
**PERCEPTION OF SEX EDUCATION AMONG TEACHERS IN
PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AMAC OF THE
FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, ABUJA.**

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Article Received: 21 April 2026, Article Revised: 11 May 2026, Published on: 31 May 2026

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DOI: <https://doi-doi.org/101555/ijarp.6000>

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at examining the perception of sex education among teachers in primary and secondary schools in AMAC of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The research explores teachers' attitudes, beliefs, level of knowledge, and perceived challenges regarding the implementation of sex education in schools. Using a descriptive survey design, data were collected from selected teachers across primary and secondary schools through structured questionnaires. The study investigated key factors influencing teachers' perceptions. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed and 250 were received, out of which 200 were validated for statistical analysis with (n=200), representing 66.67%. This study reviewed that age bracket 30-40yrs recorded higher response with (n=68), representing 34% while it was lower in the age bracket above 51yrs. Based on educational background, undergraduates had the highest percentage of 65% followed by masters and PhD. It was also established that the higher rate of perception was among the married with (n=116), representing 58% while it was lower among the widowed. Findings revealed varying perceptions between primary and

secondary school teachers, with potential differences in comfort level, content delivery, and perceived appropriateness of sex education at different educational stages. The research contributes to ongoing discussions on improving sexuality education programs in Nigeria by providing empirical data specific to AMAC in the FCT. Recommendations will focus on policy enhancement, teacher training, curriculum development, and community engagement strategies to promote effective and culturally sensitive sex education in schools.

KEYWORDS: Perception, Sex Education, Teachers, Primary and Secondary Schools, AMAC.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of sex education and its introduction in primary and secondary schools has witnessed much controversies and misconception by many teachers, students, parents and the society at large. The concept of sex education which is sometimes called sex and relationship education or sexuality education attracts a plethora of definitions from different people and scholars (WHO, 2017).

According to Anibueze (2001) sex education is a study that makes an individual develop a positive and wholesome attitude towards sex, which enables him to live a full life, enjoy his or her life fully and develop a responsible member of the society to which he/she belongs.

Similarly, Frimpong (2010) also sees sex education as “the systematic attempt to promote the healthy awareness in the individual on matters of his/her sexual development, functioning, behaviour and attitudes through direct teaching”.

Like other forms of education, sex education aims at training the youths and young individuals towards a better society.

This can also lead to a conclusion that the main goals of sex education is to promote sexual health buy providing learners with the opportunities to develop positive and factual view of sex, acquire the information and likewise skills they need to take care of their health (UNESCO, 2018).

Traditionally, sex education was expected to be provided to every child, particularly adolescents, by their immediate families. However, this practice has been eroded by the influence of Western civilization, modernization, and the disintegration of family life, leaving young people at the mercy of society and other socializing agents who may not provide accurate or appropriate information (Okafor, 2016; UNESCO, 2018). Consequently, this gap in adolescents’ knowledge should be filled by schools through the inclusion of sex education

in subjects such as social studies. The concept of sex extends far beyond the physical aspects of sexual organs and reproduction; it encompasses human relationships, emotional connections, and mutual understanding between partners (Kirby, 2002). Sex plays a significant role in human life, and everyone—including children—has a natural curiosity and desire to understand it (WHO, 2017).

Many people believe that children should not receive information about sex; however, in the absence of proper guidance, they often obtain such knowledge from friends, books, television, pornographic materials—whether from the internet, magazines, or movies—which may provide misleading or harmful information (Kirby, 2002; UNESCO, 2018). Therefore, it is essential that adolescents receive accurate and age-appropriate education about the physical and emotional changes occurring in their bodies. During puberty, boys experience the maturation of sexual organs, broadening of the chest, and enlargement of the larynx, which leads to voice changes, typically beginning around ages eleven to twelve. In girls, the breasts begin to develop, menstruation commences, and the pelvic bones widen in preparation for potential future childbearing (WHO, 2017; Okafor, 2016).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Study Setting

The study was carried out to examine the assessment and perception of primary and secondary school teachers on sex education using some selected schools in AMAC, the Federal Capital Territory Abuja as a case study. Hence, the population of the study comprised of teachers of some selected primary and secondary schools in AMAC, FCT Abuja.

Research design

The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey design. A cross-sectional design allows the collection of data at a single point in time, which is suitable for assessing the current perceptions, knowledge, and attitudes of teachers toward sex education in both primary and secondary schools.

