

Knowledge, Attitude and Perception of Secondary Students Towards Sex Education in Moro Local Government Area, Kwara State.

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2024.1107029>

Received: 17 June 2024; Accepted: 26 June 2024; Published: 02 August 2024

ABSTRACT

Sex education is aimed at helping students understand the physiological, social and emotional changes they experience as they mature, develop healthy and rewarding relationships, and make wise, informed and responsible decisions on sexuality matters. It is also hoped to delay sexual debut, forestall teenage pregnancies and reduce STI and HIV infections. This research focuses on the knowledge, attitude and perception of secondary students towards sex education in Moro Local Government Area, Kwara State. Furthermore, this study approach to determine why adolescent sexuality is not a much researched topic in Nigeria as in most sub-Saharan countries which revealed the causal factor is attached to restrictive socio-cultural values and norms and why Parents who ought to be the primary educators shy away from their role in the area of sexuality education, leaving it to schools. A multi stage sampling technique was utilized for this study with a sample size of 500 students selected from different secondary schools within Moro Local Government Area of Kwara State. Research data was collected by the utilization of a semi-structured questionnaire which was thereafter subjected to analysis employing fundamental statistical methods, including frequencies, percentages, and chi-square analysis. A significance level of $p=0.05$ was selected. The results shows that most of respondents had the knowledge on sex education as 151 (30.2%) of male students and 159 (31.8%) of female students had an orientation on sex education in their schools. However, a large percentage of students stated sex education is not efficiently taught in their respective schools. Hence, this study recommends periodic organizing of sex education programs and campaigns for secondary school students, parents and guardians active involvement, Teachers and school management to strengthen moral comportment amidst students, orientation on gender equality and indiscrimination and promotion of Governmental regulations as factors to promote sex education among students and teenagers.

Keywords: Sex education, Teenagers, Teenage Pregnancy, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).

BACKGROUND

Sexuality is a central aspect of being human and encompasses sex, gender identities, gender roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. It is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviors, practices, roles and relationships (WHO, 2021). Sexuality education is the provision of necessary clues and guidance about body growth, puberty buildup, sex, sexuality, and relationships, along with skills-building to help young people communicate about and

make informed choices regarding sex and their sexual wellbeing (WHO, 2021). It should include orientation about puberty and reproduction, abstinence from sex, safe sex through contraception and condoms, relationships, sexual abuse prevention, body image, gender identification and sexual orientation (WHO, 2021). It is sometimes called sex education, sexual orientation or sex relationship education.

Indeed, sex education does not mean instructing adolescents in sexual techniques or acts, rather it entails giving the necessary facts, information or knowledge about sex and encouraging questions and discussions (Onoyase, 2021). According to Obiunu (2021), sex education helps in preparing adolescents to have responsible attitudes and behavior towards sex for a harmonious sexual life. Its goal is to help students make wise, important, responsible and informed decisions by providing them with accurate, current and appropriate knowledge, with regard to their age, on human sexuality and the consequences of sexual activities. Sexuality education is also targeted to help young individuals develop a moral discipline, respect for body image and for others. It also helps them practice abstinence from sex before marriage which stands as the best protection against sexually transmitted infections and unwanted pregnancies among the young population (Onoyase, 2021).

Adolescent sexuality is not a much researched topic in Nigeria as in most sub-Saharan countries due to our restrictive socio-cultural values and norms, but the HIV pandemic has given a sense of urgency to the topic of sexuality education mostly in school settings (WHO, 2021). Parents who ought to be primary educators shy away from their role in the area of sexuality education, leaving it to schools (WHO, 2021). School-based sexuality education caters only to in-school adolescents. Moreover, out-of-school adolescents who are generally less informed about sexual and reproductive health participate more in risky sexual activity than those in school; this further buttresses the need for parents to provide sexuality education at home as this will envelop all adolescents (Shonde *et al.*, 2021). The family as a focus of health research, despite evidence from previous studies, has been relatively neglected (in health strategies) as an area of research. Coupled with this, sex education provided by parents across geographical areas varies considerably even within similar regions. Sex education knowledge among parents and guardians in Nigeria differs across religious, cultural and geographical contexts. Differences in cultural morals and overall way life, educational accomplishment, income level and social media exposure among parents in rural and urban climes make this comparison imperative. Furthermore, diverse access to health facilities and heterogeneous sexual behavior among adolescents in rural and urban communities also is an indication for comparison (Njoroge, 2021).

