

## **Perception of Parent's And Teacher's Towards Introduction Of Sex Education In Senior Secondary Schools In Bauchi State, Nigeria**

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**Abstract:** *This study investigated the perception of parents and teachers towards introducing sex education in Bauchi State. The study uses descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprises of parents and teachers who are teaching in senior secondary schools in the state and the samples were drawn from 10 out of the 20 local government areas in the state. A purposeful random sampling was used in which 300 parents as well as 300 teachers were used for the study. The instruments used for data collection were two structured questionnaires that were validated by three experts drawn from three higher institutions of learning. The instruments consist of 10 Questionnaire items each for the parents and as well as teachers of the selected schools. A 4- point Likert scale was used to elicit information from the respondents. The data obtained from the study was analyzed using simple percentages. The findings of the study revealed that majority of parents and teachers in Bauchi State considered sex education as inappropriate, as well as unacceptable type of education for the youth in the state due to socio-cultural beliefs and religious dogmatism. Also some useful suggestions were offered to the government for consideration before introducing sex education in the state.*

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### **I. Introduction**

There have been a lot of challenges on the introduction of sex education in senior secondary schools and tertiary institutions in Nigeria. These challenges may not be unconnected with the socio-cultural beliefs and religious dogmatism especially in the Muslim's dominated areas in the northern part of the country. Sex education has not been directly introduced in Nigerian schools but some courses dealing with sex education were introduced in tertiary institutions in Nigeria 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 high-level of sexual desire demand urgent attention. Tolope and Bosade(2009) maintained that the Nigerian demographic and Health survey in their 2003 report stated that one out of every five women aged 15-19 had sex before the age of 15 and half of women age 15 -19 had sex before the age of 15 and half of women age 20-24 had sex when they reached 18 years. The report further stated that over 37% of ever-married women age 15-24 first had sex before the age of 15. The issue of sex education has become a subject of discussion everywhere in Nigeria. Many groups and organizations are earnestly welcoming the introduction of sex education especially in secondary schools where as other groups are vehemently protesting for its introduction. It is apparently clear that the introduction has become necessary due to monumental increase in sexual abuse among youth in secondary schools and tertiary institutions in the country. It is widely believed that adolescent's sexuality in general and students in particular as problem to be dealt with rather than part of his or her normal growth and development. There are number of rampant cases of sexual abuse among adolescence which have catastrophic circumstances on the youth in the society. It is indisputably true that the knowledge of sex education will prepare the youth against sexual promiscuity and sexual abuse as well as protect them against sexual infections that could hamper the well-being of the individual. The knowledge of sex education could also provide the necessary foundation for effective social relationship between the males and their female counterparts. More over the knowledge of sex education will drastically reduce the possibility of given birth to single parents children that could have disastrous consequences on their communities and the government at large. More often than not children born with single parents in Nigeria constitute a major threat among their peers and eventually become kingpins in committing dubious and nefarious crime in the society due to improper parental upbringing. The term sex education has been subjected to a series of definition and explanation by many scholars conveying

individual's opinion and bases about the subject matter. Adenula (2005) perceived sex education solely as education in the machining of sexual act. He also maintained that sex education is aimed at sinister campaign to create an increasing and dangerous obsession with sex argued that is not simply physiology of the system nor is it the process of telling the youth the facts of life and cautioning them about possible outcome of pre marital experimentation. Sex education could be define as an ecologic ethical approach involving the biological, psychological, social and ethical dimensions of sexual attitude standards , values and behaviours. It is widely believed that sex education seeks to reduce the risk of potentially negative outcomes from sexual behaviors such as unwanted pregnancies and enhance the quality of relationship. It is indisputably true that inadequate knowledge and misconceptions on sexual issues is dangerous for the adolescents and this had been responsible for their risky sexual behaviour. As a result of inaccurate sources of information on sexual issues, adolescents are not knowledgeable about puberty changes' occurring in their body and the consequences of irresponsible sexual behaviour. Similarly, Opara,Ike and Tabansi(2012) maintained that young people should have adequate information about their sexuality, so that they can make informed choices. It is undoubtedly true that sex education will provide accurate information to the youth that will counteract wrong sexual pervasive acts that will have disastrous consequences on the individual. Sex education is a lifelong process of acquiring information on the biological, socio-cultural, physiological and spiritual dimension of sexuality. In her assertion Igbanago (2001) stated that sex education is important for a number of reasons particularly during the turbulent time of adolescence. During adolescence period there are development struggles; adolescents have anxieties and fear about their sexual development and natural factors that can be misunderstood if not properly handled. According to Masha (2001) parents should have a thorough knowledge and understanding of who their children are as human being and why certain behaviours are manifested at different stages of development.