Sampling techniques

In this study, the convenient sampling method was adopted to determine the sample size. Out of the entire teachers of some selected primary and secondary schools in AMAC of the Federal Capital Territory Abuja, the researcher conveniently selected 300 respondents as sample size for this study.

Research instrument

Questionnaire was used as a research instrument for this study. A survey containing series of questions was administered to the enrolled participants. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, the first section which focused on the demographic response or personal data while the second section was in line with the study objectives, aimed at providing answers to the research questions in which participants responded by placing a tick at the appropriate column.

Validity of the Study

The researcher constructed the questionnaire for the study and submitted to the project supervisor who in turn used his intellectual knowledge to analytically and logically examined the instruments and then made the instrument valid for the study.

Method of Data Collection

Two sources which are primary and secondary source were used as the method of data collection. The primary source was the use of questionnaires, while the secondary source included journal, textbooks, internet, published and unpublished articles and government publications.

Method of Data Analysis

The responses were analyzed using frequency tables with the mean and standard deviation, which provided answers to the research questions. In analyzing the data collected, the four-point rating scale was given values as follows: SA = Strongly Agree (4); A = Agree (3); D = Disagree (2); SD = Strongly Disagree (1).

Ethical Consideration

The study was approved by the Project Committee of the Department. Informed consent was then obtained from all study participants before they enrolled in the study while strictly adhering to confidentiality of data and informations from respondents. Permission was sought from the relevant authorities to carry out the study. Date to visit the place of study for questionnaire distribution was also put in place in advance.

RESULTS

Table 4.1: Showed frequency of distributed questionnaires.

Questionnaire	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sample size	300	100
Received	250	83.33
Validated	200	66.67

The table above shows the summary of the survey. A total of 300 questionnaires was distributed for use in this study. However, a total of 250 responses were received while 200 were validated. For this study, a total of 200 validated questionnaires were used for the analysis.

Table 4.2: Shows demographic data.

Demographic Information	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	88	44%
Female	112	56%
Age		
20-30	56	28%
30-40	68	34%
41-50	58	29%
51+	18	9%
Education		
BSc	130	65%
Masters	56	28%
PhD	14	7%
Marital status		
Single	62	31%
Married	116	58%
Seperated	14	7%
Divorced	5	2.5%
Widowed	3	1.5%

Table 4.3: Mean Responses on the assessment and perception of sex education among teachers in primary and secondary schools in Wuse FCT Abuja.

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD	X	S.D	DECISION
1	To provide teenagers with a wholistic knowledge of STIs, HIV AIDS and the likes of them.	20	17	9	4	3.1	2.57	Accepted
2	Gives young people the knowledge and skills they need for a lifetime of good sexual health	22	20	8	0	3.3	2.5	Accepted
3	For young people to learn how to have healthy relationships, make informed decisions about sex	17	19	9	5	3.0	2.7 4	Accepted
4	To develop general life-skills such as communication, negotiation, decision-making assertion and listening	21	21	8	0	3.3	2.56	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2023

In table 4.3 above, the need for teaching sex education in primary and secondary schools, the table shows that all the items (item1-item4) are accepted. This is proven as the respective items (item1-item4) have mean scores above 2.50.

KEY: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, X = Mean, S.D = Standard Deviation

Table 4.4: Shows effective responses.

Options	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Very effective	102	51.0
Somewhat effective	69	34.5
Not effective	29	14.5
Total	200	100

From the responses obtained as expressed in the table above, 51% of the respondents said very effective, 34.5% said somewhat effective. while the remaining 14.5% were not effective.

Table 4.5: Shows mean responses on the factors affecting the teaching of sex education in primary and secondary schools.

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD	X	S.D	DECISION
1	Beliefs about sexuality	23	12	10	5	3.1	2.57	Accepted
2	Restrictive laws and policies	20	21	7	2	3.3	2.54	Accepted
3	Lack of training on sexuality education to health workers/head teachers and religious leaders	19	16	8	7	3.0	2.74	Accepted
4	The subject not part of primary education curriculum	22	19	9	1	3.3	2.56	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2023

In table 4.5 above, the factors affecting the teaching of sex education in secondary schools, the table shows that all the items (item1-item4) are accepted. This is proven as the respective items (item1-item4) have mean scores above 2.50.

KEY: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, X = Mean, S.D = Standard Deviation.