METHODS

Study Area

Moro Local Government Area (LGA) is a local government area in Kwara State, Nigeria. It is located in the North-Central region of Nigeria and is bordered by Baruten LGA to the North, Asa LGA to the South, Kaiama LGA to the West, and Edu LGA to the East. The administrative headquarters of Moro LGA is located in the town of Bode Saadu and the area covers districts of Malete, Alara, Elemere, Asomu, Ajanaku, Babadubu, Jebba, Ejidonjari, Oloru, Womi, Ayaki, Pakumo, Gbugudu, Jehunkunnu, Bode-saadu, Shao making 17 communities in Moro local government. Moro LGA covers an area of approximately 1,318 square kilometers and has a population of over 200,000 people according to the 2006 census. The major ethnic groups in the area are the Yoruba, Bariba, and Fulani, with Yoruba being the most predominant. The economy of Moro LGA is largely based on agriculture, with crops such as yam, cassava, maize, and rice being cultivated. Livestock farming is also practiced in the area, with cattle, goats, and sheep being reared. The LGA also has mineral resources such as kaolin and granite. Moro LGA is home to a number of educational institutions, including primary schools, secondary schools, and a college of education. The area also has several health facilities, including hospitals, clinics, and primary health care centers. Moro LGA has a rich cultural heritage, with traditional festivals such as the Oro festival and the Egungun festival being

celebrated by the people. The area also has several tourist attractions, including the Owu Waterfall and the Esie Museum, which houses one of the largest collections of soapstone artifacts in the world.

Community Entry and Advocacy for Penetration

A letter for community entry and advocacy to prevent any form of obstruction was obtained from the office of the Head of Public Health Department, Kwara State University, Malete and presented to the Ministry of Health and Education, Ilorin. This is to get approval from selected schools in Moro LGA with the purpose of the study and collection of data on students in the selected schools in Moro LGA.

Study Population

The target population for this study consist of secondary school students in selected schools in Moro Local Government Area, Kwara State. This population is chosen because students have misconceptions about sex education so we need to study and enhance their knowledge about sex education.

Study Design

This study used a quantitative descriptive cross-sectional study method to identify the knowledge, attitude and perception of the secondary students in Moro LGA regarding sex education.

Inclusion Criteria

1. Those participants who are willing and sign the consent, will be included in the study.
2. All unmarried students (Bachelor/Spinster)

Exclusion Criteria

1. Those participants who refuse to take part in the research and are not showing any willingness and feel shy to give the personal data are excluded from the study.
2. All the married students will be excluded from the study.

Sample Size Determination

The sample size is calculated through the Cochran Formula Equation 1, which comes out 500 As the level of confidence is 95%, so Z on Z-score table is 1.96, at margin of error of 05% (0.05), p is the (estimated) proportion of the population which has the attributes in question and q is the remaining portion (1-p)

$$n = Z^2 \frac{pq}{e^2}$$

$$n = (1.96)^2 \frac{(0.5)(0.5)}{(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = 500$$

Sampling Techniques

A multistage sampling technique used for selecting 500 secondary school male and female students from the selected communities in Moro over a period of 2 weeks (July, 2023). Proportionate sampling technique used in selecting the number of participating schools from the metropolis of each communities. Ten schools selected from each of the four communities (Malete, Elemere, Asomu and Shao). Respondents from each school selected proportionately. A total of 500 respondents were drawn from Malete, Elemere, Asomu and

from Shao. Participants shall be within the age range of 13–19 years. A questionnaire entitled “Questionnaire on Knowledge, Attitude and Perception of Secondary School Students towards Sex Education” used in eliciting information from respondents.

Stage 2 involves selection of classes from each level of SSS1, SSS2 and SSS3; all the school visited had more than one classes per class level. Two of such classes shall be selected by balloting

Stage 3 involves selecting eligible respondents from the selected classes; a proportionate sample shall be taken from the selected classes based on their sizes and already determined number of respondents allotted to the school. Respondents from selected classes selected using systematic sampling technique; the sampling interval will be calculated based on the number of students in the class and the number of respondents to be selected from the class. The male to-female ratio in each class shall also be considered during the selection such that a fair proportion of both sexes were selected. The first participant selected by balloting.

Research Instrument: Validity, Pretesting, Pilot Study

The instrument pretested among 50 male and female students (10% of actual sample size) from a secondary school in Moro Local Government Area. The school is a coeducational public school, similar to the schools used for the main study. The exercise help in assessing appropriateness of the questions in eliciting desired responses. Ambiguous questions were rephrased or removed in line with study objectives.

