

# Assessing The Attitude Of Mothers Towards Family Life Education Of Their Adolescents In Ilishan Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria

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**Abstract- Background:** Family life education (FLE) is an essential education that children born into a home must undergo before reaching adulthood. Adolescents resort to illicit behaviours because they lack the knowledge of family life education. The mother has a great role to play in imparting this knowledge and skills and if properly inculcated into the adolescents, the act of too early initiation of sexual activity, premarital sex, teenage pregnancy, unsafe abortion leading to destruction of reproductive organs, dumping and abandoning babies by the way side and refuse bin and contracting sexually transmitted infections will abate. The attitude of mothers towards family life education of adolescents was assessed in this study.

**Materials and Methods:** A descriptive survey design was used for this study to assess attitude of mothers towards family life education of their adolescents and 183 consenting mothers were recruited from in Ilishan Remo, Ogun State for this study. A self-structured questionnaire was administered to obtain sociodemographic characteristics, assess attitude of the mothers towards imparting family life education and also assess the hindrances to imparting family life education among the study participants. Questionnaire was validated, Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was 0.81. Mothers' attitude were assessed with the use of 13 questions and some of the factors that hinder the mothers from imparting family life education were assessed with the use of 6 questions on a Likert scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree. Data gotten from questionnaire was collated and analyzed in frequencies and percentages using Statistical Package for social sciences (SPSS) version 21 and the hypothesis was analyzed with crosstab chi-square. Statistical significance was set at  $p < 0.05$ .

**Results:** Study participants comprised 183 mothers from Ilishan-Remo, with majority of study participants aged 31-40 years (50.3%). The highest level of education of the mothers was tertiary education 110(60.0%). The mothers had a poor attitude towards imparting family life education to their children as 50.3% do not feel comfortable teaching family life education, 72.2% have never discussed with their children because they do not have the time to discuss family life education with their children, 68.3% have never discussed because they feel their children are too young to understand family life education while 64.5% have never discussed with their children because they feel the knowledge of family life education may expose their children to immorality. The null hypothesis was accepted as it revealed no significant

difference between mother's attitude and how they impart family life education to their children with a *p-value* is 0.086.

**Conclusion:** Mothers' attitude was revealed to be negative from the study and they some encountered difficulties imparting family life education to their adolescents. Mothers need to develop a positive attitude towards imparting family life education and should also create time for their children to gain their confidence so they can feel free to talk to them on any issue bothering them. Mothers need to be encouraged on matters concerning family life education through community outreach, seminars and workshops in churches and even in the market.

**Index Terms-** Adolescent, Attitude, Family life education, Mothers

## I. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a powerful formative time of transition to adulthood. Young people all over the world are potential of a country's future, and if their needs, particularly sexual reproductive health needs are not addressed, they have the real potential to jeopardize their future (Adesokan, 2014). Family life education is an essential education any child deserves from his/her home to avert the problems that come with lack of such education. The parents, particularly mothers have enormous role to play in this regard since the home is the child's first school of socialization, such roles as rearing, nurturing, educating the child on the acceptable moral values and exposing the child to what sexuality is all about is very paramount (Okoroafor & Njoku, 2012).

Lack of proper knowledge of FLE puts the adolescent at greater risk for teenage pregnancy, unsafe abortion, sexually transmitted infections, HIV infection or health problems related to pregnancy and child bearing, too early initiation of sexual activity, sexual intercourse without the use of contraceptive, sexual intercourse without condom, sexual intercourse with more than one partner, probably sexual intercourse with a partner infected with an STI and/or HIV/AIDS and stands a risk of dropping out of school (Adesokan, 2014). These practices by the adolescents which are on the increase in our society today shows there is a gap in the early upbringing and training of the adolescents suggesting that there is an education that was probably left out.

The mother's attitude towards teaching family life education is an emotional response that expresses different degrees of acceptance and rejection, in sum total, the attitude of mothers determines the success of the teaching of family life education. The type of attitude formed by mothers can be negative or positive. [Odimegwu, Bamisile & Okemgbo<sub>2</sub> \(2017\)](#) stated that positive attitude towards the teaching of family life education will lead to the avoidance of premarital sexual intercourse while on the other hand negative attitude will lead to several risky behaviour especially sexual and their complications. Inioluwa (2017) also stated that sexual attitude, like other attitude which generally result from frustration, are derived from unexpressed and often unconscious premises and imaginative thoughts of the adolescents which are always articulate and precise resulting in experimentation. Inadequate information about sex has led to the mothers forming a negative attitude about family life sexuality education.

