

PARENTS' RELIGION AS A DETERMINANT OF COMMUNICATION ON ADOLESCENTS' SEXUALITY IN SOUTHWEST NIGERIA

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Abstract

There has been an increasing level of perverted sexual activities among teenagers. This has resulted in early sexual debut of the young ones, engagement with multiple partners and adolescent pregnancy in Nigeria and her neighbouring countries. These is often associated with total lack and uni-directional, weak and autocratic communication channels about sexuality within the family. Adolescents may seek information about sexuality from distorted, incomplete and unreliable information sources, such as the social media, peers, novels, music and magazines. This behaviour has resulted in gaps in communication, which have had long-term consequences on their health and wellbeing. This research work investigated influence of parent's religion as a determinant on communication on sexuality by parents and their children in their teen years. The study utilized a descriptive research design. A total of 721 parents of adolescents were chosen through a multistage sampling technique from three (3) Southwest States in Nigeria. Data were collected, using an instrument titled "Parent's Religion and Communication on Adolescents' Sexuality" (PRCAS). Facial, content and construct relevance of the instrument was ensured. It was also subjected to assessment for reliability, using test re-test reliability method and a coefficient of 0.87 was realized. Statistics such as Frequency count, percentage and Chi-square were employed in analysing the data. Results revealed 16.7% of parents had poor level of communication on sexuality with their adolescents, while 23.1% averagely communicate on sexuality. It also showed that a reasonable percentage (60.2%) of parents had relatively good level of communication on sexuality with their teenage children. Also, the parents' religion essentially shaped exchange of information on adolescents' sexuality. It was suggested that parents must be made to give sexual health information to adolescents. They should communicate with their teenage children on essential sexuality issues. They should be mentally and emotionally ready to serve as their children sexuality educator right from the early stage of their lives.

Keywords: Religion, parents' communication on sex-related matters, adolescents sexuality and sex-related matters.

Introduction

A cursory examination of the total number of people living in under-developed countries of the world showed that adolescent number is prominently large, yet their “sexuality and reproductive health (SRH) needs are largely unmet. In Nigeria, over 35 million people are aged 10–19 years and 3% of 15-19 years old are HIV positive” (WHO, 2013). The danger of sickness and death among expectant mothers is rising because of difficulties between gestation and delivery, such as impeded labour, precocious labour, and abrupt abortion. During the ages of 15 and 18 years, five million teenagers have dangerous miscarriages yearly and 70,000 of these fatalities are connected to abortions. (WHO, 2020). In Southwest Nigeria, casual observations have revealed an upsurge in teenagers' genital taking calculated risks conduct. Many adolescents have had early sexual intercourse at young ages. Many have more than one individual with whom they have sexual activities. Most young people in the vicinity started dating around the ages of 10 and 16 (FederalMinistry of Health (FMH), 2015).

There is overwhelming evidence that the home has a major role in socialisation throughout the teenager's existence (Santrock, 2005). Consequently, parental involvement in their life is essential to that adolescent complete growth. Their sexual development, which includes their sex lives and the avoidance of taking calculated risks sexual activity start at home. Parents act as the child's initial point for interaction and the primary place they learn about sexual roles. The learning process could form a template for future sexual behaviour of adolescents (Mwangangi, 2019). Hence, ccommunication about adolescents' sexuality between parents or caregivers and offspring was found to pose a barrier during a variety of sex practises. Due to the unilateral, authoritarian, and fragile nature of interactions involving parents and their kids in poor nations like Nigeria, it seems that this is not the case. Teenagers are never allowed to openly voice their opinions. (Haruna, Hu, KaiWah Chu, Mellecker, Gabriel & Ndekao, 2018).

Religion appears to be a cardinal influencer of the young persons awareness and social ability level. Some parents find sexual discussion with adolescent uncomfortable. A sizable portion of mothers who have conversations want to adhere to religious moral standards on reproductive activity and prevention. This is due to the fact that fervently religious individuals frequently see themselves as being in competition with a sex-obsessed mainstream society and public culture for their young people's sexual socialisation. According to perception, there are actually a variety of means by which faith might impact teenage eroticism and parent-child communication. (Koleic, Landripet, Tafro, Jurkovid, Milas Stihofner, 2021). This can affect thoughts regarding intimate relations, legal sex prior to marriage, explicit material, birth control, and other topics. Parents' opinions and disposition towards sex knowledge and its suitability for teenagers are commonly connected to whatever parents offer youngsters about sexually-related subjects, their interaction fashion, and the frequency of such interactions (Krull, Pearce & Jennings, 2021). Notwithstanding the correlation between religion and conservative genital beliefs, there is no evidence linking faith to trends in parent-child communication on sexual matters (Regnerus, 2007).

In view of the sexuality challenge and needs of adolescents, some studies like Quinn and Lewin (2019) have focused on the dire need of parents to have interactive communication on sexuality with

their children from childhood. It has been observed that while some studies, such as (Mwangangi et al, 2019) have indicated positive influence of parents' religion on parenting of adolescents on sexuality, they are scanty and inconclusive. Therefore, there is the need to determine the precise mechanism by which parents' religion may influence positive communication on sexual behaviour of adolescents with the aim of protecting them against risk-taking sexual behaviour.

Thus, this study investigated parents' religion as a determinant of exchange of views between parents and their young ones on sexuality in Southwest Nigeria. The following questions and hypothesis were raised and formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the levels of parent-adolescents' communication on sexuality in South West Nigeria?
2. There is no significant association between parents' religion and communication on adolescents' sexuality in Southwest Nigeria.