The instrument for data collection is a questionnaire designed by the researchers and titled “Questionnaire on knowledge, attitude and perception of secondary school students towards sex education in Moro local government area, Kwara State.”. The questionnaire was designed to investigate the attitude of adolescent students towards sex/sexuality education. The instrument consisted of four sections: Section A was designed to obtain demographic information about the respondents, while Section B, C and D sought information on respondents’ knowledge, attitude and perception on sexual education. The respondents were given alternative responses to choose from. It is a closed-opened ended questionnaire in which the responses were categorized into 4-point Likert-type scale to their level of agreement with statement given as;

- Strongly Agree (SA)
- Agree (A)
- Disagree (A)
- Strongly Disagree (SD)

The instrument was validated through expert judgment in the Department of Public health, Kwara State University, Kwara State, Nigeria, and the research team to establish both face and content validity. The instrument were administered to the respondents by the research team, with the assistance of the class teacher. Instrument administered was retrieved, processed and used for the study. In order that participant’s rights to privacy and confidentiality were met the following were taken into consideration: Participants were briefed as to the nature and the need of this research study. With the help of guidance teacher, participants were guaranteed that their responses would be handled with confidentiality and sensitivity.

Methods of Data Collection

For the purpose to collect the data from secondary school students in Moro local government area, Kwara state. A close ended questionnaire was used and the consent form attached to the questionnaire. Participants were allowed to sign the consent first before reading the questionnaire then put their personal data in that. Participant information kept secret and confidential and not shared with anyone. 20 minutes given to all

participants to fill the questionnaire. Then the questionnaire collected and put for statistical analysis. The questionnaire was pretested (in a similar but different location) to correct for any ambiguity.

Measurement of Variables and Data Processing

Associations tested between the outcome variable (knowledge, attitude and perceptions of male and female senior secondary school students on sex education) and the independent variables/factors (socio-demographic factors of male and female senior secondary school students).

Method of Data Management and Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using SPSS version 20. The socio-demographic characteristics of the students, their knowledge, attitude and perception was analyzed and summarized as means (standard deviation). Difference in the knowledge, attitude and perceptions of male and female senior secondary school students on sex education analyzed using the chi-square test, with the level of significance set at a p-value of <0.05 .

Consent /Methods of Protection of Human Subjects

Written informed consent was obtained from all the respondents before the interview. Respondents were informed of their right to decline or withdraw from the study at any time without any adverse consequences. Participants' confidentiality will be respected and maintained by ensuring that no unauthorized person had access to the information on the data information sheets, that no information can be traced to the subjects.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical consideration was obtained from the Kwara State Ministry of Health, through the department of Research planning and Statistics. Ethical approval was also obtained from ethical committee of Kwara State University, Malete. Permission to conduct the study obtained from relevant Local Government Authorities (LGA) and community leaders.

Result 1

Demographic Information

Age Distribution (mean age 16 ± 2.16)

Table I Age of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
13-14	69	13.8
15-16	237	47.4
17-18	145	29.0
Above 19	49	9.8
Total	500	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The table I above shows the age distribution of the respondents. From the table, 237 respondents which constitute 47.4% of the total population fall within the age category of 15 – 16. Second highest to this is the age category of 17-18 which has a frequency of 145 respondents and constitute 29% of the total population.

69 Respondents which represents 13.8% of the total population falls within the category of age 13 – 14 while only 49 respondents which represent 9.8% of the total population are of 19 years and above. This implies that major part of the respondents are teenager which are between the age of 15 and 16.

Result 2

Gender Distribution

Table II Gender Distribution of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Male	212	42.4
Female	288	57.6
Total	500	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 11 above shows the gender distribution of respondents which presents that 288 respondents which represents 57.6% of the total population were female which the other 42.4% were male with a frequency of 212. This has the implication that most of the respondents were female.

Result 4

Town of Respondents

Table III Town of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Malete	130	26.0
Elemere	50	10.0
Asomu	70	14.0
Shao	250	50.0
Total	500	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table III above shows the town of respondents which presents that 250 respondents which represents 50% of the total population are from Shao town. However, 130 respondents which constitute 26% of the total population are from Malete, while 70 respondents which represent 14% of the population are from Asomu. The least frequency is from Elemere which has 50 respondents with a percentage of 10%. It can be observed that most of the respondents are from Shao town.