#### **The issue of cultural diversity and the introduction of sex education in Nigeria:**

Nigeria as multi cultural society consists of vast people with different socio cultural and religious belief that distinguishes one community from another. This social and religious dichotomy has significant impacts on the overall life of the individuals. The dichotomy has deeply divide Nigerians along ethnic and religious line such that what is generally acceptable in one society may not be acceptable in another. For instance, in a typical Hausa community in northern Nigeria any girl child that gets illegal pregnancy will face serious stigmatization from the society and can hardly get a husband. Unplanned marriages in some Nigerian communities and their consequences could be curtailed through the introduction of sex education in schools. Sex education seek to assist individuals in having a clear and factual view of sexuality providing them with information about skills for taking care of their sexual health and help them acquire skills made decision now and in the future. Sex education will give youth appropriate knowledge; help them clarify an act in accordance with self, family and moral values. Sex education will impart refusal skills which will help the youth ward off sexual abuse and harassment (Igbanago, 2001).To this end, sex education could be seen as a type of education which could not be generally acceptable in a heterogeneous society like Nigeria. In a similar view, the National Guidelines Task Force (NGTF) 1996 observed that a great number of school Heads and teachers do not have the knowledge of sex education. Bauchi state in particular is predominantly inhabited by Muslim communities where Islam does not allow free atmosphere of discussing sex education issues among the people. However, Igbanago (2001) stated that in African setting sex is looked upon as dirty words. Issues relating to sex are seen as cultural taboo. Parents and teachers are uncomfortable talking about it; this may be because of the fact that many of them did not receive training in the subject. Sound foundations of sexual knowledge help the individual to dispel sexual myths superstitions and misinformation that hinder proper understanding or create confusion. Accurate information enable the individual to think critically and make sound decisions and also take responsibility for sexual health. However, in his reaction Ogechukwu(2016) emphasized that even the developed countries such as Britain and USA where sex education is been taught to the students have the highest record of teenage pregnancies in the western World. Caron and Bethan (1988) maintained that knowing and feeling that we are normal person can go a long way to increase our sense of our personal worth and self esteem, Hence, the need for sex education among students.

#### **The influence of religion and cultural belief's on introduction of sex education in Nigeria:**

Invariably religion and cultural beliefs continue to pose a daunting challenge to the successful implementation of sex education in Nigeria, While Christianity is seen as less rigid and highly adaptable to societal changes. Islam is very rigid and not acceptable to any changes as well as not receptive to any subject whose content is at variance with its ideologies. The idea of intermingling of people of the opposite sex, half naked dressing and female assertiveness is seriously frown at by Islam. Christianity tolerates the idea of protective sex as a measure of avoiding 'sinful 'abortions but frown at masturbation and covetousness (Lauman, 1994).Islam injunctions believed that both the Islamic moral philosophy and the social system of Islam have adequately taken care of sex education. It is strongly believed that religious knowledge be it Islam or

Christianity helps children to cultivate religious attitude towards life and orients them towards self purification, self actualization and socialization. Both Christianity and Islam do not see the need of sex education in Nigeria (Adunola, 2005). Sex 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 would hide our feelings. A study conducted by Akande on sex education revealed that 70% of the respondents aged between 10-18 years had never discussed sex with their parents. In his view Adenula(2005) opined that in Nigeria cultural heterogeneity, multiculturalism ethics, social status and other traditions influence rules and norms that affect the perception of parent, teachers and others and therefore serve as a catalyst against the successful implementation of sex education in the country. According to Greenberg (2000) religion and spiritual beliefs influence feelings about morality, sexuality behavior, adultery, divorce, contraception and abortion. Some of the positive impact of religion on sexuality has said to include assertiveness. Postponement of age, first sexual experience diminished and permissiveness, responsible relationship in marriage and parenthood. According to Laumann (1994) conservatives or traditional beliefs avert strong impact on sexual experience. The mere mention of the word "sex" evoke sentiment with regard to teaching the youth in secondary schools. This is because religion generally and African culture regard such word "sex" as taboo and as such they shy away from mentioning them. However subject like Biology, Health science or Health Education are more acceptable and palatable to the vast majority or traditional background. Lawal (2015) reported that it is now becoming clear shockingly thought to many parents who have children in secondary schools that their wards are being secretly coerced into participating in sex education. Many adolescents find their parents and teachers ill-equipped or afraid to teach them about sexual issues. The role of sex education in adolescents' sexual issues cannot be over emphasized. A typical example is the northern part of Nigeria where young girls marry between the aged of 13- 15 years, this practice posed great problems for the teenagers and they reach physical, emotional social or economical maturity. This sexual activities at an early age may perhaps lead infertility and vesico vaginal Fistula(VVF) (Abdullahi,2003).Abdullahi further stated that about half of the HIV infection Worldwide non occurs among people younger than the age of 25.Estimate from the World Health Organization(WHO), rate sexually transmitted diseases(STDs) as higher among adolescents than for any other age group, all these problems can be brought to under reasonable control through given sex education knowledge to the adolescents. A number of researchers had conducted studies on adolescents sexual status such as the one reported by Booth (1999) in Ibadan in which he indicated that young people of 16 years of age are the mean for initial sexual experience. It is undoubtedly true that human behaviours have influenced the incidence, prevalence pathogenesis of various diseases. The risk factors for sexually transmitted diseases are directly related to patterns of sexual behaviors in the community. Numerous studies by scholars have concluded that the majority of young including those who are sexually active lack basic information about reproductive health.

