



## Problems of Teaching Sex Education in Secondary Schools in Adamawa State

Bamanga, Jabbo Song<sup>1</sup>, Kikiwa, Ndanda,<sup>2</sup> Kemuel, Kaula<sup>3</sup>

Department of Physical and Health Education Adamawa State College of Education, Hong<sup>1,2,3</sup>

**Correspondence:** [bamangasonjabbo@gmail.com](mailto:bamangasonjabbo@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

*The study is on the problems of teaching sex education in senior secondary schools in Adamawa State. The aim of the paper is to identify the problems of teaching sex education starting with who is to teach sex education to the students. The concept of sex education was cited differently by different authors. Attitudes of parents, teachers, religious leaders and students towards teaching sex education in schools were also x-rayed. Methods and materials for teaching sex education were discussed. The study proffered necessary recommendations for address. The identified problems of teaching sex education in senior secondary schools in Adamawa state.*

**Key words:** Problem, Secondary School, Sex Education, Teenage, Teaching.

### Introduction

Sexually Transmitted Diseases were on the increase in the society. The case of HIV/AIDS was identified in 1980's. Many people had lost their relatives and dear ones. The number of Orphans and Widows increased. AIDS became a monster and had come to stay. This made the Government and Non-Governmental organizations to start talking and advocating about the diseases in the open. This involved open talk on causes of the disease and its effects. Safety measures were called for as well as abstinence. This led to the call for the teaching of sex education/Adolescent reproductive health. The subject aims at equipping children with matters related to sexuality.

Sex education changed the name Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health and life planning skills. A rose would still be a rose by whatever name it is called. To most, sex education was like sending children to hell. It is as a result of this backdrop that this paper intends to analyze the problems of teaching sex education.

Sex education is a systematic program designed to prepare people to understand human relationship and to perform responsibilities, their roles as both family members and community members over the ages. Sex education has been a crucial thing to its sensitiveness and also as a

result of the wrong assumption held by many people on sex. The problem among adolescence students of some secondary schools today more especially some post primary schools, the teaching of sex as a subject is a question whether teaching sex education in secondary school is a daily game or is the issue for those who do not receive proper education on the subject matter.

Therefore, teaching of sex education in our schools should never be over looked. The teaching of sex education whether formal or informal from the attitudes of their families and later on them and the society as a whole. Homes, schools and places of worship are the best places where discussion of matter relating to sex and sexual life could be presented and learnt, but some of our society's leaders, parents and religious leaders do not like to discuss such issue freely. They thought when such is discussed freely among youths, could motivate them to practice it. This wrong notion had forced many of our youths to consider sex as a taboo in its totality (Bulus, 1988).

However, it is not a taboo as such. The youths in our various secondary schools had gotten proper enlightenment on sex education. Some critics assumed it as education for sexual acts and the provision of sex information. Parenthood education suggests sex education for specific role of child rearing while parenthood education seems to focus on the concepts of population control and methods of limiting population size (Jemuel, 2000).

Sex education is a concept that could mean a comprehensive development programme extending from infancy to maturity which is planned and executed to produce social and moral disable attitudes practices, good and personal behaviours. The term sex education and family life education are cooperative efforts executed by the homes, schools, places of worships and communities to provide selected learning experience and concerning the needed interest, values and good human psycho-sexual development; primarily as related to love marriage, parenthood and family life aimed at helping the youths to develop attitudes, values, goals and practices lays on sound knowledge that will enable them expressed the sexual and mating impulse as constructive not destructive force in our modern democratic living as social animals. In a developing country like Nigeria, the society has been strongly against discussing sex education either at home or in schools due to cultural and religious factors. Those against it in the other hand feel that with their knowledge about sex education, our youths will now indulge in pre-

marital sexual relationship thereby exposing them to sexually transmitted diseases or dropping out of schools at teenage (Shertger & Stone, 1976).

