



Attitude of Christian Parents towards Sex Education in Etche, Rivers State

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Abstract

This study examined the attitude of Christian parents towards sex education in secondary schools in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State. The study adopted a survey research and the population consisted of Christian parents in Etche Local Government Area. Stratified random technique was used to determine the sample size of two hundred (200) Christian parents for the study. One research question and three hypotheses was used for the study. A self-made questionnaire titled "Sex Education Scale" (SES) was used for the study. The research questions were answered using percentage while the hypotheses were tested using chi-square at 0.05 level of significance. The result showed that majority of the Christians had positive attitude towards sex education while the non-Christians had negative attitude. The stud further revealed that there is no significance difference between the attitude of literate and illiterate Christian patents in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State. There is no significance difference between the attitude of male and female Christians towards sex education, it was also revealed that there is no significance difference between the attitude Christian parents from low and high socio-economic status towards sex education. Recommendations were made and conclusion reached.

Keywords: Attitude, Christian, Parents, Sex Education, Etche, Rivers State, Nieria.

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INTRODUCTION

Considering diversity in cultures, heritage especially in Africa and Etche in particular, the roles of women are clearly mapped out in any given family context. Every society whether primitive or modern has a way of teaching the younger ones the norms and values of such society and thus, women mostly are saddled with such responsibilities. The extent to which every woman performs this duty is observed by her offspring. There is a saying literally in Yoruba land that "A good child belongs to his/her mother". In other words, the woman takes the blame for any of her

bad offspring. This may sound unfair but it is generally acceptable by the Africans. Nobody will consider whether the father is responsible or not, even where such consideration is given, excuses will still be given to blame the mother for her child's irresponsibility.

Obiany (2005) says the lives of boys and girls are daily bombarded with sexually provocative programmes by the prints and electronic media and this has led to increase sexual permissiveness and abuse. This phenomenon emphasizes the need for proper sex education to give adequate information about sex to our overwhelmed youth especially girls. Knowledge of reproduction in biology alone is not sex education.

Many of the agitators have different views for their call. Sociologists like Anderson (2008) see sex education as necessary because training of children these days have virtually been transferred from home to the school. According to him, the reason is due to industrialization and specialization of institution, parents spend less time to train their children. Therefore, to give a complete education, schools also need to prepare the children for future family life as it is done in advanced countries.

Similarly, Nwomeh (2007) points out that there is need for sex education of teenagers in school because it teaches them the right attitude toward sex, eradication of false beliefs and information about healthy relationship between boys and girls. Thus, he threw his weight behind the crusade for sex education in secondary schools.

Abiola (2004) reports that 30% of death among females within the ages of 14-20 is due to abortion: an embarrassing situation. Sex education includes all the educational measures which in anyway may help young people prepare to meet the problems of sexual life that have their centre in sex instincts and inevitably come into some form of experience of every normal being. Sex education further stands for protection, preservation, extension, improvement and development of the family, based on accepted ethical ideals.

Statement of the Problem

Christian parents due to their religious backgrounds and upbringing have this consciousness or notion that talking about sex (educating their children on sex) is a "sin", rather they inculcate in their children the fear of "if anyone touches you, you will get pregnant"; that is mostly to the female children. And to their male children; "if you touch any girl, there will be tendency of the girl getting pregnant". This has been in the mindset of these youngsters. However, they (parents) forget the role early education plays as well as emphasized in the bible in Proverb 4:22, "train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it". The fact is these adolescents out of ignorance get wrong information from their friends, peer group and may end up in wrong hands. Christian parents need much awareness of the outcome of their attitude of sex education on their adolescence in the past. Therefore, the problem this study sought to investigate is: What is the attitude of Christian parents towards sex education of their children in secondary schools.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses testable at 0.05 level of significance are stated below:

- There is no significant difference in the attitude of Christian parents towards sex education with regard to their educational background.

- There is no significant difference in the attitude of Christian parents towards sex education with regard to their gender.
- There is no significant difference in the attitude of Christian parents towards sex education with regard to their socio-economic status (high and low economic status).

METHODOLOGY

The design for this study was descriptive survey which seeks to determine the attitude of Christian parents towards sex education in secondary schools in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State. The population of this study comprised all the Christian parents in Etche Local Government Area.

The stratified random sampling technique was used to select sample. The technique allowed equal representation of all the area being selected. A total of 200 Christian parents selected from the population was used as the sample size.

Questionnaire titled Sex Education Scale (SES) was used as the operational instrument. The questionnaire contains two sections, A and B. Section (A) comprises personal data of the respondents such as name, age, sex, occupation, religion. Responses should be based on filling the space. Section (B) consists of general items designed to measure Christian parents' attitude towards sex education. The response was based on four point Likert scale pattern of Strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Strongly agree = 4. Each respondent were required to respond to the item by ticking in each item.

The questionnaire was validated by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation from the Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt. The instrument was administered to respondents by the researcher. The researcher solicited for assistance from acquaintances for easy administration and collection of information from Christian parents. The data collected was analysed with chi-square statistics for the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference between literate and illiterate Christian parents on their attitude towards sex education. The research hypothesis 1 was answered using chi-square at 0.05 level of significance as shown on Table 1 below.

Table 1: Chi-square statistics of the attitude of literate and Illiterate Christian parents towards sex education

	Agreed	Disagreed	Total
Literate	68(49)	29(49)	98
Illiterate	31(51)	71(51)	102
Total	100	100	200

χ^2 calculated = 3.18; Critical value = 3.84.