## **II. Statement of the problem**

Educational attainment and civilization have significant influence on the life of the individual. When dealing with sensitive issues like sexual relationship the individual is required to make the wisest choice in his/her complex alternatives .Bauchi state is predominantly inhabited by Muslim communities such as the Hausa 's the Fulani's and Jarawa's. Islamic religious teachings have put some restrictions on sex education among the youth. Conversely, Nigeria today is witnessing an increased rate of problems associated with adolescent sexual problems .Among these problems are sexual perversions such as homosexuality, lesbianism, rape, prostitution and sexual harassment. These unwanted social vices could be curtailed if proper guidance through sex education could be provided to the youth. This study therefore, investigated the perception of parents and teachers towards the introduction of sex education in senior secondary schools in Bauchi state, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the study:**

The purpose of the study is to find out whether the people of Bauchi state are interested in sex education to be introduced in their senior secondary schools.

### **Significance of the study**

The significance of this study is to mobilize both parents and teachers to appreciate the importance of sex education to their children and help in addressing issues relating to sexual abuse among the youth.

### **Research questions:**

This research study tries to answer the following questions;

1. To what extent will sex education be included in senior secondary schools curriculum in Bauchi state?
2. To what extent does sex education could change the attitude of students towards sexual promiscuity among the youth in Bauchi state?
3. To what extent does religion and cultural belief accept the teaching of sex education in Bauchi state?

### **Methodology:**

The research design adopted in this research work was descriptive survey. The populations of the study consist of all parents who are having children in senior secondary schools and their teachers in Bauchi State. The samples were drawn from 10 out of 20 Local Government Areas in the state. A total of 300 parents as well as 300 teachers were used for the studies that were selected through purposeful random sampling. A questionnaire titled perception of parents towards introducing sex education in Bauchi state senior secondary schools (POPTSEBSSS) and another one titled perception of teachers towards introducing sex education in Bauchi State senior secondary schools (POTTSEBSSS) were designed to elicit information from the respondents. The questionnaire has 10 items statement. The instruments were divided into two sections (A & B) sections. Section A, comprised of personal information of the respondents such as gender, Age, educational qualification, Employment etc. while section B comprised of questionnaire items constructed based on the variables of the study. The four point Likert scales of strongly agreed (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) were employed.

**Presentation of result:**

Perception of parents towards introducing sex education in Bauchi State

ITEM	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.I want sex education in our secondary schools	28 (9.3%)	42 (14%)	75 (25%)	155 (51.67)
2.Adolecents are more susceptible to sex abuse when exposed to sex education	146 (48.67%)	66 (22%)	52 (17.3)	36 (12%)
3.Societal attitude to sex education is negative	162 (54%)	65 (21.65%)	50 (16.67%)	23 (7.67%)
4.I have no interest in sex education	173 (57.67%)	67 (22.33%)	40 (13.43)	20 (6.67%)
5.Sex education expose people to sexual promiscuity	153 (52.67%)	72 (24%)	48 (16%)	22 (7.33%)
6.Sex education should be included in the school curriculum	40 (13.33%)	48 (16%)	66 (22%)	146 (48.67%)
7.Sex education will reduce the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS among students	100 (33.33%)	65 (21.67%)	52 (7.33%)	112 (37.33%)
8.Sex education will reduces sexual harassment among students	136 (45.33%)	71 (21.67%)	52 (17.33%)	34 (11.33%)
9.Teaching sex education is contrary to the teachings of my religion	149 (49.67)	65 (21.67%)	44 (14.66%)	22 (7.33%)
10.Sex education is detrimental to the moral behavior of the youth	162 (54%)	68 (22.67%)	46 (15.33%)	24 (8%)

