

Effects of Sexuality Education on Gender Among Secondary School Students in Ekiti State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *The study investigated the effects of Sexuality Education on gender among senior secondary school students in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The study also examined the knowledge and attitude of students on Sexuality Education. It is a descriptive survey research with a population of 150 respondents drawn from three senatorial districts of the state; seventy-three (73) males and eighty-seven female students participated in the study. A self-constructed instrument titled the Sexuality Education questionnaire was used to obtain information from the students. In contrast, a multi-stage sampling technique was used to select students from three senior secondary schools in three state senatorial districts, using a self-constructed instrument titled Sexuality Education Questionnaire (SEQ). The reliability was ensured using the test-retest method. The study's results showed that male students recorded a higher-mean gain in the achievement of Sexuality Education, while female students recorded a higher mean increase in attitude score. The result also revealed that students with low self-efficacy recorded higher mean- gain in achievement and attitude scores towards Sexuality Education. The study concluded that teaching Sexuality Education is improved in schools to achieve the curriculum objectives. It was, therefore, suggested that more emphasis be laid on the teaching of Sexuality issues in schools. Government should also organise seminars and workshops for teachers and students on Sexuality issues. In addition, curriculum developers should extend the teaching of Sexuality Education to the primary school level, informal and non-formal settings.*

KEYWORDS: sexuality education, gender, self-efficacy, students, Ekiti State.

INTRODUCTION

The need for Sexuality Education in society cannot be over-emphasised, as it positively affects young people's knowledge and improves their attitude toward sexual and reproductive behaviour. The Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS,2021) stressed that school-based comprehensive sexuality education plays a vital role in promoting the health and wellbeing of

children and adolescents, both now and in the future. United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2018) noted that only 34% of the young people worldwide could demonstrate accurate knowledge of Sexuality Education. No wonder the issue of social abuse like rape and disrespect for a social and sexual relationships is a common practice in most developing nations of the world. Fact sheet (2019) on abortion in Nigeria cited that the rate of sexual and domestic violence in developing countries is alarming. World Health Organization (WHO, 2021) estimated that 4,400 people die daily due to intentional acts of sexual abuse against each other. Also, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF, 2015) reported that one in four girls and one in ten boys had experienced sexual violence before the age of eighteen. UNESCO (2009) cited that some girls said their first sexual encounter was rape or forced sex. WHO (2017) stressed that there is no day without a report of either rape or other sexual violence in society. Despite inquiries on reducing this menace in the community, the problem of sexual abuse persists.

Nichole and Deborah (2015) opined that there is an increasing problem of moral laxity, promiscuity, unwanted pregnancy, abortion, rape, sexually transmitted infections, school dropouts and other moral decadence among youth is attributed to ignorance of youth about Sexuality Education. Ajila (2015) posited that despite the clear and pressing need for effective school-based Sexuality Education, the problem of how to make the youth informed adequately about Sexuality Education still exists. United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO,2021) asserted that despite good progress in disseminating information on Sexuality Education, Many countries are failing to ensure children and young people have the knowledge and skills they need for good health and wellbeing.

Nicole and Deborah (2015) defined Sexuality Education as an instruction relating to human sexuality, while Jenifer (2021) cited it as the study of characteristics of being a male and female. Ezechi (2016) viewed Sexuality teaching as an instruction involving a comprehensive action by the school. Olofinbiyi (2020) stressed that it is a concept with a research scope and goal of helping children incorporable sex and teach all aspects of sexual issues. Asekun (2007) viewed Sexuality Education as an aspect of human beings that includes the totality of the body and sexual orientation given to the youth at a time. UNESCO (2021) defined Sexuality Education as laying a foundation for life, while UNAIDS (2018) cited it as a core dimension of humans which includes the understanding and relationship to the human body, emotional attachment, love; sex, gender; gender and reproduction. Gender, according to UNAIDS (2018), refers to male and female, while Jenifer (2021) opined gender as men and women. According to Shonde (2007), knowledge refers to achievement that could be derived from awards attitude and behaviour.

Purpose of Study

The study examined the effects of Sexuality Education on the achievements and attitudes of senior secondary school students in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The study also examined the impact of gender and self-efficacy on sexuality teaching.

Research Questions

1. What is the Students' Achievement score in Sexuality Education according to their level of Self -efficacy?
2. What are the Students' Attitude scores in Sexuality Education according to their level of Self-efficacy?
3. Which of the Students' Gender categories will record a higher mean – gain in achievement toward Sexuality Education?
4. Which of the Students' Gender categories will record a higher mean – gain in attitude towards Sexuality Education?