Recent experiences and educational awareness by parents have made them prepare their children for the changes ahead so that they will be able to understand themselves and their minds as they grow up. It has been noted that for youths to be good to themselves and lead to successful life a child needs guidance that will make him acceptable in the society. It is further observed that sex education among the adolescent students is described as an assistance made available to an individual by personally qualified and adequately trained men or women to an individual adolescent to help manage his own life (Bulus, 1988). Adult students behave negatively toward sex education, this often result to unwanted pregnancies in young girls. Sexual transmitted diseases such as gonococcus, syphilis and HIV/AIDS. Death through abortion by crude methods of miscarriages and frustration. All these constitute to problems to adolescents' health.

Turner (1980) opined that sex and family education have physical or structural aspects as well as psychological and social aspect or components. The structural aspect or component of sex education refers to the provision of knowledge regarding part of female and male reproduction organs. The reproductive organs determine the sex of the individual. The physical aspect of sex education encompasses those functions of each structure or organs and the part it plays in the sexual and reproductive process. From birth, the human body continues to undergo changes in structures and functions until adulthood is reached. For example, there is increase in size, height, weight and the corresponding appearance of secondary sexual characteristics such as growth of pubic hair and changes in voice. The structural changes are also accompanied by corresponding physiological changes such as the production of sex cells or gametes. At puberty and adolescence stage, male and female reproductive organs reach maturity. At this stage, boys and girls are capable of reproduction. These structural and physiological changes of boys and girls require the application of appropriate methods and principles of learning in order to direct, guide and encourage people to develop desirable sexual attitude and behaviours.

Jemuel (2000) said psychological aspect of sex education refers to the provision of knowledge and feeling related to sexual behaviours. For example, there is a progressive development of interest in the opposite sex. As such girls wear make-up and look nice and boys groom and dress well. Ajala, (2001) contributed that the social aspect or component of sex education is concern

with the discussion and examination of specific roles that society expects people to perform according to their sex. Example, the female is expected to be home bound and is brought up for child rearing while the male is socialized to accept the role of breadwinner.

### **Concepts of Sex Education**

Brower (2002) cited the term sex education sometimes referred to as parenthood education, population education continues to convey different meanings among family members and communities. You will agree that sex education among some communities erroneously or wrongly regarded as activities directed towards enabling people to acquire the necessary skills in sex act. Sex education sometimes also perceived as the provision of sex knowledge or information. However, a proper understanding of the concept of sex education will show that sex education goes beyond these ideas. Human sexuality is another related term of sex education. Human sexuality refers to the sexual nature and characteristics of human beings. It encompasses the biological, Psychological, socio-cultural and ethical aspect of human sexuality from the above view, sex education is a comprehensive and systematic developmental programme extending from infancy to maturity. It is planned and directed to produce socially and morally desirable sexual attitudes, practice and personal behaviours.

Philemon (2004) stated that sex education and family life education attempt to help young people to develop attitudes, values, goals, practice that will enable them to express their sexual and mating impulses in a manner, socially and ethically acceptable. Family life and sex education should therefore, be a cooperative effort by the home, school, church, mosques and community.

Augustine (1990) posited that sex education goes beyond sexual practice as other people thought at to be. In addition to that it enables the individual to have knowledge of: Difference between the sexes related characteristics; Making courtship in a health manner and preparation for marriage; Having knowledge of physiological sex up of human and issues related to conception child birth and upbringing and understand changes that take place as child grows up to the man hood and how to confirm with these changes

## **Sex Education/Adolescent Reproductive Health**

Due to growing number of cases of STD (sexual transmitted diseases) and unwanted pregnancies among our teenagers. Parents have become more concerned and worried that teaching of sex education in our schools is to expose their children to negative effect of early sexual practice. Parents have realized that children have come to learn lot of things concerning sex without having taught them. This is as a result of immoral pictures and films they watch. It is obvious that they are taught about sex education to guide them against the negative implications of sex on early life that they ask their parents many questions, parents and teachers have now seen the need to teach their children about sex to prepare them for future. There are cases of unwanted pregnancies and untimely death as a result of desire about the pregnancies. Such education will eradicate such beliefs (superstition and beliefs) the youths have to be taught about the challenges they will face as they develop from childhood to adolescence age. These include:

Menstruation: - sign of sexual maturity on the part of the girls so as to prepare them for it;  
Nocturnal mission: - natural discharge that occurs in every individual; Masturbation: - a method of having sexual satisfaction individually. The negative effect of it should be emphasized;

**Homo sexuality:** - having sex relationship with person of the same sex.

**Contraception:** - the use of device to prevent pregnancies. The effect of such should be highlighted; Reasons for circumcision as it makes the penis to be neat and reduce changes of cancer of the penis. Teaching of sex education provides the youths the feeling of self-satisfaction and is able to manage their own bodies sexually as they grow to maturity (Sertger & Stone, 1976).

Tunner (1980), said that sex education is an aspect of education which deals with the teaching of sex attitudes and behaviours in order to enlighten the pupils about sex. The growth and development organs and care are also taught. When pupils are taught about the parts and functions of sex organs, they will be able to take good care of them and they will desist from immoral use of the organs.

According to Meeks (1992), sex education when properly taught will make the students know the effect of venereal diseases such as HIV/AIDS and gonorrhea. According to Ajala (2001),

teaching of sex education makes students to know why boys commit evils of raping and unwanted pregnancy. Sex education thus influences students' reaction of sex.

According to Bucher (2000) defined sex education as a comprehensive and systematic development programme extending from infancy to maturity. It is planned and directed to produce socially and morally desirable sexual attitudes, practices and personal behaviours. According to Akin (2002) defined sex education as a provision and organization of learning experience related to sex matters. The purpose is to provide the pupils with scientific information with a view to removing the misconceptions above the subject and to develop positive and critical attitudes towards the practice and satisfaction of sexual feeling.

Azuzu (2003) said that sex is one of the most crucial things in the life of any young person, whether the teachers or the parents should handle this problem. However, reading from books and learning are of more important than learning by imitation. His feeling about the impressions builds up about him by his parents and his teachers. Parents should always tell their children the truth when questions about sex education are asked. In answering their questions, the use of tongue counts a lot. The father, mother or teacher should be free from ashamed when talking about sex to their children. There is nothing wrong to a normal child that shows healthy interest in sex. Repression may lead a child to hide his normal curiosity. Parents and teachers should be example, show the young people that they find true happiness and affliction by living a pure sexual life and then each bestowing his/her whole affliction on a young lady of about his own age young who has also led a pure sexual life.

Alaeye (2002), observed a highly controversial sets of opinions. The first believes that children should be allowed to find out for themselves. Other people believe that it is the job for both the school and home and then shall be discussed with boys and girls who are about to reach the age of puberty. If we agree that sex education should be discussed with our boys and girls at a certain age, then the following questions arise: Who should teach it? Where should it be taught? Therefore, in answering the questions above, sex education should be taught both at home and in schools.

In case of interaction with the girls, it is for the mothers to share their experience with them while fathers should discuss it with the boys, listening to the radio interview on the same topic, sometimes ago, a boy in secondary school said that his father used to discuss sexual matters with

him before he sleeps. In schools, it is not a subject for every teacher but few are selected, most especially those who teach biology, health science, nature study and allied subjects, related topics are taught, such as reproduction in animals and plants, pollution and fertilization.

Usually, there are some married teachers in secondary school who are old enough to be the pupils' parents. Such teachers may be able to teach the subject effectively without any anti-social behaviours resulting from it. There should be no any particular time devoted to the teaching of sex education, but it could be discussed as a result of questions from the students. Azuwaine (1976) looked at the word "education" first, according to him education is not identical with such process as an institution, training or indoctrination, and it is quite incompatible with such aim as making people behave in a certain way. Education aims at initiating people in to work activities concerning with learning and understanding. Sex education therefore, cannot logically be given certain facts or only training in relevant skills (whatever these might be) nor can it involve imposing a particular attitude towards sexual morality. If it is to be judged by the same criteria as other areas of education is the maximum possible degree of knowledge and understanding concerning sexual behaviours.

