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A Survey of Sexuality and the Use of Contraceptives among Undergraduates

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Abstract: The purpose of this research is to ascertain the level of sexuality and use of contraceptives among undergraduates in Rivers State, Nigeria. To achieve this study 12 items structured questionnaire of yes or no was developed by the researcher and administered to seven hundred (700) respondents using a stratified random sampling technique from five (5) tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The data gathered were analyzed with a simple percentage. From the analysis, it was found that: 1. Undergraduates are aware of contraceptives but do not like using them. 2. Contraceptives effectively protect the users from sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies. 3. Most undergraduates are into multiple sexual relationships. Recommendations were also made.

Keywords: Sexuality; Contraceptives; Undergraduates.

1. Introduction

Sexuality is about sexual feelings and attractions towards others. It is the capacity to have erotic experiences response. According to Suleman [1] environment, culture and social setting play major roles in the perception, attitudes and behaviours of sexuality.

Each gender has a distinguishing characteristics grouped as primary and secondary characteristics. Both are important in the reproductive life of human being.

The primary sex characteristics come with human existence at birth and with them you can differentiate a boy from a girl: marked structural changes occur from late childhood to early adolescence with increase in height, weight with corresponding appearance of secondary sexual characteristic such as growth of pubic and axilla hair, changes in voice, enlargement of breast, broadening of the hips, buttocks and thighs.

The structural changes are also accompanied with physiological changes like production of sex cell or gamete which makes them capable of reproduction. This structural and physiological changes of adolescent requires application of learning to be able to direct, guide and encourage them to develop desirable sexual attitudes and behaviour.

There is also psychological change on the adolescents at the same time. This change has to do with emotions and feelings as well as a progressive development of interest in the opposite sex. As a result according Billy, *et al.* [2] girls wear make-up and look nice while boys groom and dress well, both gender become concerned about their appearances. At this point the specific roles society expects of each gender start to emerge. Girls are expected to be home bound in preparation for marriage and rearing of children.

While the boys socialized to accept the role of bread winner. The emerging personality of both genders with the warning and advice of parents wishing that no gender related tragedies fall any of them combine to create anxiety at this stage.

The level of sexual activity and the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases are high among Nigerian adolescent while a reproductive health service is low. Sexuality is an important aspect of life of a human being. Sex education includes all the educational measures that may centre on sex, Borderick [3].

Sex education may be taught informally such as receiving information through a conversation from a parent, friend, religious leaders or media such as magazines, advice, columnist, websites etc. formal sex education occurs when schools or health care provides sex education.

Sexuality education is a life-long process of acquiring information and forming attitudes, belief and values, it encompasses sexual development, sexual and reproductive health, interpersonal relationships, affection, intimacy, body image and gender roles, Lahey [4].

According to Agbakwuru and Ekechukwu [5] comprehensive sexuality programmes have four main goals:

1. To provide accurate information about human sexuality
2. To provide an opportunity for young people to develop and understand their values, attitudes and insights about sexuality
3. To help young people develop relationship and interpersonal skills

4. To help young people exercise responsibility regarding sexual relationships which includes abstinence, pressure to become primitively involved in sexual relationships and the use of contraception as well as other sexual health measures.

2. Statement of the Problem

In spite of the vast number of churches and religious activities in Nigeria, promiscuity is on the high side especially among the undergraduates, the resultant effect has given cause for alarm as most of them are unable to control their sexual desire.

This gives rise to unplanned pregnancies resulting to illegitimate children as well as sexually transmitted diseases. This study is therefore undertaken to determine the level of sexuality and use of contraceptives among the undergraduate as a way of checking this social menace.

3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine

1. The level of the use of contraceptive among undergraduates
2. If contraceptives effectively protect the interest of the users
3. If there is a relationship between the use of contraceptive and promiscuity among undergraduates.

4. Research Questions

Based on the stated purposes, the following research questions were posed to achieve the goal of the study.

1. Do undergraduates use contraceptives?
2. Does contraceptives effectively protect the interest of the users?
3. Is there any relationship between the use of contraceptives and promiscuity among the undergraduates?

5. Scope of the Study

This study was undertaken to investigate the sexuality and use of contraceptives among undergraduates in higher institution in Rivers State Nigeria. It is specifically limited to the six (6) tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

6. Materials and Methods

6.1. Design of the Study

The research design used for this study is the survey design.

6.2. Area of the Study

The area selected for this study is Rivers State with a total of six (6) tertiary institutions since the target population is undergraduates.

6.3. Study Population

The population of this study comprises of all undergraduates in six tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

6.4. Study Sample and Sampling Techniques

A stratified random sampling technique was used to select males and female from each of the six tertiary institutions in Rivers State, a total number of seven hundred undergraduates between the ages of 15-29.

6.5. Research Instrument

The researcher developed a twelve item structured questionnaire of 'yes' and 'No' type which was used to illicit information on various issues raised in the research questions.