Result 5

Class

Table IV Class of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
SS1	250	50.0

SS2	250	50.0
Total	500	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table IV above shows the class of respondents which presents that 250 respondents which represents 50% of the total population were in SS1 which the other 50% were in SS2 with a frequency of 250. This has the implication that the respondents were selected evenly.

Result 6

School Type

Table V School Type of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Government school	350	70.0
Private school	150	30.0
Total	500	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table V above shows the school type of respondents which presents that 350 respondents which represents 70% of the total population were from government school which the other 30% were from private school with a frequency of 150. This has the implication that most of the respondents were from government school.

Result 7

Table VI Gender Based Association with Knowledge, Attitude and Perception on sex education among study Participants (n=500)

S/N	Variables	Gender		* P value (< 0.05)
		Male n (%)	Female n (%)	
1.	KNOWLEDGE			
	Have you received any sex education in school?			
	Yes	151(30.2%)	159(31.8%)	0.009
	No	96(19.2%)	94(18.8%)	
	What are the different aspects covered under sex education?			
	Reproductive health	131(26.2%)	179(35.8%)	0.000
	Contraception and safe sex	79(15.8%)	59(11.8%)	
	Gender equality	11(2.2%)	15(3.0%)	
	No idea	123(24.6%)	67(13.4%)	
	Do you know the different types of contraceptives and how they work?			
	Yes	100(20.0%)	113(22.6%)	0.039
	No	33(6.6%)	139(27.8%)	
	Are you aware of the consequences of unprotected sex?			

	Yes	98(19.6%)	115(23.0%)	0.050
	No	173(34.6%)	114(22.8%)	
	6. Can you identify the different types of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and their symptoms?			
	Yes	78(15.6%)	157(31.4%)	0.005
	No	133(26.6%)	132(26.4%)	
2.	ATTITUDE			
	Do you think sex education is important for secondary school students?			
	Yes	191(38.2%)	234(46.8%)	0.005
	No	11(2.2%)	39(7.8%)	
	Not sure	5(1.0%)	15(3.0%)	
	If yes, why do you think sex education is important? (Select all that apply)			
	Prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs)	120(24.0%)	126(25.2%)	0.010
	Healthy relationships and communication skills	49(9.8%)	35(7.0%)	
	Reproductive health knowledge	38(7.6%)	62(12.4%)	
	How do you feel about discussing sexual topics with your peers or teachers?			
	Comfortable	92(18.4%)	113(22.6%)	0.000
	Uncomfortable	120(24.0%)	175(35.0%)	
	Indifferent	0	0	
	Do you think that sex education will encourage students to engage in sexual activities?			
	Strongly agree	27(5.4%)	43(8.6%)	0.010
	Agree	30(6.0%)	20(4.0%)	
	Disagree	87(17.4%)	188(37.6%)	
	Strongly disagree	68(13.6%)	37(7.4%)	
	Do you believe that sex education is important for students to make informed decisions?			
	Strongly agree	70(14.0%)	56(11.2%)	0.009
	Agree	128(25.6%)	162(32.4%)	
	Disagree	14(2.8%)	70(14.0%)	
	Strongly disagree	0	0	
	Do you think that parents should be involved in sex education?			
	Strongly agree	50(10.0%)	92(18.4%)	0.000
	Agree	112(22.4%)	96(19.2%)	
	Disagree	50(10.0%)	100(20.0%)	
	Strongly disagree	0	0	
3.	PERCEPTION			
	How do you feel sex education is currently taught at your school?			

	Comprehensive and informative	69(13.8%)	69(13.8%)	0.020
	Inadequate and insufficient	65(13.0%)	107(21.4%)	
	Not applicable (no sex education taught)	78(15.6%)	112(22.4%)	
	Do you think that sex education is taboo in your community?			
	Strongly agree	0	0	0.011
	Agree	40(8.0%)	30(6.0%)	
	Disagree	172(34.4%)	258(51.6%)	
	Strongly disagree	0	0	
	Do you think that sex education is necessary in today's society?			
	Strongly agree	0	0	0.035
	Agree	156(31.2%)	250(50.0%)	
	Disagree	56(11.2%)	38(7.6%)	
	Strongly disagree	0	0	
	Do you think that sex education will help reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy in your community?			
	Strongly agree	80(16.0%)	130(26.0%)	0.000
	Agree	132(26.4%)	158(31.6%)	
	Disagree	0	0	
	Strongly disagree	0	0	
	Do you think that sex education will help reduce the spread of STIs in your community?			
	Strongly agree	78(15.6%)	110(22.4%)	0.050
	Agree	134(26.8%)	178(35.6%)	
	Disagree	0	0	
	Strongly disagree	0	0	
	Do you think that sex education will help reduce sexual harassment and abuse in your community?			
	Strongly agree	24(4.8%)	171(34.2%)	0.000
	Agree	188(37.6%)	117(23.4%)	
	Disagree	0	0	
	Strongly disagree	0	0	
	Do you believe that abstinence-only sex education is an effective method of preventing unintended pregnancy and STIs?			
	Yes	145(29.0%)	214(42.8%)	0.002
	No	36(7.4%)	49(9.8%)	
	Unsure	30(6.0%)	25(5.0%)	