The importance of sex education to post primary school. Teachers and parents perceived sex education as a bad act in the society and girls produce abundant children. He suggested the need for sex education to be taught to children wisely by parents and teachers to clear such misconception from the mind. The need for teaching sex education in our secondary schools as good act because young people learned much on how they would live a happy life. They would also learn to be husbands and wives. In view of this statement, the researcher then concludes that without good provision of learning materials there is no how the pupils would understand the subject (Ajala, 1981). Alaeje (2002) stated that health and happy family is one of the goals of sex education in the school, especially at secondary level stands the better opportunity of doing this as most of their students are people approaching the puberty.

Agbe (1987) surveyed from four hundred (400) primary and secondary schools throughout the country revealed that only 40% of the teachers taught period in the school time table. Federal ministry of education pamphlet (1989) title "Health Education" , was published which states that there are grounds which believed that a better understanding of the reproduction process in man is nature, sex and sexual behaviours and the basic facts about population may help many people



to achieve more rotational conduct in their sex lives and in family relation. Children and their primary school were presented to the government in 1997. The authors stated that sex education is a parental responsibility. The suggestion is that each school has a defined policy on sex education made in consideration with the parents that children should understand the biological nature of reproduction that ethical aspect of sex education should be avoided. It is recognized that some teachers will not feel comfortable in the situation. In the representation mentioned above, calls are been made to local education authorities and to the central government to take a great interest in the field of sex education in one or more of the following ways; be encouraging increased activity under various sections of the curriculum of the school and by encouraging special cooperation with parents.

### **Parents Problems in Sex Education**

Education has come to be so generally conducted and directed by special agencies and institutions that many adults find it difficult to consider the activities and influences of the home a significant and potent education forces. It is time that parents have generally delegated to the school, the task of teaching children certain elementary skills and organized knowledge, but they have not divested themselves of responsibility for the continuous direction of the children's education. Nor have they lost in the process of certain pervasive control over the children's development (Philemon, 2004).

In sex education, as in other fields that involve the settlements and attitudes, the home occupies a distinct place. In addition to getting its work ahead of the other forces, the home as an educational agency has two distinctive characteristics. It normally operates through the affections, in large measure unconsciously, and so determines attitudes of liking or disliking with relation to almost all kinds of experiences, objects, personalities, situations, ideas and actions. The home operates continuously in contrast to their influences; for even when children are old enough to go to school and to associate with many companions the home is there with its own tradition. For better or for worse, parents fix children's values and purposes, whether or not they succeed in carrying out their intentions (Jemuel, 2000).



## **Attitude of Religions Leaders towards Teaching of Sex Education**

Places of worship are best places where discussion on matters relating to sex and sexual life could be profitably concluded. Some of our church and mosques leaders do not like to discuss freely on the issue of sex. They believe discussing sex free among youth would encourage them to put it to practice. This wrong notion has made them forced many of our youths to consider sex as a taboo to receive proper teaching on sex education. The problems of discriminates sex as in most of our schools is due to lack of proper education on the subject by our religious leaders. Efficient and appropriate knowledge concerning sex education and correct attitude towards sexual life are very necessary and important for health, physical and social life of an individual (Abubakar & Saidu, 2014).

## **Attitude of Teachers toward Teaching of Sex Education in Schools**

One of the attitudes of teachers toward sex education is that there is no significant difference in the attitude of male and female teachers towards the teaching of sexuality education in schools. The reason one may adduce for the sameness in the attitude of both sexes of teachers is that all of them working the same environment, have observed that students experience a lot of changes during adolescence and thus manifest behaviours that are anti-social and inimical to their general well-being. This attitude lends credence to that of (Ugoji, 2009) where she found out that there was no significant difference in the attitude of male and female teachers towards teaching of sexuality education in our schools. Abubakar and Sa'idu (2014) revealed that there was no significant difference between male and female teachers towards teaching sexuality education in secondary schools in Nigeria.