6.6. Administration of Instruments

The researcher personally administered the instrument to the respondents and also retrieved them on completion.

6.7. Data Analysis Technique

A simple percentage was used for data analysis

Research Question 1: Do undergraduates use contraceptives? items 1-4 of the questionnaire were analyzed to answer this research question as shown in Table below:

Table-1. Response on Undergraduates use of contraceptives

S/N	ITEMS	YES	NO	%YES	%NO	TOTAL
1.	Do you now about the use of contraceptives	600	100	85.7	14.3	700=100%
2.	Do you use contraceptives	200	500	28.6	71.4	700=100%
3.	How often do you use contraceptive regularly	150	550	21.4	78.6	700=100%
4.	Do you like the use of contraceptive	150	550	21.4	78.6	700=100%

Above tables shows that most undergraduates are aware of contraceptives (85.7%) but do not like using them (28.6%).

Research question 2: Does contraceptives effectively protect the interest of the users? Item 5 of the questionnaire was analyzed to answer this research question as shown in table 2 below

Table-2. Response of effectiveness or not of the protection of contraceptives on users

S/N	ITEMS	YES	%YES	NO	%NO	TOTAL
5.	Contraceptives help to protect against STDS and unwanted pregnancies.	450	64.6	250	35.4	700=100%

Table 2 above shows that contraceptive effectively protect both Sexually Transmitted Diseases and unwanted pregnancy.

Research question 3: Is there any relationship between the use of contraceptives and promiscuity among the undergraduates. Item 6-9 of the questionnaire were analyzed to provide answer to the research question.

Table-3. Percentage score of the relationship between the use of contraceptives and promiscuity

S/N	ITEMS	YES	YES%	NO	NO%	TOTAL
6.	Have you been involved in sexual relationship?	600	85.7	100	14.3	700=100%
7.	Do you have a sex partner	600	85.7	100	14.9	700=100%
8.	Do you have a stable relationship with your partner?	300	42.9	400	57.1	700=100%
9.	Have you been pregnant before?	200	28.6	500	71.4	700.100%

Above table show that majority are involved in sexual relationship and most of them are not in stable relationship.

Research question 4: Is there a relationship between sex education and incidence of sexually transmitted diseases. Items 10-12 of the questionnaire were analyzed to provide answers to the research question as shown in table 4 below.

Table-4. Percentage of the relationship between sex education and incidence of sexually transmitted diseases

S/N	ITEMS	YES	YES%	NO	NO%	TOTAL
10.	Are aware about sex education	700	100	-	-	700=100%
11.	Are you aware of HIV/AIDS and STDS?	700	100	-	-	700=100%
12.	Have you ever experienced STDS before?	300	42.9	400	57.1	700.100%

Above table shows that majority of undergraduates are aware of sex education as well as HIV/AIDS and STDs.

7. Discussion of Result

In table 1 the data analyzed showed that most undergraduates are aware of contraceptives but do not like using them as represented with 85.7 percent and 14.3 percent respectively. This is in line with the finding of Esen and Okpede [6] who reported that sexually transmitted disease occur most commonly in sexually active teenager and young adults because they do not like making use of contraceptives.

Table 2 it was revealed that contraceptives effectively protect the undergraduates from both sexually transmitted disease and unwanted pregnancies. This is line with the finding of Adams [7] who advocated abstinence based programme that emphasize the benefit of abstinence which include information about sexual behavior as well as contraceptives and disease prevention methods.

Analysis in table 3 shows that majority of the respondents are into unstable sexual relationship. This is in line with the report of Fankule [8] who noted that over 200-400 Million people world wide commonly sexually active

adolescents and young adults especially those with multiple sex partners are infected with sexually transmitted diseases.

8. Summary

The study sought to ascertain the sexuality and use of contraceptives among the undergraduates in Rivers State.

To achieve this, the researcher designed a structured twelve item questionnaire of 'Yes' or 'No' response and administered to seven hundred (700) respondents mainly undergraduate sampled through a stratified random sampling technique from six tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The data was analyzed using, simple percentage. The findings show:

1. Most undergraduates are aware of contraceptives but do not like using them.
2. Contraceptives effectively protect the users from sexually transmitted disease and unwanted pregnancies
3. Most of the respondents are into unstable relationship

9. Conclusion

From the result of the research, it can be concluded that undergraduates are aware of contraceptives but feel reluctant using them. Contraceptives effectively protect the users from sexually transmitted diseases as well as unwanted pregnancies. Above all, most undergraduates are involved in multiple relationships.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendation are made.

1. Abstinence from sex before marriage should be encouraged by government, parents and school authorities
2. School health care centres should be equipped with drugs including contraceptives.
3. Sex education should be made compulsory in tertiary institution no matter your field of study.
4. Seminars and conferences should be organized by schools authorities on usage of contraceptives.

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