DISCUSSION

This study examined the perception of primary and secondary school teachers on sex education using some selected secondary schools in AMAC, the Federal Capital Territory as a case study. The study was specifically carried out to assess teachers perception on the need for teaching sex education in primary and secondary schools, assess teachers perception on

the effectiveness of sex education in cautioning sexual behaviour of primary and secondary schools, and assess teachers perception on the factors affecting the teaching of sex education in primary and secondary schools.

The gender distribution shows that females constituted the majority of respondents (56%), while males accounted for 44%. This indicates a slightly higher female participation in the study. This findings is consistent with reports by Ademuyiwa *et al.* (2022) and Daagu *et al.* (2021) who also recorded a higher female participation in their studies. These researchers explained that females tend to show greater interest in educational and social research topics, particularly those related to health and sexuality.

However, studies else where; Akpong *et al.* (2025), reported a more male-dominated or nearly equal gender distribution. The slight difference suggests that gender participation may vary depending on the study location and population. Nonetheless, the relatively balanced gender distribution in the present study aligns with most existing literature.

The age distribution reveals that the 30–40 years age group formed the largest proportion of respondents with n= 68(34%), followed closely by those aged 41–50 years with n=58(29%). Respondents aged 20–30 years with n= 56 accounted for 28%, while those 51 years and above constituted only 9% with n=18. This suggest that the majority of respondents were middle-aged adults, who are likely to have sufficient experience and maturity to provide informed responses relevant to the study. The low percentage of respondents aged 51 years and above might indicate reduced participation among older individuals. This is similar to the findings of Orboh & Aine (2023), who reported that most respondents fell within the economically active and professionally mature age brackets. In contrast, some studies focusing directly on secondary school students, such as Ipinnimo *et al.* (2025), reported a younger age dominance. This difference can be attributed to variations in study population. The similarity with studies involving educators, parents, or professionals suggests that the present study draws from respondents with sufficient maturity and experience.

Based on educational status, the study showed that 65% of respondents possessed a Bachelor's degree, 28% had a Master's degree, and 7% held a PhD. This aligns closely with reports by Ademuyiwa *et al.* (2022), who observed that a majority of respondents had tertiary education. This indicates that the majority of respondents were well educated, which enhances the credibility of the responses obtained. The high level of tertiary education suggests that respondents were likely knowledgeable and capable of understanding the subject matter under investigation.

Other researchers have argued that higher educational attainment improves understanding and acceptance of sex education concepts. Therefore, the high level of education observed in the present study supports previous findings that well-educated respondents are more likely to provide informed and reliable responses.

With respect to marital status, married respondents formed the majority (58%), followed by single respondents (31%). Those who were separated (7%), divorced (2.5%), and widowed (1.5%) constituted a small proportion of the sample.

The predominance of married respondents suggests that many participants may have family responsibilities and practical exposure to issues related to social and educational development. This could influence perspectives expressed in the study, particularly on topics involving social behaviour or education.

By comparison, Similar patterns were reported by *Daagu et al.* (2021) where married respondents constituted the majority. Researchers have discussed that married individuals often have greater exposure to family and social responsibilities, which may influence their perceptions of education and social behaviour. The consistency between the present study and previous research suggests that marital status distribution in social research often reflects the dominant adult population in the study area.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that; The need for teaching sex education in primary and secondary schools includes: to provide teenagers with a wholistic knowledge of sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS and the likes of them, gives young people the knowledge and skills they need for a lifetime of good sexual health, learn how to have healthy relationships, make informed decisions about sex and to develop general life-skills such as communication, negotiation, decision-making assertion and listening. Sex education is effective in cautioning the sexual behaviour of primary and secondary school students. The factors affecting the teaching of sex education in primary and secondary schools includes: beliefs about sexuality, restrictive laws and policies, lack of training on sexuality education to health workers/head teachers and religious leaders, the subject not part of primary education curriculum.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proffered.

1. The education curriculum developers should introduce extra-curricular activities in schools that would promote sexuality health knowledge in schools from that of the formal classroom experiences.
2. School managements of primary and secondary schools should periodically invite guest lecturers to give health talks to students outside the normal student learning process so as to increase the knowledge of sexuality health.
3. Nolly-wood film producers and film writers should write and produce films and short plays on risky sexual behaviours and its effect to help sensitize the nation television viewers on risky sexual behaviours.
4. Sexuality education must be treated with utmost relevance by all parties just like any other subject in order to keep on meeting its objectives and even exceed it.
5. Training and workshops should be organized for teachers to help them to be adequately prepared to deliver quality sexuality education.

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