Another attitude is that there was significant difference in the attitude of less experienced and experienced teachers towards the teaching of sexuality education. The difference observed in the attitude of less experienced and experienced teachers towards the teaching of sexuality education may be due to the fact that some of the teachers have spent many years in the school and have become conversant with the patterns of adolescents' behaviour, their worries about their looks, their desires to experiment on new things and therefore see the need to furnish them with useful information for healthy development.

Finally, there was no significant difference in the attitudes of married and unmarried teachers towards the teaching of sexuality education. Hearing the other side of people's, views on the subject (sex education), therefore, sex education is a systematic attempt to prepare young people to understand human relationship and to perform some responsibilities, their roles as both family members and community members. Sex education in its real term simply tries to explain to the parents and young people the extent to which this concept should be put into cognizance perception for fact. The question of sex is one of the most crucial word people talk about it, the knowledge of sex education help in developing a sound attitude to family life, marriage individual bodies and how issues are expressed towards members of the same sex. Sex education is a plan in the school curriculum which is aimed at enlightening parents, teachers and students on the important of sex education in the society: it tells how life begins. It also teaches us about diseases associated to sex and help students to live a happy life.

According to Akin (2002) there should be education of child learning. He stated further that "since 1961, members of important government reports have made references to young people's need for adequate sex education, moral education and for personal relationship. Sex education could mean a comprehensive development programme extending from infancy to maturity which is planned and executed to produce social and morally desirable attitudes, practice and personal behaviours.

Furthermore, life and sex education are a cooperative effort by home, school and community to provide selected learning experience as an guide for young people in school and outside school concerning the needs, interest, problems and goals that arise out of human psycho-sexual development primarily as relate to love, marriage, parenthood and family life. It is aimed at helping young people to develop attitude, values and enable practice based on sound knowledge that will enable them to express their sexual and maturing destructive force and modern democratic living that is socially and ethically acceptable as well as personally satisfying (Azuzu, 2003).

Nicholas (1978) stated that the study of human sexuality will invariably touch upon some socially explosive issues; sexual promiscuity, contraception abortion; legitimacy; prostitution and homo sexuality are controversial issues. The changes sexual roles in our society resulting from alteration in traditional made roles are of great concern and interest to every individual. The need

for sex education is further related by existing problems such as the sharp increase in venereal diseases.

Bucher (2000) advocated that within the next decade, the majority of our secondary schools and public will in all livelihoods have some forms of sex education programme. Whether this change in our public school curriculum will be the solution to existing problem in the area of sex education or whether that we should take it up tomorrow. He further went on and says the impression that he has, has been with the key characteristics of the sex education programme that exist in most of our schools today are as follows: The courses have strong moralistic and propagandistic elements; then psychological aspect is sexuality; the courses are isolated and sexual materials are not integrated in to other relevant courses in the school system; the teachers of the course are inadequately trained for an inadequately define task;

Meek (1992) stated that the values of teaching sex education in schools, thus: to understand the anatomy and philosophy of sex organism; to lessen unwanted pregnancy among students and youths; to limit the idea of male and female deference that exists during early childhood; to give secondary school youth idea of preventive drugs against unwanted pregnancy; to lessen sex related diseases like gonorrhea, syphilis and HIV/AIDS and to avoid too much rape;

### **General Problems to be encountered**

Going by the rate at which our youths are indulging themselves in sexual practices thus creating immoral acts and social problems. There is therefore, the need to introduce sex education in our schools. These are the problems which concern teachers: what moral right has a teacher to teach sex education; method and materials to present the lesson; learning experience to be provided; adopting sex education in to the school curriculum; and getting the community in acceptance of teaching sex education (Ajala, 2001).

