

Evaluation of the Impact of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) on the Sexual and Reproductive Health of Adolescents in Garki FCT, Abuja

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Nigeria faces a critical adolescent sexual and reproductive health (SRH) crisis, characterized by high rates of unintended pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, and gender-based violence. Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) is recognized globally as a key intervention to address these challenges. However, its implementation and impact within the Nigerian context, particularly in urban centers like Abuja, remain inconsistent and under-evaluated. This study aimed at evaluating the impact of CSE on the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents in Garki, Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja.

Methodology: A cross-sectional mixed-methods research design was employed, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative focus group discussions and interviews. A total of 200 in-school adolescents (aged 13-17) from public, private, and faith-based secondary schools in Garki were selected via a multi-stage sampling technique. Quantitative data were collected using structured questionnaires and analyzed with SPSS version 26, employing descriptive statistics, Chi-square tests, and ANOVA. Qualitative data from parents and teachers were analyzed thematically.

Results: The study revealed a significant positive correlation between exposure to CSE and improved SRH outcomes. Adolescents with full CSE exposure had a markedly higher mean knowledge score (4.5/5.0) compared to those with no exposure (1.8/5.0). A strong statistical association was found between CSE exposure and behavioral compliance (χ^2 test, $p < 0.001$), with 77.8% of fully exposed adolescents being compliant with safe SRH practices, versus only 10% in the non-exposed group. Qualitative findings identified key barriers to CSE effectiveness, including cultural and religious resistance, teacher discomfort, and persistent adolescent hesitancy stemming from a gap between knowledge and the confidence to act.

Conclusion: The study concludes that Comprehensive Sexuality Education is a decisive and effective intervention for improving adolescent SRH knowledge and promoting safer behaviors in Abuja. To maximize its impact, it is recommended that policymakers enforce the standardized implementation of the Family Life and HIV Education (FLHE) curriculum, invest in robust teacher training, and integrate skills-based modules to bridge the confidence gap among adolescents. Furthermore, community sensitization programs are crucial to foster a supportive environment for adolescent SRH education.

