

Teachers' Perception of The Introduction of Sex Education in Primary Schools in Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract: *This study investigated teachers' perception of the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. Three research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. The design of the study was descriptive survey research design. The sample size for the study comprised one hundred and seventeen (117) teachers from the 52 public primary schools in the study area. For even representation, stratified random sampling technique was used to draw eight schools (four urban and four rural) from the Local Government Area. The Instruments for data collection is the 24-item researcher developed questionnaire titled: Teachers' Perception of the Introduction of Sex Education in Primary Schools Questionnaire (TPISEPSQ), which was validated by experts. The overall reliability co-efficient of 0.84 was obtained for the TPISEPSQ using Cronbach Alpha. Mean and standard deviation, were used to answer the research questions while independent samples t-test statistic was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study indicated that: teachers in the urban and rural primary schools agree on the inclusion of sex education in the primary schools in Enugu State; teachers in the urban and rural primary schools agree that religious and cultural beliefs influence the teaching of sex education in the primary schools in Enugu State; and teachers in the urban and rural primary schools agree that introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State could curb sexual abuse against children to a high extent. Based on the findings, the study recommended that teachers should be adequately trained to teach sex education in the primary schools; awareness should be created in the communities and religious bodies on the importance of sex education in the primary schools; and the stakeholders of education in the State should embrace sex education in the primary schools for a morally sound society.*

Key Words: Education, Introduction, Location, Perception, Primary Education, Sex, Sex Education, Teacher.

Introduction

In the Nigerian society, issues of sex and sexuality are hardly ever discussed with children. Parents in most cases, appear to be seriously opposed to passing such information to their children. This, according to Onoyase (2018) is because they believe that such issues might make youths to be morally loose. But in recent times, as a result of technological advancement especially in the area of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), children have on their own acquired such concealed information from the social media and entertainment industry, this seems to have exposed some of the youths to sexual promiscuity. This is because they want to experiment on anything new. There appears to be increase in teenage pregnancy, contacting of sex-related diseases such as

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gonorrhoea, syphilis, Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV), and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). This is where the teaching of sexuality education comes in.

Sex education, like other developmental areas, is a field in which all children need to develop and be involved in the school curriculum. Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) is a curriculum-based cognitive learning process prepared by UNICEF (2020) and planned to be implemented all over the world. Comprehensive sexuality education aims to make children aware of their own well-being, social and emotional relationships by providing them with sufficient knowledge and values, while at the same time aiming to help them protect themselves and defend their rights (Treacy, 2016).

Sexuality education is often an issue that frightens school professionals and families, as there is a belief that working on these discussions could encourage children and adolescents to start having sex (Souza & Ferrari, 2019). At present, however, there are other concerns. Among others, educators, and family members find it strange that in the contexts in which preadolescents are inserted, there are continuous debates on topics such as sexuality, gender relations, gender identity, sexual diversity, sexual and reproductive health, which may deviate from the heteronormative idea of society (Nunes, 2021).

Therefore, it seems appropriate to discuss in this introduction the concepts of sex and sexuality because, although they are complementary, they do not have the same meaning. In these terms, sex refers to sexual intercourse and is part of sexuality. Sexuality, on the other hand, is broader and includes pleasure, affection, touch, the body, the body image that each person has of himself or herself, verbal and nonverbal communication (looks, smiles, and touches, among others), gender (female and male), sexual and gender identity (how a person perceives his or her gender), and sexual education (sexual and affective attraction) [Figueiró, 2018].

The term sex education has been subjected to series of definitions and explanations by many scholars conveying individuals' opinion and bases about the subject matter. Sex education is considered to be all teaching and learning about human sexuality, whether at the level of knowledge or discussion and reflection on values, norms, feelings, emotions, and attitudes related to sexual life (Figueiró, 2020). Sex education could be defined as an ecologic ethical approach involving the biological, psychological, social and ethical dimensions of sexual attitude standards, values and behaviours (Mustapha, Abdullahi & Kawu, 2018). Mukambika (2023) refers to sex education as a comprehensive set of knowledge and process of learning the emotional, physical and social aspects of sexuality. The author suggests that sex education should include information about puberty, menstruation, contraceptives, condoms, sexual violence prevention, sexual orientation, gender identity and body image. Sex education provides the importance of children's wellbeing and health, among others, and it gives better understanding of the protection of the rights throughout their lives.