Bankole, Adewole, Hussain, Awolude, Singh and Akinyemi, (2015).stated that over 70% youths (girls) in Africa become pregnant between the ages of 15-19 years and in Nigeria so many girls aborted in schools. In a survey conducted by Mmari, Kalamar, Brahmhatt, and Venables, (2016), on the Influence of the Family on Adolescent Sexual Experience: A Comparison between Baltimore and Johannesburg., findings revealed that lack of parental presence was perceived to result in adolescents feeling an overall lack of adult support and guidance and that Young adolescents were often left to raise themselves and their younger siblings, even if they were living with their parents showing lack of emotional support.

According to National academic press (2016), a parent could face certain challenges that may be a hindrance to imparting family life education. Some of these factors can be; (i) Ignorance as most illiterate mothers find it difficult to discuss sexual matters. They feel that one needs to grow to adulthood before hearing about sex. Some mothers think that someone who has not married should not know the thing peculiar to men and women. (ii) Culture can affect effective teaching of family life education especially for parents who give away their girl child too early to marriage. (iii) Divorce: when a mother is a single mother, sometimes she lacks emotional balance to impart family life education. (iv) Communication pattern/attitude: having the knowledge of family life education is good but another issue is the mother's attitude in trying to impart this knowledge. (v) Time: mothers of these days hardly spend their quality time with their children, this could be attributed largely to quest for knowledge and degrees and then to improve the financial state of the family, consequently a mother sometimes move out very early for work and return late and has no time to spend with her kids. Even when she does, she's in a hurry.

Mothers are duty bound to give more detailed explanation about sex and sexuality to their children because children naturally tend to confide in their mothers, this relationship of trust, friendship and confidence which have started in early first year of life that the mother should take advantage of in discussing sexuality with their children. Mothers should help their children understand the stages of physical and psychological developments of the genital organ, and should not allow them get this information from friends and people who are not well informed. Therefore the main objective of this study is to assess the attitude

of mothers towards family life education of their adolescent children in Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State.

## II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objective of this study was to **assess** the attitude of mothers about family life education of their children and to find out the mothers major hindrances to teaching family life education.

### Research questions

1. What is the attitude of mothers about imparting family life education to their children?
2. What is the mother's major hindrances to teaching family life education?

### Hypotheses

There is no significant difference between the mother's attitude and how they impart family life education to their children.

## III. MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study utilized a descriptive design to assess the attitude of mothers towards family life education of their children in Ilishan-Remo, Ikenne Local Government Area of Ogun State after obtaining ethical approval from Babcock University Health Research Ethics Committee (BUREC). Permission to carry out the study was also sought and obtained from the church/mosque leaders in Ilishan. Mothers were selected from different denominations, a total of 183 mothers participated in the study after obtaining a written informed consent.

**Study design:** Descriptive survey design

**Study Location:** The location for this study was Ilishan-Remo Community in Ikenne Local Government Area of Ogun state, Nigeria.

**Sample size:** 183 mothers attending churches and mosque

**Sample size calculation:** The sample size for this study was estimated based on a single proportion design. The target population of mothers were 336. A confidence interval of 5% was assumed. The sample size obtained for this study was 183participants.

**Subjects and selection method:** The study participants were selected using multistage sampling technique to ensure that all denominations in Ilishan-Remo were represented during the study. A proportionate sampling technique was used determine the number of churches and mosque to be selected while simple random sampling technique was used to select the mothers from the 8 churches and purposive sampling technique was used to select participants from the central mosque(where a large number of them gather 2pm on Fridays)

**Inclusion criteria:**

Mothers who have children between the ages of 10 and 19  
Mothers resident in Ilishan  
Mothers who attend churches and mosque  
**Exclusion criteria:**  
Mothers not willing to give consent  
Mothers who do not have children between the ages of 10 and 19

**Instrumentation**

A self-developed questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire comprised of three sections  
Section A: Socio- Demographic data of the respondents  
Section B contains 13 questions to assess the mother’s attitude towards family life education of their children. This was done using a 5 point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Section C contains 6 questions to find out the factors hindering mothers from teaching family life education to their children using a 5 point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

**Validity and Reliability of instrument**

The instrument was validated through expert observation by the researcher’s supervisor and other school faculty to ensure the content validity and to eliminate ambiguity. Reliability was done by pretest using 18 mothers from pioneer church, Babcock. Cronbach alpha coefficient was found to be 0.81 which was considered reliable.