Methodology

The investigation was undertaken using a survey-type descriptive-research approach. In Southwest Nigeria, a total of 721 fathers and mothers who had a minimum of one adolescent kid or ward were used. The sample was chosen, using a multiple-stage sampling process. Out of the six states in Southwest Nigeria, three were purposefully chosen as the initial stage. Ekiti, Ondo, and Osun States were purposefully chosen as the States. The majority of teenagers who have started dangerous sexual behaviours are found in these three southwest Nigerian States (ICF International and the National Population Commission, 2014). The state capitals of the three states were purposefully chosen in the second round. This was done to make sure that, in accordance with the study's important factors, an accurate representation included individuals from varied family origins, educational levels, religious affiliations, occupations, and values. As a result, Ado Ekiti in Ekiti State, Akure in Ondo State, and Osogbo in Osun State, were chosen as the three state capitals. The last step was using the purposeful selection approach to pick fathers and mothers who satisfy the researcher's inclusion requirements, i.e., only those who had a minimum of one teenager as a kid or care.

Data were collected with a self-constructed questionnaire titled "Parents' Religion and Communication on Adolescents' Sexuality (PRCAS). Section A of the instrument collected details of the characteristics, such as sex, educational level, family setting, occupation and religion. Section B was designed to obtain information on the practice of communication on adolescents' sexuality by parents and their adolescent children. The facial contents and construct of the questionnaire were ensured. It was also tested for reliability, using test re-test reliability method. Reliability coefficient of 0.87 was obtained. The research instrument was personally distributed and collected immediately after completion. Data were evaluated with "Frequency count, percentage and Chi square statistical analysis. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance".

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis

Research Question I:

What are the levels of parent-adolescent communication on sexuality in Southwest Nigeria?

Table 1: Level of Parent-Adolescents Communication on Sexuality

Levels of Communication on sexuality	Frequency	Percentage%
Poor	120	16.7
Average	166	23.1
Good	433	60.2
Total	719	100

According to Table 1, 120 (16.7%) of families had inadequate communication about sexuality with their children, whereas 166 (23.1% of parents) had average interaction. Additionally, data demonstrates that 433 (60.2%) of parents had positive communications with their children on sexuality. This implies that the majority of the parents had a good level of communication on sexuality with their adolescents and a few parents had a poor or an average communication level on sexual matters with their adolescent children.

Hypothesis: There is no significant association between parents' religion and communication on adolescents' sexuality in Southwest Nigeria.

Table 2: Chi square Analysis of Parents' Religion and Communication on Adolescents' Sexuality.

Parents Religion	Communication on Adolescents' Sexuality					
	Poor	Good	Total	χ^2	p- value	df
Christianity	180(31.2)	397(68.8)	577	6.850*	0.033	718
Islam	30(23.0)	100(77.0)	130			
Traditional	8(66.7)	4(33.3)	12			

p<0.05

Table 2 shows that Parental religion had a substantial impact on how teenagers communicated their sexuality ($\chi^2 = 6.850, p = 0.033 < 0.05$). It was decided against the null hypothesis. High and favourable impact magnitude. This implies that communication on adolescents' sexuality is determined by religion of parents.

Discussion

The descriptive analysis showed that 120 (16.7%) of the parents had a poor level of communication on sexuality with their adolescent, while 166 (23.1%) of the parents had an average level of communication on sexuality. It also showed that a good number 433 (60.2%) of parents had a good level of communication on sexuality with their adolescents. This implies that the majority of the parents had a good level of communication on sexuality with their adolescents and a few had a poor or an average communication with their adolescents on sexuality. This contradicts the finding of FMH (2012) that revealed that adolescents have little knowledge about sexuality from the family, because it is still a taboo subject rarely discussed between parents and children. It is also seen as a way of corrupting the children. Similarly, Obono (2010) earlier reported the practices of exchange of sex information among parents and their youngsters potentially to be negative. Consequently, adults do not discuss sexual topics with children. This could be attributed to the increased parents' understanding of the devastating effect of adolescents unwholesome sexual behavior and the negative impact of extra family factors, such as peer pressure, internet and social media, have on them. Therefore, parents have been challenged to increase discussions on sex safety with their younger ones.

According to the findings of the hypothesis, parents' religion had a big impact on how they talked to their kids about sexuality. It implies that parental discussions on teenage sexuality are influenced by religion. It can affect attitudes and views regarding intimate relations, legal premarital sex, pornography, contraception, and other topics. This is in agreement with the findings of Bastien et al. They claimed that when it came to sexual talk, one of the most important factors was religious membership. The results, however, go against Mbugua's (2007) conclusion that parental religion still seems to have less of an impact on communication between parents and adolescents. What is your own take concerning this result. Let your voice be heard just like in the previous result.

Conclusion

Relying on the discoveries of this study, it could be inferred that many parents' level of communication on adolescents' sexuality with their adolescents is good. Also, parents' religion influence communication on adolescents' sexuality.

Implications of the findings for Guidance and Counselling

There is a need for effective Guidance and Counselling services in schools and communities, going by the discoveries in this research. The finding is important for Health workers and Counsellors because it is geared toward providing adolescent-parent friendly reproductive health services and counselling generally on adolescent sexuality.

Recommendations

The following are offered for possible actions:

1. Parents should be encouraged to uphold the belief that sexual health information should be discussed the more with adolescents. Also, they should encourage discussions on adolescents' sexuality with them. Furthermore, regardless of their faith, parents need to be mentally and emotionally ready to talk with their kids about sexuality at an early age.
2. To provide and carry out appropriate counselling courses for behavioural topics involving teenagers and their guardians, counsellors must be aware of the effects of the results of the research.

3. Parents should be more transparent and accommodating in discussions on sexuality issues in agreement with their adolescents.

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