It is widely believed that sex education seeks to reduce the risk of potentially negative outcomes from sexual behaviours such as unwanted pregnancies and enhance the quality of relationship. Given this, it is understood that sex education can take place at any stage of a person's life. It is present in everyday spaces through formal and/or informal values and discourses related to sexuality. According to Figueiró (2018), teachers must overcome the fear of a negative reaction from fathers, mothers, or people associated with conservative movements when it comes to sex education. This attitude will help children, adolescents, parents, and educators seek sex education as a way to prevent sexual abuse, sexual violence, and sexual exploitation of children, adolescents, and young people, without neglecting the discourse on teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

People have so many different conceptions about sex education. Having knowledge, skills, values will empower them to realize their health and wellbeing and their dignity and have respectful social and sexual relationships. Sex education should treat sexual development as a normal human development. Young people have the right to live a healthy life and the society has the responsibility to create an environment for them and yield them with comprehensive sex education which will help them to make healthy decisions (Mukambika, 2023). But this is not enough; children are perplexed and demand honest answers. Comprehensive sex education should provide honest, age-appropriate information. Every child should know that they can decide who can touch them.

Puberty brings out dramatic physical and mental change to an unprepared child. Sex education should be mandatory in school. Sex education does not increase the engagement of a child to sex but actually does the opposite. Sex education teaches the child not only the basics of puberty, body changes and development but also gives a comprehensive understanding of their bodies and how to say no to unwanted sexual activities.

The issue of sex education has become a subject of discussion everywhere in Nigeria. Many groups and organizations are earnestly welcoming the introduction of sex education especially in primary schools where other groups are vehemently protesting against its introduction. It is apparently clear that the introduction has become necessary due to monumental increase in sexual abuse among the youth in secondary schools and tertiary institutions in the country. There are number of rampant cases of sexual abuse among adolescence which have catastrophic circumstances on the youth in the society. It is indisputably true that the knowledge of sex education will prepare the youth against sexual promiscuity and sexual abuse as well as protect them against sexual infections that could hamper the well-being of the individual. The knowledge of sex education in primary schools could also provide the necessary foundation for effective social relationship between the males and their female counterparts. Moreover, the knowledge of sex education will drastically reduce the possibility of giving birth to single parents' children that could have disastrous consequences on their communities and the government at large. More often than not children born with single parents in Nigeria seem to constitute major threats among their peers and eventually become kingpins in committing dubious and nefarious crime in the society due to improper parental upbringing.

In formal education, secondary school curriculum offers a little knowledge about HIV/AIDS and human reproduction process through some courses in Biology but is not discussed in detail (Bhuiyan, 2014). Part of sex education is included in the pre-primary curriculum but not much emphasis is given on it (National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), 2018). Schools need to put emphasis on sex education in their curriculum from early age of the child onwards. Sex education is very much needed in the primary schools to help the child understand the issue about sexual abuse. Inadequate sexuality education in primary schools can impact negatively on how young people respond to HIV epidemic especially with regard to HIV prevention practices. Young people have unprotected sexual intercourse with one or more partners, potentially exposing themselves to HIV, other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or unintended pregnancy (Pearson, Kholodkov, Henson & Impett 2012). The authors reported that comprehensive sexuality education programmes work to delay initiation of sex, reduce the number of sexual partners and increase the use of condoms and other forms of contraception. The perception of teachers to sexuality education in schools can affect how they teach sexuality education in general and HIV/AIDS education in particular.

There have been a lot of challenges on the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Nigeria. These challenges may not be unconnected with the socio-cultural beliefs and religious dogmatism in some parts of the country. In the Nigerian society, issues of sex and sexuality are hardly ever discussed with children. Parents in most cases, appear to be seriously opposed to passing such information to their children. This is because they believe that such issues might make youths to be morally loose. But in recent times, as a result of technological advancement especially in the area of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), children have on their own acquired such concealed information from the social media and this seems to have exposed some of the youths to sexual promiscuity. This is because they want to experiment on anything new. There appears to be increase in teenage pregnancy, contracting of sex-related diseases such as gonorrhoea, syphilis, Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV), and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). This is where the teaching of sexuality education comes.