**Procedure**

Ethical clearance was obtained from Babcock University Health Research and Ethics Committee (BUHREC) and a letter from school of nursing, Babcock university was given to the church/mosque leader and women leaders to gain their permission and entrance into their midst. Explanations were given to the mothers, participation was voluntary and they were assured that every information they will supply will be handled as confidential. The questionnaire was administered face-to-face to the respondents and the researchers used a research assistant to translate the questionnaire into Yoruba language to facilitate understanding of those who can only speak Yoruba. The questionnaire was distributed to respondents at different date and time and same collected on the spot.

**Data analysis**

Data gathered from the respondents was assessed for completeness, coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS, version 21). Descriptive statistics (frequency tables and percentages) was used to describe participants’ demographic characteristics and answer the research questions asked. Hypothesis was tested using inferential statistics (crosstab chi-square)

**IV. RESULTS**

The primary sources of data for this study was obtained through the administration of questionnaires to 183 mothers, same were collected back from the participants that were involved in the study giving 100% response rate.

**Table no. 1** below shows the sociodemographic characteristics of study participants. The study participants comprised of 183 participants, 92 (50.3%) were within age group 31-40yrs, followed by 55(30.1%) fall within age group 41-50 years, 23(12.6%) fall within age group 51-60 years while the least happened to be 13(7.1%) fall within age group above 60 years . Almost all the respondents 131 (71.6%) were Christians, 51(27.9%) were Islam while 1(0.5%) were other religion. Majority of the respondents’ occupation 78(42.6%) are trading, 46(25.1%) are teaching, 30(16.4%) are house wife, 20(10.9%) are fashion designer while 9(4.9%) are catering. 152(83.1%) are major respondents that had 1 – 4 children, 29(15.8%) had 5 -8 children while 2(1.1%) had 9-12 children. Majority of the respondents 160(87.4%) are from monogamy marriage while 23(12.6%) are from polygamy marriage. Most of the Educational level of the respondents 110(60.1%) are in tertiary, 47(25.7%) are in secondary, 14(7.7%) are in primary while 12(6.6%) are not in any educational level. The most of the tribe of the respondents 142(77.6%) are Yoruba, 28(15.3%) are Igbo, 7(3.8%) are from others tribe while 6(3.3%) are from Hausa’s tribe.

**Table 1: Sociodemographic characteristics of study participants**

Variables	Frequency (N = 183)	Percentages (%)
<b>Age</b>		
31 - 40 years	92	50.3
41 - 50 years	55	30.1
51 -60 years	23	12.6
Above 60 years	13	7.1
<b>Religion</b>		
Christianity	131	71.6
Islam	51	27.9
Others	1	.5
<b>Occupation</b>		
House wife	30	16.4
Trading	78	42.6
Teaching	46	25.1
Catering	9	4.9
Fashion designer	20	10.9
<b>Number of children</b>		
1 -4	152	83.1
5 -8	29	15.8
9 -12	2	1.1
<b>Type of marriage</b>		
Monogamy	160	87.4
Polygamy	23	12.6
<b>Educational level</b>		
No education	12	6.6
Primary	14	7.7
Secondary	47	25.7
Tertiary	110	60.1
<b>Tribe</b>		
Yoruba	142	77.6
Igbo	28	15.3

Hausa	6	3.3
Others	7	3.8

their children are too small to understand family life education. 124(64.5%) agreed they have never discussed with their children because it may expose my children to immorality, 111(60.0%) do not encourage teaching family life education, 90 (49.1%) do not feel family life education will enlighten their children about acts of life, 123(67.2) strongly feel family life education will encourage their children to explore their body and experiment sex while 93(50.8%) do not believe family life education provides opportunity for proper counselling for their children.