METHODS

The study used Descriptive survey research. The population consisted of one hundred fifty male and female students selected through a multi-stage random sampling technique from three public senior secondary schools in Ekiti State. The instrument for the study was a self–developed questionnaire titled Sexuality Education Questionnaire (SEQ). Face and content validity was ensured, by experts, while the reliability of the instrument was confirmed using the test-retest method. The study administered the device to twenty (20) students that were not part of the study population. The data collected were coded and prepared for data analysis using a statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics. Mean, and standard deviation scores were used to show estimates of the pre-test and post-test scores in the knowledge of and attitude to Sexuality Education, analysed the 0.5 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What is the level of Students' Achievement in Sexuality Education according to their level of Self-Efficacy?

Table 1: Students' Pre and Post–Test Achievement Scores in Sexuality Education according to their level of Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy L	N	Mean	S.D	Min	Max	Mean gain
Low Pre-test	77	23.66	5.49	12	43	5.69
Post-test		29.35	6.38	12	44	
High Pre – test	73	25.7.83	5.48	15	41	3.83
Post-test		29.56	7.81	12	44	
Total pre-test	150	24.67	5.56	12	43	4.78
Post-test		29.45	7.09	12	44	

Source: Fieldwork, (2021).

The result in Table 1 showed the participants' mean and standard deviation scores in the achievement of Sexuality Education according to the students' level of Self Efficacy before (pre-test) and after (Post-test) the teaching of Sexuality Education. At the end of the interaction period,

the 73 participants in the high Self-Efficacy level recorded a higher mean post-test achievement score of 29.56 (S.D = 7.81) than those in the low Self-Efficacy level, whose mean post-test achievement score was 29.35 (SD = 6.38). The result also showed positive mean gains across the level of Self-Efficacy when the mean pre-test and mean post-test achievement scores were compared. The students with low-Self efficacy recorded a higher mean gain in achievement (5.69). Hence it appears that the students with a low level of Self-Efficacy recorded a higher mean gain in the achievement of Sexuality Education than those with a high level of self-efficacy.

Research Question 2: What is the students’ attitude score in Sexuality Education according to their level of Self-Efficacy?

Table 2: Students’ Scores in Pre and Post-test Attitude towards Sexuality Education according to Self – Efficacy level

Self-Efficacy Level	N	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max.	Mean-Gain
Low Pre-test	77	49.31	9.64	30	87	9.98
Post-test		59.29	10.09	37	90	
High Pre-test	73	48.75	8.81	30	68	9.22
Post-test		57.97	9.04	40	82	
Total Pre-test	150	49.04	9.22	30	87	9.61
Post-test		58.65	9.58	37	90	

Source: Fieldwork, (2021).

The result in table 2 showed the participants' mean and standard deviation scores in attitude toward Sexuality Education according to the students' level of self-efficacy before (pre-test) and after (post-test) treatments. At the end of the interaction period, the 77 participants in the low self-efficacy recorded a higher mean post-test attitude score of 59.29 (S.D. = 10.09) than the 73 participants in the high self-efficacy level, whose mean post-test attitude score was 57.97 (S.D.= 9.04). The result also shows positive mean-gains across the levels of self-efficacy when compared. The students with a low- level of self-efficacy recorded a higher mean- profit in attitude (9.98). Hence, it thus appears that the students with a low level of self-efficacy recorded a higher standard-increase in attitude towards Sexuality Education than those with a high level of self-efficacy.

Research Question 3: Which of the students’ Gender categories recorded the higher mean gain scores in Sexuality Education?

Table 3: Students Question 3: Students’ Gender categories recorded the higher mean gain scores in Sexuality Education

Self-Efficacy Level	N	Mean	S.D	Min	Max	Mean gain
Low Pre-test	77	23.66	5.49	12	43	5.94
Post-test		29.35	6.38	12	44	
High Pre-test	73	25.73	5.48	15	41	3.83
Post-test		29.56	7.81	12	44	
Total Pre-test	150	24.67	5.56	12	43	4.78
Post-test		29.45	7.09	12	44	

Source: Fieldwork, (2021).

The result in table 3 showed the participant's mean and standard deviation scores in the achievement of sexuality education according to the students' gender before (pre-test) and after (post-test), showing that the 67 male participants recorded had mean post-test achievements score (30.37) (SD = 7.03) in sexuality education than 83 female participants whose mean post-test achievement score was 28.77 (SD = 7.10). The result also showed positive mean gains across the levels of gender when the mean pre-test and mean post-test achievement scores were compared. Male students recorded a higher mean growth in achievement (5.94). It implies that male students recorded a higher mean gain in the accomplishment of sexuality education than female students.