The school is a secondary social unit. The crucial responsibility of the school in the socialization process of the child cannot be over-emphasized. As far as Onoyase (2013) is concerned, the school is an agent of secondary socialization after the home. It is supposed to provide the child with all-round education, that is, intellectually, morally, spiritually and physically. The author believes

that the behaviours of the young adolescents are influenced by their physical development. The girl, during this stage notices certain physical changes in her body which may be indications that she is matured for sexual activities. It makes her to look for a boyfriend. In the case of the boy, the appearance of pubic hair is a sign that he is no longer a boy but a man and he is also interested in having a girlfriend. It appears that this is the most delicate period in the life of the child because any mistake concerning sexuality education may affect him/her throughout life. In the views of Ovri, Obiekea and Chukwuma (2013) sexuality or sex education seem to be a no-talk-issue in both schools and homes and that the only channel that is open to adolescents for discussion about sex and sexuality education is their peers, but the information provided by the peers about sexuality education are not always accurate. Esere (2016) stressed that the appropriate place where sexuality can be discussed with children could be in the school because classroom interaction between teachers and pupils has been found to play important role in the preparation of adolescents for effective personal development and an effective health habits. Location of a school could influence the perception of teachers on the introduction of sex education.

Location as an intervening variable in this study refers to the physical environment where schools are situated which are divided into rural and urban. By extension, it entails the places where the subjects of the study live or carry out their daily activities. Olawale (2016) explains that a school situated in an urban area is much likely to have all the characteristics of that same area such as electricity and internet services while that of rural areas will equally have the characteristics of its environment. In this respect, school location could influence the responses of the teachers. This is due to their different perceptions and exposure to issues of sex education. The researcher therefore, intends to investigate school location with a view of assessing its relative influence on the teachers' perception on the introduction of sex education in the primary schools in Enugu State.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria today is witnessing an increased rate of problems associated with children and adolescent sexual problems. Among these problems are sexual perversions such as homosexuality, lesbianism, rape, prostitution and sexual harassment. There are many reported cases of sexual abuse of children over the mass media almost on daily basis. Sadly, some of these abuses are done by men that are close to the family of the child or even by their close relatives. The girl child or the boy child who is a minor has no knowledge of what sex is all about but is used by these men to satisfy their sexual appetite. The victim is always asked not to disclose this to anybody, thereby making them hide the abuse from their parents.

Unfortunately, teachers seem not to have adequate training on the issue of sex education and therefore shy away from it. There is also the religious and cultural belief that discussing about sex with a child is a taboo and something not to be done openly. The unwanted social vices being witnessed today in the youths could be curtailed if proper guidance through sex education is provided to the children from their early age. This study, therefore, sought to investigate teachers' perception of the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State of Nigeria, using Enugu North Local Government Area as a case study.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to investigate teachers' perception of the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State: Case study of Enugu North Local Government Area.

Specifically, the study determined:

1. whether sex education could be included in the primary schools curriculum in Enugu State.
2. the influence of religious and cultural beliefs on the teaching of sex education in the primary schools in Enugu State.
3. the extent to which the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State could curb sexual abuse against children?

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the mean responses of the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools on the inclusion of sex education in the primary schools curriculum in Enugu State?
2. What are the mean responses of the teachers in urban and rural primary schools on the influence of religious and cultural beliefs on the teaching of sex education in the primary schools in Enugu State?
3. What are the mean responses of the teachers in urban and rural primary schools on the extent to which the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State could curb sexual abuse against children?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- HO₁:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools on the inclusion of sex education in the primary schools curriculum in Enugu State.
- HO₂:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools on the influence of religious and cultural beliefs on the teaching of sex education in the primary schools in Enugu State.
- HO₃:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools on the extent to which the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State could curb sexual abuse against children.

Literature Review

Sexuality education is the process of acquiring information and forming attitudes and beliefs about sex, sexual identity, relationships and intimacy. It develops young people's skills so that they make informed choices about their behaviour. It helps them to feel confident and competent about acting on these choices. It also equips children to face developmental challenges and empowers them against the ills of abuse, exploitation and unwanted pregnancies. The knowledge of sex education includes ways of helping children develop self respect, sexual understanding, define the values of interpersonal relationships and strengthen communication skills in sex and education (Sule, et al, 2015). This promotes a wholesome and stable sex life. It is necessary for parents and teachers to acquire scientific, social, and psychological understanding of the need for sex education. According to Sule, et al., the sexual revolutions among contemporary youths recommend sex education as an imperative for adolescents that should be protected from the harmful effects of deviant sexual behaviours.