	Have you ever sought out information about sex education outside of school?			
	Yes	14(2.8%)	6(1.2%)	0.051
	No	198(39.6%)	282(56.4%)	
	What sources do you rely on for obtaining accurate information about sex education?			
	Teachers	112(22.4%)	181(36.2%)	0.049
	Books and educational resources	10(2.0%)	15(3.0%)	
	Parents or guardians	66(13.2%)	74(14.8%)	
	Internet	5(1.0%)	2(0.4%)	
	Friends	0	0	
	Healthcare professionals	19(3.8%)	16(3.2%)	

*Chi square test; Dependent Variable: Sex Education

Knowledge

The results shows that 151 (30.2%) of male students and 159 (31.8%) of female students had an orientation on sex education in their schools before, while 96 (19.2%) of male and 94 (18.8%) of female students had no orientation on sex education before and this finding was significant ($p = 0.009$), the result finds that most of respondents had the knowledge on sex education. However, 78 (15.6%) of male students and 157 (31.4%) of female students can identify the different types of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and their symptoms while 133 (26.6%) of male and 132 (26.4%) of female cannot identify the different types of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and their symptoms, this finding was significant ($p = 0.005$) but from the result, it shows that majority of the respondents had no knowledge of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Also, the 44.6% of male and female students had knowledge on different types of contraceptives and how they work with frequencies of 100 (20%) and 113 (22.6%) respectively while 34.6 % had no knowledge on it, the finding was significant ($p = 0.039$).

The result also revealed that 173 (34.6%) male and 117 (22.8%) of female students had no knowledge on the consequences of unprotected sex while 98 (19.6%) of male and 115 (23%) of female student had knowledge on the consequences of unprotected sex, finding was significant ($p = 0.05$).

Table 1, shows the gender-based responses received from the students shows statistically significant relationship with knowledge among them. Therefore the alternate hypothesis is accepted

Attitude

From the result, 191 (38.2%) of male students and 234 (46.8%) of female students think sex education is important for secondary school students while 11 (2.2%) of male and 39 (7.8%) of female did not think sex education is important for secondary school students, the finding was significant ($p = 0.005$). Majority of the male and female respondents 120 (24%) and 126 (25.2) respectively think sex education is important to prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs) while 49 (9.8%) male and 35 (7%) male think sex education is important to improve healthy relationships and communication skills. However, 38 (7.6%) male and 62 (12.4%) female think sex education is important to improve reproductive health knowledge, the finding was significant ($p = 0.01$). 120 (24%) male students and 175 (35%) female students feel uncomfortable about discussing sexual topics with their peers or teachers while 92 (18.4%) and 113 (22.6%) feel comfortable, the finding was significant ($p = 0.000$).

From the result, 70 (14%) male and 56 (11.2%) female strongly agreed that sex education is important for students to make informed decisions while 128 (25.6%) and 162 (32.4%) agreed and 14 (2.8%) male and 70 (14%) female disagreed. The finding was significant ($p = 0.010$) and it shows the majority of the male and female respondents agreed to the question. Also, majority of the male and female respondent 350 (70%) agreed strongly that parents should be involved in sex education while 150 (30%) disagreed.