### **Remedy of the Attitude of Parents, Teachers, Religions Leaders and Students toward Teaching Sex Education in Schools/Preventive Measures**

The task of teaching sex education in the school is not an easy one. To overcome these problems, both school and the community have to be involved in this great task: in the first place, the school should make use of leaders to existing clubs in the who would effluence the younger

members to develop positive sex; in secondary school, the school should invite people from outside like religious leaders, doctors, medical personnel, and other health workers to talk about aspects of sex education; teachers handling the subject/topic should not teach it with sentiment and emphasis should be placed on sexual practice only, but making the students see the implications of immorality (Nicholas, 1978). Moreover, in Africa as well as other developing countries like Nigeria, even up to the World, “sex was never discussed even up to present time”. It is a word not usually mentioned or discussed in most respected homes. They are as well against the teaching of sex education in schools. While some of thought felt that discussing sex in schools may attempt to create social problems. Therefore, the teaching of sex education in our secondary schools should be never a problem as such. The knowledge of sex education help to developing a sound attitudes towards family life marriage, individuals body and how issues are been expressed towards members of the other sex. Through the teaching of sex education: formally or informally, children would learn much about sex, either from the members of the family or later on by the society as a whole.

### **Methods and Materials for Teaching Sex Education**

Students engage when instructional materials emphasized active and experiential learning. Just as in other curriculum area, using role play, small groups, class discussion and videos in sexual health education can bring the curriculum to life. Videos can be an entertaining way to introduce content and raise issues in the sexual health classroom. While there are many videos, not all are appropriate for the classroom.it is important to find the right media and to use it effectively to ensure students learning are optimized.

Reason: videos can stimulate discussion by “breaking the ice” on sensitive topics, it can increase comfort by giving the information visually example how to use condom (both for male and female) and illustration complex or abstract concepts (such as internal anatomy and physiology) through animated images (Brower, 2002).

### **Who Should Teach Sex Education?**

**Parents:** are their children’s first and most important sex educators, especially in the area of values and behavioural expectations and they need to know in advance what is being taught, feel confident about the teacher and be able to opt out with no stigma for their children.

**Teacher:** school should also be an important support in educating these children. Here, there are some reasons why sex education be taught in schools:

Good sex education encourages abstinence, practicing safe sex early in youth, large number of teens are having sex, teach young boys to grow into matured adults, good sex education does not teach kids to have sex, it is the parents' job to teach the faith, and the more kids know, the more likely they are to say no (Abubakar & Sa'idu, 2014).

### **Religions Leaders:**

Places of worship are best places where discussion on matters relating to sex and sexual life could be profitably concluded. Some of our church and mosques leaders do not like to discuss freely on the issue of sex. They believe discussing sex free among youth would encourage them to put it to practice. This wrong notion has made them forced many of our youths to consider sex as a taboo to receive proper teaching on sex education (Bulus, 1988).

### **Conclusion**

Sex education is a very crucial issue, which needs to be handled carefully. To this and however, in any situation where a member of people are involved, the people should be treated as an individual not in group or something of that set. People should be employed with sound education background to carry out this assignment in order to make it a success. On the part of the youths, they should take all that people may be saying concerning sex education into cognizance and digest it seriously. Because the programme is geared towards the betterment of the entire citizens of this country at large.

Beside this programme, it is very important to the parents because their daughters may not be carrying unwanted pregnancy to their homes and boys on the other hand may save their parents from quite a number of troubles. That is to say if a boy puts a girl in a family way, obviously he is going to take care of the girl.

### **Recommendations**

Having seen the problems confronting teaching of sex education in secondary schools in Adamawa state, the following recommendations were put forward:

1. Various forms of education programmes could be used for men. Example national Planned Parenthood Federation (N.P.P.F).
2. The researchers also suggest that the concept of sex education should be made clear to the people and their children. This will eradicate the taboo, cultural beliefs and misconception of sex education by some parents over their children especially their daughters.
3. The teachers and students should organize research seminars and workshops about the sex education in the schools.
4. Religious leaders should include sex in planning their programmes for sex affaires to improve the children's, parents, teachers' relationship.
5. Community leaders should also enlighten parent/children on the dangers of sexually transmitted diseases through health personnel
6. Children should be instructed on the dangers of premarital sex in the society.
7. Government should provide fund to purchase the items necessary for the implication of the programme on sex education.

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