Sex education for children is rarely done openly in almost every culture, especially in Nigeria and other conservative countries like China and India. Discussions of sex and related topics are often discouraged and sometimes considered taboo because of the common belief that to inform children about sex is to encourage sexual activity or promiscuity. Child sexual abuse permeates all levels of Nigerian society. Children are at risk of abuse or harassment in their own homes, from relatives and family friends. It is found in schools, communities and the workplace. Apart from rape, child abuse has seen a new height and society as a whole need to stand up for it (Islam, 2015).

Invariably, religious and cultural beliefs continue to pose a daunting challenge to the successful implementation of sex education in Nigeria. While Christianity is seen as less rigid and highly adaptable to societal changes, Islam is very rigid and not acceptable to any changes as well as not receptive to any subject whose content is at variance with its ideologies. The idea of intermingling of people of the opposite sex, half naked dressing and female assertiveness is seriously frowned at by Islam. According to Mustapha, Abdullahi and Kawu (2018) it is strongly believed that religious knowledge, be it Islam or Christianity helps children to cultivate religious attitude towards life and orients them towards self purification, self actualization and socialization.

Some scholars have carried out studies on the issue of sex education in schools. Dehahani, Nasiriani, Pour and Deghani (2015) undertook the study of teachers' attitude regarding sex education to adolescents of secondary and high school teachers. One of the findings showed that teachers were in favour of the necessity of sex education as one of the fundamental rights of young adults and

stressed that sex education in schools must cover issues regarding maturity, menstruation and abstinence. In the same vein, Kinley (2015) investigated the attitude of teachers and students towards teaching of sex education among secondary schools. The finding shows that teachers and students alike were in favour of teaching sex education in secondary schools. Similarly, Sule, et al (2015) investigated the impact of family sex education on secondary schools students. The results revealed that students have sexual problems, misuse of sex, high teenage pregnancies, abortion and inadequate information on sex. In another study, Aresfin, Rahman and Chowdhury (2018) conducted a study to find out teachers' perception on sex education of children aged between 5 and 8 years. The findings of the study identified the gaps in the teachers' understanding of sex education. Furthermore, Mustapha, et al (2018) investigated the perception of parents and teachers towards introducing sex education. The findings of the study revealed that majority of parents and teachers considered sex education as inappropriate, as well as unacceptable type of education for the youth due to socio-cultural beliefs and religious dogmatism. Finally, Onoyase (2018) investigated the attitude of teachers towards the teaching of sexuality education in federal government colleges. The research found that there was no significant difference in the attitude of male and female teachers towards the teaching of sexuality education.

Methods

The study employed descriptive research survey design. The population of the study consisted of all the five hundred and forty-seven (547) teachers in the 52 public primary schools in Enugu North Local Government Area of Enugu State. The sample size for the study was n 117 teachers (61 urban and 56 rural) from the 52 public primary schools in the study area. The Instrument for data collection is the 20-item researcher developed questionnaire titled: Teachers' Perception of the Introduction of Sex Education in Primary Schools Questionnaire (TPISEPSQ) validated by experts. The internal consistency reliability estimate yielded an overall reliability estimate of 0.84 using the Cronbach Alpha statistic.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the mean responses of the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools in Enugu North LGA on the inclusion of sex education in the primary schools curriculum in Enugu State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the respondents on the inclusion of sex education in the primary schools curriculum