The gender-based responses received from the students shows statistically significant relationship with attitude among them. Therefore the alternate hypothesis is accepted

Perception

A 78 (15.6%) male students and 112 (22.4%) female students percept that sex education is not taught at their school while 65 (13%) male students and 107 (21.4%) female students felt that sex education is not inadequately and insufficiently taught at their school and 69 (13.8%) of both male and female students felt that sex education is comprehensively and informatively taught at their school. The finding was significant ($p=0.02$) however, this result shows that majority of private school students receives comprehensive teachings on sex education and minority of government school students receives comprehensive teaching of sex education. From the results, 172 (34.4%) male students and 258 (51.6%) female students disagreed that sex education is taboo in their community while 40 (8%) male and 30 (6%) female agreed sex education is taboo in their community, finding is significant ($p=0.011$). However, majority of the male 156 (31.2%) and female 250 (50%) respondent agreed that sex education is necessary in today's society while 56 (11.2) male and 38 (7.6%) female disagreed. 188 (37.6%) male and 117 (23.4) female student respondent agreed that that sex education will help reduce sexual harassment and abuse in their community, 24 (4.8%) male and 171 (34.2%) female students also strongly agreed that that sex education will help reduce sexual harassment and abuse in their community. The finding was significant ($p=0.000$) however, this result shows that 100% of the respondents totally agreed to the question. 112 (22.4%) of male student respondents and 181 (36.2%) of female student respondents obtained accurate information about sex education from teachers while 66 (13.2%) male and 74 (14.8) female students obtaining accurate information about sex education from parents and guardians. However, 19 (3.8%) male and 16 (3.2%) female students obtained accurate information about sex education from healthcare professionals, 10 (2%) male and 15 (3%) female students obtained accurate information about sex education from books and educational resources and 5 (1%) male and 2 (0.4%) female students obtained accurate information about sex education from internet. The finding is significant ($p=0.049$). The gender-based responses received from the students shows statistically significant relationship with perception among them. Therefore the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study shows that the mean age was 16 ± 2.16 years; this is in agreement with the study of Kumar *et al.* (2022) on Perception of adolescents towards sex education in Ambala District, Haryana India and Ayalew *et al.* (2019) on Knowledge and attitude towards sexual and reproductive health rights and associated factors among Adet college students, Northwest Ethiopia: where the mean age was 15.96 ± 1.61 years.

The findings also shows that majority of the respondents had good knowledge of sex education, this finding is in contrary with the study conducted Ayalew *et al.* (2019), where adolescents were found to have inadequate knowledge about sex education as they do not really understand the meaning of sex education, some reasoned that it is a means of corrupting the youths, while some indicated that it is a process of teaching young people bad things. Only a few believe that it is the information and teaching about sex matters. Whereas, findings from the result of some studies in Ethiopia and Nigeria Ayalew *et al.* (2019), on knowledge relating to sexual and reproductive health and rights shows that their respondents were

knowledgeable and had positive attitude towards sex education, which is in conformity with the findings of this current study.

The findings of this study further shows that majority of the respondents had positive attitude towards sex education, this finding is in accordance with Adiaha *et al.* (2020) findings where the authors conducted a study on the attitude of adolescents towards sex education and their findings showed that majority of the respondents had positive attitude to sex education.

Other studies by Effiom and Stella (2019), found that the respondents had a favorable attitude towards sex education Regarding the need for sex education among adolescents, the study by Effiom *et al.* (2021) shows that majority of adolescents recognized the need for sex education.

However, boys (97.1%) were more likely to support sex education as compared to girls (89.7%). Furthermore, this study findings further show that, there was a statistically significant relationship between the knowledge of sex education and the attitude of the respondents towards sex education. This shows that a change in the knowledge of the respondents would significantly affect the attitude of the respondents towards sex education. This study's findings thus, corresponds with Onoyase (2021) which reveals that there was a significant relationship between the knowledge of young people and their attitude towards sex education. In addition to the above, knowledge of sex education was significantly associated with class of students in this study. Knowledge of sex education increases as class of student increases; this finding is in agreement with Ayalew *et al.* (2019) that found a significant association between level of education and knowledge of reproductive and sexual rights of youths. These findings shows that the more knowledgeable adolescents and young people are, the more likely they are to have positive attitude towards sex education. Good knowledge and positive attitude to sex education will have far reaching influence of adolescents and young people sexual and reproductive health.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that while the majority of respondents have a positive attitude towards sex education and recognize its importance, significant gaps in comprehensive knowledge still exist. A large proportion of students are aware of basic concepts like STIs and contraceptives, but there is a notable lack of detailed understanding and comfort in discussing these topics. Additionally, perceptions of the adequacy of sex education vary, with many students feeling that the current approach is either insufficient or non-existent in their schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address these issues, it is crucial to enhance the curriculum content by integrating comprehensive and detailed sex education into the school curriculum, covering a wide range of topics such as reproductive health, contraception, gender equality, and the consequences of unprotected sex. Specialized training for teachers should be provided to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively deliver sex education and create a comfortable environment for discussions.

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