Table 2 below shows the attitude of the mothers about imparting family life education, 92(50.3%) do not feel comfortable teaching family life education, 22(12% were undecided), 83(45.4%) have not discussed the sex topic with their children, 49(26.8%) were undecided), 132 (72.2%) agreed they do not have time to discuss family life education with their children. 125 (68.1%) actually feel

**Table 2. Showing the attitude of mothers towards family life education of their children**

Respondent's attitude scale	SA	A	U	D	SD
I feel comfortable teaching family life education to my children	30(16.4%)	39(21.3%)	22(12.0%)	9(4.9%)	83(45.4%)
I discuss with my children sex topic	21(11.5%)	30(16.4%)	49(26.8%)	10(5.5%)	73(39.9%)
I discuss with my children menstruation/wet dreams topic	23(12.6%)	31(16.9%)	43(23.5%)	3(1.6%)	83(45.4%)
I discuss with my children relationship with opposite sex topic	34(18.6%)	25(13.7%)	41(22.4%)	8(4.4%)	75(41.0%)
I have never discussed with my children because I don't have time to discuss family life education	96(52.5%)	36(19.7%)	25(13.7%)	10(5.5%)	16(8.7%)
I have never discussed with my children because my children are too young to understand family life education	88(48.1%)	37(20.2%)	29(15.8%)	19(10.4%)	10(5.5%)
I have never discussed with my children because it is a taboo, that should not be discussed until shortly before marriage	8(4.4%)	11(6.0%)	31(16.9%)	36(19.7%)	97(53.0%)
I have never discussed with my children because it may expose my children to immorality	77(42.1%)	41(22.4%)	23(12.6%)	25(13.7%)	17(9.3%)
Teaching of family life education is something I always encourage	50(27.3%)	11(6.0%)	11(6.0%)	54(29.5%)	57(31.1%)
Teaching of family life education is good because it enlightens children about facts of life	53(29.0%)	38(20.8%)	2(1.1%)	3(1.6%)	87(47.5%)
Family life education encourages exploring the body and experimenting sex	100(54.6%)	23(12.6%)	11(6.0%)	21(11.5%)	28(15.3%)
Teaching of family life education is good because it gives a person the opportunity to correct misconception about the subject matter	38(20.4%)	48(26.2%)	5(2.7%)	7(3.8%)	85(46.4%)
Teaching of sex education provides opportunity for proper counseling for my children	48(26.2%)	37(20.2%)	5(2.7%)	9(4.9%)	84(45.9%)

**Table 3 below shows** the factors that hinder mothers in Ilsham-Remo from teaching family life education to their children, 57(31.1% had no idea of what family life education is. It is very interesting to note that 155(84.7%) indicated that teaching of family life education is not a taboo in their culture and 161(88%) indicated their religion do not forbid the teaching of family life education to their children. However 134(73.2%) said they do not really have the time to discuss family life education with their children, 139 (75.9%) indicated it is embarrassing to discuss with their girls while 139(76%) also indicated it is embarrassing to discuss with their boys.

**Table 3 Showing the factor that hinder mothers from teaching family life education**

Factors that hinder	SA	A	U	D	SD
I have no idea of what family life education is	22(12.0%)	35(19.1%)	2(1.1%)	40(21.9%)	84(45.9%)
It is a taboo to speak about family life education in my culture	6(3.3%)	12(6.6%)	10(5.5%)	73(39.9%)	82(44.8%)
My religion forbids it	5(2.7%)	7(3.8%)	10(5.5%)	66(36.1%)	95(51.9%)
I don't really have the time to discuss with my children	69(37.7%)	65(35.5%)	15(8.2%)	24(13.1%)	10(5.5%)

It is embarrassing to discuss with my girls	72(39.3%)	67(36.6%)	13(12.6%)	8(4.4%)	23(12.6%)
It is embarrassing to discuss with my boys	71(38.8%)	68(37.2%)	13(7.1%)	21(11.5%)	10(5.5%)

**Hypothesis testing**

Table 4 showing area of discussion about family life education, the differences in the Mother’s attitude and how they impart family life education to their children.

Mother’s attitude	Area they have discussed with their children						$\chi^2$	p-value
	Not at all	Dating	Reproduction	Menstruation/Wet dream	Sexual experience	Relationship with opposite sex		
Good	17	1	1	7	3	13		
Bad	40	8	8	20	11	54	222.50	0.086
Total	57	9	9	27	14	67		

The hypothesis revealed that there is no significant difference between mother’s attitude and how they impart family life education to their children. The result from above table showed that the p-value is 0.086. Therefore the null hypothesis was accepted.