S/N	Item Statement	Location	n	X	SD	Dec.
1.	Sex education should be included in the school curriculum.	Urban	61	3.34	.85	A
		Rural	56	3.04	.91	A
2.	Primary school curriculum is appropriate for teaching sex education.	Urban	61	2.69	.98	A
		Rural	56	2.55	1.04	A
3.	Sex education is very important in primary schools.	Urban	61	2.77	.94	A
		Rural	56	2.70	.99	A
4.	Sex education is not appropriate for primary school pupils.	Urban	61	2.13	.96	D
		Rural	56	2.50	1.04	A
5.	I am willing to teach sexuality education to my pupils if officially introduced.	Urban	61	2.89	1.16	A
		Rural	56	2.71	.91	A
6.	Only teachers trained in sex education should teach it in the school.	Urban	61	3.18	.70	A
		Rural	56	2.68	.90	A
7.	Teachers should be at the forefront in teaching sex education.	Urban	61	2.46	.98	D
		Rural	56	2.71	.65	A
8.	I am familiar with the teaching of sex education.	Urban	61	2.21	.84	D
		Rural	56	2.21	.82	D
9.	Sex education was part of my training as a teacher.	Urban	61	2.11	.49	D
		Rural	56	2.04	.71	D
10.	I have no interest in sex education.	Urban	61	2.23	1.23	D
		Rural	56	2.21	.93	D
Cluster Mean		Urban	61	2.60	.31	A
		Rural	56	2.54	.35	A

Key: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree (SA); 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree (A); 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree (D); 0.50 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

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Table 1 shows the mean responses of both urban and rural primary school teachers on the inclusion of sex education in the primary schools curriculum in Enugu North LGA of Enugu State. It indicates that the mean responses of the teachers in the urban and rural schools to items 1 – 3, 5 and 6 are in the real decision limit of 2.50 – 3.49. It therefore, implies that the teachers in both the urban and rural primary schools agree to the statements of items 1 – 3, 5 and 6 on the inclusion of sex education in the primary schools curriculum in Enugu State. Also, the mean responses of the teachers in the urban primary schools to items 4 and 7 are in the real decision limit of 1.50 – 2.49, while the mean responses of their counterparts in the rural primary schools are in the real decision limit of 2.50 – 3.49. This implies that the teachers in the primary schools in the urban disagree while their counterparts in the rural agree to the statements in items 4 and 7, respectively. Again, the table also shows that the mean responses of the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools to items 8 – 10 are in the real decision limits of 1.50 – 2.49. The implication is that the teachers in both urban and rural primary schools disagree to the statements in items 8 – 10. However, the overall mean scores of 2.60 (SD = .31) and 2.54 (SD = .89) for the teachers in urban and rural primary schools respectively imply that the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools equally agree to the statements in the items, although the teachers in the urban schools obtained a higher mean score than their counterparts in the rural schools. That is to say, that sex education should be included in the primary schools curriculum in Enugu State.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools in Enugu North LGA on the inclusion of sex education in the primary schools curriculum in Enugu State.

Table 2: t-test scores on the mean responses of teachers in the urban and rural primary school on the inclusion of sex education in the primary schools curriculum

Location	n	X	SD	df	t	Sig.	Decision
Urban	61	2.60	.31	115	1.07	.287	HO ₁ Accepted
Rural	56	2.54	.35				

Table 2 shows the t-test score on the mean responses of teachers in the urban and rural primary school on the inclusion of sex education in the primary schools curriculum in Enugu State, $t(115) = 1.07$, $p = .287$. Since the p -value of .287 is greater than the 0.05 probability level set for the study, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools in Enugu North LGA on the inclusion of sex education in the primary schools curriculum in Enugu State is accepted. **Research Question 2:** What are the mean responses of the teachers in urban and rural primary schools in Enugu North LGA on the influence of religious and cultural beliefs on the teaching of sex education in the primary schools in Enugu State?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of the respondents on the influence of religious and cultural beliefs on the teaching of sex education in the primary schools in Enugu State

S/N	Item Statement	Schools	n	X	SD	Dec.
11.	Societal attitude to sex education is negative.	Urban	61	2.80	.85	A
		Rural	56	3.09	.90	A
12.	Sex education contradicts the teachings of my religion.	Urban	61	2.44	1.28	D
		Rural	56	2.21	.97	D
13.	Religion and culture are big barriers to sex education.	Urban	61	2.82	.72	A
		Rural	56	2.30	.83	D
14.	Sex education should only be taught to female pupils.	Urban	61	1.85	.85	D
		Rural	56	1.95	.82	D
15.	Sex education should be taught irrespective of gender differences.	Urban	61	3.03	1.15	A
		Rural	56	3.00	.93	A

16.	Sex education should exclusively be taught to married people.	Urban	61	2.33	1.27	D
		Rural	56	2.73	1.31	A
17.	Sex education is detrimental to the moral behaviour of the pupils.	Urban	61	2.46	1.04	D
		Rural	56	2.54	1.13	A
Cluster Mean		Urban	61	2.54	.51	A
		Rural	56	2.55	.52	A