Perception of Teachers towards introducing sex education in Bauchi State

Factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.I am familiar with teaching of sex education	158 (52.62%)	72 (24%)	49 (16.33%)	21 (7%)
2.I can teach sex education to my students	153 (51%)	78 (26%)	47 (15.66)	22 (7.33%)
3. Societal attitude to sex education is negative	163 (54.33%)	75 (25%)	43 (14.33%)	19 (6.33%)
4. Sex education is contrary to the teachings of my religion.	152 (50.66%)	73 (24.33%)	65 (21.66%)	10 (3.33%)
5.Sex education should be included in the school curriculum	12 (4%)	51 (17%)	65 (21.67%)	172 (57.3%)
6 .sex education will expose students to sexual promiscuity	149 (49.66%)	66 (22%)	48 (16%)	37 (12.33%)
7.Sex education should only be taught to female students	162 (54%)	68 (22.67%)	42 (14%)	28 (9.33%)
8.Sex education should be taught irrespective to gender differences	165 (55%)	64 (21.33%)	41 (13.66%)	30 (10%)
9.Sex education should exclusively be taught to married people	162 (54%)	58 (19.33%)	51 (17%)	29 (9.67%)
10.Sex education is detrimental to the moral behaviour of the students	157 (52.33%)	69 (23%)	53 (17.57%)	21 (7%)

**III. Discussion**

In the discussion, strongly agreed and agreed are regarded as simply agreed and strongly disagreed and disagreed are regarded as simply disagreed in the description of the findings.

**Research question 1:**

asked the respondents the extent to which sex education should be included in the school curriculum, based on this question the respondents both teachers and parents have popular opinion that sex education should not be included in the curriculum as far as 212 parents(70.67%) and 225 teachers (75%) were of the same view. Similarly, the respondents were of the opinion that societal attitude to sex education is negative as it has been indicated by about 227 parents (75.67%) and 238 teachers (79.3%) based on the result obtained from the table given above.

**Research question 2:**

asked the respondents whether sex education will expose students to sexual promiscuity, based on this question the respondents both parents and teachers perceived sex education as a way of exposing the students to sexual promiscuity simply because, as far as 225 parents(75%) agreed that sex education will expose the students to sexual promiscuity. Also a total of 215teachers (71.67%) have the opinion that sex education will exposed the students to sexual promiscuity. Also both teachers and parents perceived sex education as a type of education which is detrimental to the behaviour of the students. This view is indicated by the opinion of 227parents (75.67%) and 226 teachers (75.33%) accordingly

**Research question 3:**

asked the respondents on whether sex education is contrary to the teachings of their religion: based on this question, as far as 225 parents (75%) agreed that the sex education is contrary to the teachings of their religion thereby only 75parents (25%) disagreed with the view. In the same vein a total of 214 teachers (71.33%) are of the opinion that sex education is contrary to the teachings of the religion thereby only 86 teachers (28.67%) expressed contrary view on the assertion. Therefore, sex education should not be introduced in Bauchi state.

**Findings:**

Based on the above results obtained from the study, the findings are summarized as follows:  
Both parents and teachers were of the opinion that sex education should not be included into the senior secondary school curriculum.  
Both parents and teachers believed that sex education could expose the students to sexual promiscuity.  
Both parents and teachers believed that sex education is contrary to the teachings of their religion.  
The findings also revealed that irrespective to gender differences sex education should not be taught to any group of students.  
The findings also revealed that sex education could degenerate to immorality among the students.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the issue of sex education has become a serious challenge both to government and private sectors due to stiff resistance by majority of the existing communities that could be the stake holders of the move to introduce the sex education. The findings of the study revealed that majority of teachers and parents have negative attitude towards introduction of sex education in Bauchi State. Although, a number of scholars are of the view that sex education has some benefits to the youth but, cultural beliefs and religious influence are the major factors militating against its introduction especially in Bauchi State.

#### **V. Recommendations**

- Sex education has religious and socio cultural implications in its broader context, therefore a lot of public awareness and sensitization campaign has to be conducted before introducing it in Bauchi state.
- The delicate nature of adolescents and their susceptibility to sex-abuse due to puberty may render the introduction of the programmed as rather curse than blessing to the general public.
- Sex education is seen by many people as God given talent and wisdom towards human and animal species, it should therefore remain as spontaneous knowledge which does not require any training by somebody. In line with this assertion cautious measures should be taken before introducing the programmed in Bauchi state.
- Nigeria is a multi-ethnic and multicultural society which comprise of many communities that share divergent opinion on sex affairs, therefore government should ensure that popular opinion of the majority is taken into consideration when introducing the programmed in Bauchi state.

- The healthy grows of every unborn child depend largely on pre-natal care and therapy he/she receives during pregnancy period. I therefore strongly recommend that sex education be skeptically taught to married men and women only.

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