The above table shows that the calculated χ^2 value of 3.18 is less than the critical value 3.84 at 98 df and 0.05 level of significance, therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative accepted.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference between the attitude of male and female Christian parents towards sex education. This research hypothesis was answered using chi-square at 0.05 level of significance on the Table 2 below.

Table 2: Chi-square statistics of the attitude of male and female Christian parents towards sex education

	Agreed	Disagreed	Total
Male	47(53)	59(53)	106
Female	53(94)	41(94)	94
Total	100	100	200

χ^2 calculated = 2.44; Critical value = 3.84.

Table 4.3 above indicates that the calculated χ^2 value of 2.44 is less than the critical value 3.84 at 98 df and 0.05 level of significance. This implies or states that there is no significant difference between the attitude of male and female Christian parents towards sex education was rejected and alternatively accepted.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant difference between the attitude of Christian parents of low and high socioeconomic status. The hypothesis was answered using chi-square at 0.05 level of significance on the Table 3 below.

Table 3: Chi-square statistics of the attitude Christian parents from low and high socio-economic status towards sex education

	Agree	Disagree	Total
Low	40(38.5)	30(31.5)	70
High	60(66)	60(54)	120
Total	110	90	200

χ^2 calculated 1.35; Critical value = 3.84 at 98df.

Table 3 shows that the calculated χ^2 value of 2.44 is less than the critical value 3.84 at 98df and 0.05 level of significance therefore, there is no significant difference between the attitude of low and high socio-economic status of Christian parents toward sex education was rejected and the alternatively accepted.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The finding on the attitude of Christian parents towards sex education in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State revealed that majority of Christian parents (60%) had positive attitude towards sex education as against the minority of (40%) which had negative attitude. This finding is in line with the study carried out by Comeuntochrist.Org (2017), who states that one of the functions of the Christian parent is to give support, protection and care to their children

throughout their school period and where this necessity is conspicuously lacking; their children are bound to suffer seriously in their sex life.

Hypothesis one investigates the attitude of literate and illiterate Christian parents towards sex education and the result of the hypothesis indicates that there is no significant difference between literate and illiterate Christian parents on sex education. This was supported by Mahajan and Sharma (2005), who said that literate parents believe in verbal communication methods while illiterate parents allow their children to gain knowledge from other sources such as television, magazine, pornographic materials which might not give them a positive information concerning sex but rather abuse their minds and arousing curiosity.

Hypothesis two investigates the attitude of male and female Christian parents. The result shows that the calculated χ^2 value of (2.44) is less than the critical value of (3.84) at 0.05 level of significance. It was rejected and alternatively accepted. This result indicates that there is no significant difference between the attitudes of Christian parents based on their gender.

Hypothesis three investigated the attitude of socio-economic status of Christian parents on sex education. The result shows that the calculated value of (1.35) is less than the critical value. Thus, the result calls for the reaction which was rejected and alternatively accepted. This means the attitude of Christian parents from high socio-economic status had more positive attitude on sex education than the attitude of Christian parents from low socio-economic status. This is in line with Demarest, Reisner, Anderson, Humphrey, Farguwhar and Stein who asserted that families with high socio-economic status often have more success in preparing their young children for sex education because they typically have access to wide range of resources to promote and support young children's development.

The following were the major findings:

- Majority of Christian parents had positive attitude towards sex education while the non-Christian parent had the minority, which was negative attitude and the sex life of the adolescent mainly depends on the care, love and guidance given or shown to them by their parents.
- It reveals that there is no significant difference between the attitude of literate and illiterate Christian parents in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State, which means that level of education or qualification has no significant difference on the attitude of Christian parents.
- There is no significant difference between the attitude of male and female Christian parents on sex education in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State, which means that gender had no significant difference on the attitude of Christian parents.
- It also reveals that there is no significant difference between the attitudes of Christian parents for high and low socio-economic status on sex education.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis of the data collected and the discussion of the finding, the following conclusion has been drawn. Since there is no significant difference in the attitude of Christian parents towards sex education based on their educational qualification, it then becomes necessary that current awareness should be given to adolescents and their parents. However, lack of

awareness or knowledge or fear of teaching sex education can affect the (children) adolescent's sex life which may result in unwanted pregnancy, HIV, etc.

Nevertheless, this attitude of Christian parents varies based on their socio-economic status, educational qualification and gender.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were put forward:

- Parents should bear in mind that no child can develop autonomously as a result, Christian parents should develop good or have a close relationship with their children which will enable them make right decisions on their sexual life.
- Adolescents should be loving and remain obedient to their parents as that will increase their good relationship with their parents.
- Government, therefore, are advised to encourage relationship between parents their adolescents through Parent Teachers Association (P.T.A) meetings. Parents should also be given the orientation that will enable them understand the value and importance of parents care towards their children's sex life.

Implication for Counselling

The finding on the attitude of Christian parents towards sex education in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State necessitates for counselling. From the finding or statistics analysis for the findings of this study, the average seventy (70%) sex life of these adolescents are based on their lack of affection, care, guidance and also the relationship they have with their parents which implies that the relationship between the attitude of Christian parents towards sex education is negatively high.

Therefore, it will be proper or necessary to employ the professionals in the field of guidance and counselling to both encourage Christian parents on their attitude towards sex education. This is because researcher believes that with counsellor's recommendations or guidelines to parents, the problems of poor parent and child relationship will be taken care of.

Counselling centre should be built in all the clans in Etche Local Government of Rivers State for proper enlightenment, counselling programme should be mounted to enlighten citizenry on the importance of sex education

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