Key: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree (SA); 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree (A); 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree (D); 0.50 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 3 shows the mean responses of both urban and rural primary school teachers on the influence of religious and cultural beliefs on the teaching of sex education in the primary schools in Enugu State. It indicates that the mean responses of the teachers in both the urban and rural primary schools to items 11 and 15 are in the real decision limit of 2.50 – 3.49. The implication of this is that the teachers in both the urban and rural schools agree to the statements in items 11 and 15 on the influence of religious and cultural beliefs on the teaching of sex education in the primary schools in Enugu State. In items 12 and 14, the teachers in both the urban and rural primary schools obtained the mean scores in the real decision limit of 1.50 – 2.49. It implies that the teachers in both the urban and rural primary schools disagree to the statements of items 12 and 14. Again, in item 17, the teachers in the urban schools obtained the mean score in the real decision limit of 2.50 – 3.49, while those in the rural schools obtained the mean score in the real decision limit of 1.50 – 2.49. This implies that the teachers in the urban primary schools agree while their counterparts in the rural schools disagree to the statement in item 17. Also, in items 16 and 17, the teachers in the urban primary schools obtained the mean scores in the real decision limit of 1.50 – 2.49, while their counterparts in the rural primary schools obtained the mean scores in the real decision limit of 2.50 – 3.49. The implication is that the teachers in the urban primary schools disagree while their counterparts in the rural schools agree to the statements in items 16 and 17 on the influence of religious and cultural beliefs on the teaching of sex education in the primary schools in Enugu State. However, the overall mean scores of 2.54 (SD = .51) and 2.55 (SD = .55) for the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools respectively imply that the teachers in the rural primary schools obtained higher mean score to the items than their counterparts in the urban primary schools. It also implies that the teachers in both the urban and rural primary schools agree that religious and cultural beliefs influence the teaching of sex education in primary schools.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools in Enugu North LGA on the influence of religious and cultural beliefs on the teaching of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State.

Table 4: t-test scores on the mean responses of teachers in the urban and rural primary schools on the influence of religious and cultural beliefs on the teaching of sex education in primary schools

Location	n	X	SD	df	t	Sig.	Decision
Urban	61	2.54	.51	115	-.126	.900	HO ₂ Accepted
Rural	56	2.55	.52				

Table 4 shows the t-test scores on the mean responses of teachers in the urban and rural primary schools on the influence of religious and cultural beliefs on the teaching of sex education in primary schools, $t(115) = -.126, p = .900$. Since the p -value of .900 is greater than the 0.05 probability level set for the study, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools in Enugu North LGA on the influence of religious and cultural beliefs on the teaching of sex education in primary schools is accepted.

Research Question 3: What are the mean responses of the teachers in urban and rural primary schools in Enugu North LGA on the extent to which the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State could curb sexual abuse against children?

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation of the extent to which the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State could curb sexual abuse against children

S/N	Item Statement	Schools	n	X	SD	Dec.
18.	Children will be more susceptible to sex abuse when exposed to sex education.	Urban	61	2.38	1.29	LE
		Rural	56	2.68	1.22	HE
19.	Sex education will reduce sexual harassment among youths.	Urban	61	3.00	.77	HE
		Rural	56	2.77	1.06	HE
20.	Sex education will curb sexual abuse against children.	Urban	61	2.75	1.04	HE
		Rural	56	2.91	.98	HE
Cluster Mean		Urban	61	2.71	.51	HE
		Rural	56	2.79	.68	HE

Key: 3.50 – 4.00 = Very High Extent (VHE); 2.50 – 3.49 = High Extent (HE); 1.50 – 2.49 = Low Extent (LE); 0.50 – 1.49 = Very Low Extent (VLE)

