing, as well as their social relationship in the socio-cultural context of family and society.

The least rated was sexuality education should be taught using parents only 145(25.6%). This may be as a result of communication gap between parents

and their children and perhaps lack of confidence in their parents to tell them the truth and the whole truth consigning sex and not myths. This therefore implies that the students are of the opinion that they may never learn much from their parents. This findings are in agreement with Momodu (2010), Omatseye (2007) and Adepoju (2005), who are of the view that effective sexual communication remained difficult, elusive and almost unattainable in Nigeria because free open and relaxed communication about sexual topics between adults and the adolescents (particularly parents and adolescents has been left to specific occasions like traditional ceremonies, such as coming of age. Even at this period it is a little that is let out, a whole lot is still left hidden. This result also goes to confirm the researcher's opinion that parents tend to shy away from talking to their children about sex and if sexuality education must be taught then it ought to part of the curriculum. The teachers would have to instruct learners during the teaching-learning process

The table below shows a list of some instructional approaches for learning sexuality education to which, as may be observed shows the students most preferred to the least preferred teaching approaches for sexuality education.

From the table 1, it would be observed that the respondent 467(81.2%). would prefer evaluation using written test or examination. This high rating may be because the students feel more relaxed and confident in what they would write than being subjected to oral question / interview. Looking at the table, assessment technique using oral question / interview was the least preferred but yet had a percentage of 426(74.0%) The researcher is of the view from the above data that even though they would prefer written evaluation yet they are willing to discuss sex and not shy away from it and perhaps this generation of adolescents are breaking off from the old ways. This data goes to confirm Tiefer (1995) and Foucault, (1986) that sexuality education debunks ideologies and social constructs that regard certain words as dirty and wrong, that certain parts of the body are unmentionable and that sometimes we should hide our feelings and other myths and taboos that influence the human sexuality negatively. In Nigeria cultural heterogeneity, multiculturalism, ethics, social status and other traditions perpetuate rules and norms that affect the perceptions of parents, teachers and others and therefore discourages sex discursion between the old and the young.

Take home assignment / projects was second highest preferred assessment technique the subjects subscribe to. 463(80.1%) The take home project, the researcher believes is one of the options left for the students to let parents and

guardians know some aspect of their curriculum at school, 'if you would not teach, then the school would do it'.

Third preferred evaluation technique was class assignment and projects with 456(79.7%) and the fourth technique, oral questions/interview 426(74.0%). From the above table it would be observed that values were high ranging from 81.2% to 74.0%. The researcher will therefore want to conclude that the students would be comfortable with which ever assessment techniques employed in evaluation.

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Table 1; Students' Approval Rating of Teaching Approaches for Sexuality Education.

S/N	QUESTION	YES%	NO%	MISSING RESPONSE%	VALID YES%	VALID NO%
1	By resource persons- Nurses, medical doctors and psychologists	476(79.3)	94(15.7)	30(5.0)	83.5	16.5
2	By health science/health education teachers	437(72.8)	128(21.3)	35(5.8)	77.3	22.7
3	As a part of health science lessons	427(71.2)	145(24.2)	28(4.7)	74.7	25.3
4	As a part of Biology lessons	418(69.7)	164(27.3)	18(3.0)	71.8	28.2
5	To a mixed class of boys and girls	398(66.3)	177(29.5)	25(4.2)	69.2	30.8
6	Using physical demonstrations in some cases	395(65.8)	187(31.2)	18(3.0)	67.9	32.1
7	As a separate school subject	357(59.5)	214(35.7)	29(4.8)	62.5	37.5
8	Using illustrative diagrams and pictures	354(59.0)	220(36.7)	26(4.3)	61.7	38.3
9	Using audio-visuals (e.g. films, video equipment etc)	272(45.3)	304(50.7)	24(4.0)	47.2	52.8
10	To a class of girls only	212(35.3)	361(60.2)	27(4.5)	37.0	63.0
11	To a class of boys only	189(31.5)	378(63.0)	33(5.5)	33.3	66.7
12	Using parents only	145(24.2)	422(70.3)	33(5.5)	25.6	74.4

Table 11; Students' Approval Ratings of Some Evaluating Techniques for Sexuality Education

S/N	QUESTION	YES%	NO%	MISSING RESPONSE%	VALID YES%	VALID NO%
1	Written tests or examination	467(77.8)	108(18.8)	25(4.2)	81.2	18.8
2	Take home assignments/projects	463(77.2)	115(19.2)	22(3.7)	80.1	19.9
3	Class assignments/projects	456(76.0)	116(19.3)	28(4.7)	79.7	20.3
4	Oral questions/interviews	426(71.0)	150(25.0)	24(4.0)	74.0	26.0