**V. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Family life education (FLE) is an organized effort to enrich and improve the quality of individual and family life by providing people with information, skills, experiences and resources intended to strengthen, improve, or enrich their family experience. “Family life education focuses on healthy family functioning within a family systems perspective and provides a primarily preventive approach to health and wellbeing. The skills and knowledge needed for healthy functioning are widely known: strong communication skills, knowledge of typical human development, good decision-making skills, positive self-esteem, and healthy interpersonal relationships. The goal of family life education is to teach and foster this knowledge and these skills to enable individuals and families to function optimally” (National Council on Family Relations, 2014).

A majority of the respondents, 92 (50.3%) and 55(30.1%), are in age groups 31-40years and 41-50years respectively. Almost all the respondents 131 (71.6%) were Christians, 51(27.9%) were Muslims while the remaining 1(0.5%) were identified as other religion this is due that majority living in the part of the study religion are Christians. A large number 78(42.6%) are traders, 46(25.1%) are teachers, 30(16.4%) are house wife, 20(10.9%) are fashion designer while 9(4.9%) are caterers. This is expected in a study carried out in a community whose major occupation is trading and teaching. In term of number of children respondents had, majority 152(83.1%) had 1 – 4 children, 29(15.8%) had 5 -8 children while 2(1.1%) had 9-12 children. A significant number 160(87.4%) are from monogamy marriage while 23(12.6%) are from polygamy marriage. Majority of the respondents educational qualification 110(60.1%) are in tertiary, 47(25.7%) are in secondary, 14(7.7%) are in primary while 12(6.6%) are not in any educational level This is understandable for a study carried out in the south-west part of the country and a community whose major reason why we have more Yorubas participating in the study.

The attitude of mothers about imparting family life education to their children as revealed in this study clearly shows that mothers have a negative attitude about imparting family life education to their children because they don’t feel comfortable teaching family life education to their children or discussing with their children such topics as menstruation/wet dreams, sexual experience, dating. The mothers also reported they do not have time to discuss with their children, this implies that parents especially mothers who ought to be the primary sexuality educators to their children fall short because they do not spend adequate time with their children and children naturally relate better with people they spend more time with. Lack of adequate with one’s mothers may lead into learning values/morals which are against the family and the parent/mother may not always be around to monitor, supervise and correct risky values/morals, furthermore, mothers do not have patience even when they are around to really understand and relate well with their children and gain their confidence and approval Furthermore in this study, the mothers feel their children are too young to understand issues on family life education. Interestingly, it is not a taboo in their culture, neither do their religion forbid, but they feel that it will expose them to sexual immorality. Lebes (2010) revealed that sexual myths and ignorance have placed parents in a state of dilemma, making them to feel uncomfortable to discuss sexuality matters with their adolescents.

The mother’s major hindrances to teaching family life education was reveled in the study. Findings are that there are certain factors that hinder mothers from teaching family life education to their children, 31.1% had no knowledge of what family life education is while 56.3% had little knowledge about family life education. It is very interesting to note that 84.7% indicated that teaching of family life education is not a taboo in their culture and 88% indicated their religion do not forbid the teaching of family life education to their children. However 73.2% said they do not really have the time to discuss family life

education with their children, 75.9% indicated it is embarrassing to discuss with their girls while 76% indicated it is embarrassing to discuss with their boys. Aniebue (2012), in his study of the knowledge and attitude of secondary school teachers in Enugu to school based sex education, he identified that parents 48.9% and teachers 30.6% were the most appropriate individuals to provide information about sex to young people, but it has been reported that many parents do not and are not able to provide their children with adequate sex education. Ohia (2016), reported about the mother's attitude to giving sexuality education as a check to sexual abuse of primary school girl, the researcher found out that many mothers themselves do not know what constitutes the teaching of sexuality education. This may be due to the culture of silence on sexuality and sex related matters and the myth that sexuality is equivalent to intercourse.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study revealed that mothers in Ilishan-Remo knowledge have a negative attitude towards imparting family life education to their children

## VII. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the result from this study, the researcher made the following recommendations:

- 1) Mothers need to develop a positive attitude towards family life education
- 2) Mothers should create time for their children to gain their confidence and make their children feel free to talk to them on any issue bothering them.
- 3) Mothers should start early to talk to their children about family life education.
- 4) Most importantly, health care workers should double their efforts in seminars and workshops on family life education that will involve the mothers

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