Table 5 shows the mean responses of both urban and rural primary school teachers on the extent to which the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State could curb sexual abuse against children. It indicates that the mean responses of the teachers in both the urban and rural primary schools to items 19 and 20 are in the real decision limit of 2.50 – 3.49. It implies that the teachers in both the urban and rural primary schools indicate high extent to the statements of items 19 and 20 on the extent to which the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State could curb sexual abuse against children. In item 18, the teachers in the urban primary schools obtained the mean score in the real decision limit of 1.50 – 2.49, while those in the rural schools obtained the mean score in the real decision limit of 2.50 – 3.49. The implication is that the teachers in the urban primary schools indicate low extent while their counterparts in the rural primary schools indicate high extent to the statement in item 18. However, the overall mean scores of 2.71 (SD = .51) and 2.79 (SD = .68) for the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools, respectively imply that teachers in the rural primary schools had higher mean score to the items than their counterparts in the urban primary schools. It also implies that the students in both the urban and rural primary schools agree that the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State could curb sexual abuse against children. **Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools in Enugu North LGA on the extent to which the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State could curb sexual abuse against children.

Table 6: t-test scores on the mean responses of teachers in the urban and rural primary schools on the extent to which the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State could curb sexual abuse against children

Location	N	X	SD	df	t	Sig.	Decision
Urban	61	2.71	.51	115	-.681	.497	HO ₃ Accepted
Rural	56	2.79	.68				

Table 6 shows the t-test scores on the mean responses of teachers in the urban and rural primary schools on the extent to which the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State could curb sexual abuse against children, $t(115) = -.681$, $p = .497$. Since the p -value of .497 is greater than the 0.05 probability level set for the study, the null hypothesis which states that there is

no significant difference in the mean responses of the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools in Enugu North LGA on the extent to which the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State could curb sexual abuse against children is accepted.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that teachers in the urban and rural primary schools equally agree to the inclusion of sex education in the primary schools curriculum in Enugu State. It also indicated that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools in Enugu North Local Government Area on the inclusion of sex education in the primary schools curriculum in Enugu State. This is in line with the findings of Dehahani (2015) and Kinley (2015) who in their separate studies revealed that teachers are in support of the introduction of sexuality education in schools. It also agrees with the views of Aresfin et al (2018) who found out that teachers understand the need and benefit of sex education for children aged 5-8 years in Urban Dhaka, Bangladesh. This implies that teachers are ready to teach sex education in primary schools in Enugu State if included in the primary school curriculum.

The findings of the study also revealed that the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools in Enugu North LGA equally agree that religious and cultural beliefs influence the teaching of sex education in the primary schools in Enugu State. It also revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of urban and rural primary school teachers in Enugu North Local Government Area on the influence of religious and cultural beliefs on the teaching of sex education in the primary schools in Enugu State. This is in line with the findings of Mohammed, et al (2018) who considered sex education as inappropriate, as well as unacceptable type of education for the youth in Bauchi State due to socio-cultural beliefs and religious dogmatism. Though the teachers in the primary schools in Enugu North LGA agree that religious and social beliefs have influence on the teaching of sex education, they indicated that it should be taught to both male and female pupils.

The findings of this study also reveal that the teachers in the urban and rural primary schools equally agree that the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State could curb sexual abuse against children. It also indicated that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of urban and rural primary school teachers on the extent to which the introduction of sex education in primary schools in Enugu State could curb sexual abuse against children. This supports the view of Islam (2015) who states that apart from rape, child abuse has seen a new height and society as a whole need to stand up for it. The teachers indicated that the introduction of sex education into the primary schools in Enugu State would help reduce sexual harassment among youths and curb sexual abuse against children to a high extent.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it is concluded that teachers in both the urban and rural primary schools equally agree that sex education should be introduced into the primary schools curriculum in Enugu State. It therefore, becomes necessary that teachers should be adequately trained to teach sex education in the primary schools. The study also revealed that the primary school teachers in Enugu North LGA agree that religious and cultural beliefs have influence on the teaching of sex education in the primary schools in Enugu State. The findings also indicated that teachers in the urban and rural primary schools in Enugu North LGA agreed that introduction of sex education into the primary schools in Enugu State would help reduce sexual harassment among youths and curb sexual abuse against children to a high extent. This indicates the importance of sex education in our primary schools. The introduction of sex education to the child at an early age will expose the child to his/her biological make-up, and safeguard him/her against the increased sexual abuse of children in the society.

Recommendations

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

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1. Teachers should be adequately trained to teach sex education in the primary schools.
2. Awareness should be created in the communities and religious bodies on the importance of sex education in the primary schools.
3. The stakeholders of education in the State should embrace sex education in the primary schools for a morally sound society.

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