Research Question 4: Which of the students' gender categories will record the higher mean – gain in attitude toward sexuality education

Table 4: Students' Post-Test Attitude towards Sexuality Education according to gender

Students' Gender	N	Mean	S.D	Min	Max	Mean gain
Male Pre-test	67	49.12	8.65	30	68	8.64
		57.76	9.87	37	90	
Female Pre-test	83	48.98	9.70	30	87	10.38
Post-test		59.36	9.34	41	89	
Total Pre-test	150	49.04	9.22	30	87	9.61
Post-test		58.65	9.58	37	90	

Source: Fieldwork, (2021).

Table 4 shows the participant's mean and standard deviation scores in attitude towards sexuality education according to gender before and after the experiments. The 83 female participants recorded a higher mean post-test attitude score (59 - 36) (SD = 9.34) towards sexuality than the 67 male participants, whose mean post-test attitude score was 57.76 (SD = 9.87). The result also showed positive mean gains across the levels of gender when the study compared the mean pre-test and meant post-test attitude scores. The higher mean growth in attitude (10.38) was higher mean – gain in attitude towards sexuality education than the male stud.

DISCUSSIONS

Findings from this work on research question one showed the participants' mean and standard deviation scores on achievement of Sexuality Education according to attitudes' level of self-efficacy before and after (post-test). At the end of the interaction period, 73 participants in the high self-efficacy level recorded a higher mean post-test achievement score of 29.56 (SD=7.81) than the participant in the low self-efficacy whose mean post-test achievement score was 29.35 (S.D=6.38). In addition, the students with low-self efficacy recorded a higher mean gain in achievement (5.69).

The result in table 2 showed the participants' mean and standard deviation scores in attitude toward Sexuality Education according to the students' level of self-Efficacy before (pre-test) and after

(post-test) treatments. At the end of the interaction period, the 77 participants in the low self-efficacy recorded higher mean post-test attitude scores of 59.29 (SD=10.09) than the participants in the high self-efficacy level, whose mean post-test attitude score was 57.97 (S.D=9.04). The result also showed positive mean gains across the levels of self-efficacy when compared. The students with a low level of self-efficacy recorded a higher mean increase in attitude (9.98).

The result in table 3 showed the participants' mean and standard deviation scores in the achievement of Sexuality Education according to students' gender before (pre-test) and after (post-test) showed that 67 male participants recorded a higher mean post-test achievement score of (30.37) (S.D=7.03). The result showed positive mean gains across the levels of gender when the mean pre-test and mean post-test achievement scores were compared. The higher mean increase in achievement (5.94) was recorded by male students, who recorded higher mean gains in the accomplishment of Sexuality Education than the female students. This result supports the finding of Eze (2013), Bamiro (2012), and Olusegun (2010), who cited that male students significantly performed better than female students in sexuality teaching. However, the result contradicts the findings of Ogunyemi (1994), who found, among other things, that there was a statistically significant difference in the mean post-test achievement scores of male and female students in Population Education.

Research question 4 showed the participants' mean and standard deviation scores in attitude towards sexuality education according to gender before and after the experiment. Eighty-three female participants recorded a higher mean post-test attitude score (59.36) (S.D=9.34) than 67 male participants, whose mean post-test score was 57.76 (SD=9.87). The result showed positive mean gains across the levels of gender when the mean pre-test and mean post-test attitude scores were compared. In addition, female students recorded a higher mean increase in attitude (10.38). The result contradicts the findings of Eze (2013) and Bamiro (2010), who cited that male students performed better than female students in the Sexuality Education Classroom. The result supports the findings of Ajila (2015), who stressed that female students scored higher mean gain in Sexuality teaching than females.

CONCLUSION

Conclusively, the four research questions revealed that students know about Sexuality Education. This result implies that despite the higher knowledge gained by the male students, it did not reflect in their behaviour, indicating that the knowledge gained produced fewer results. In contrast, the female students with lesser knowledge exhibited higher positive behaviour. Therefore, one can conclude from the result why immorality, rape and other immoral behaviours are common in society because the knowledge from the teaching of sexuality has lesser effects on the boys' attitude. Furthermore, female participants recorded a higher mean post-test perspective because they were at the receiving end. The results from the study are subject to further investigation to enable researchers to develop other strategies that can produce better results for male and female students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that further investigations be carried out on the teaching of Sexuality Education in schools. Teachers and counsellors should encourage male and female students on the importance of Sexuality Education; students should also be helped to overcome depression, fear and any mental issues from students backgrounds. Other researchers may build on the findings of this work, while curriculum developers may fund the helpful result.

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