

Parental Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of Family Life Education in Apata Town of Ibadan, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT It has been noted that many adolescent-focused programmes in Nigeria have not been successful because they lack parental support. Yet no attempt has been made to examine what the parents know about family life education. The process of imparting both factual knowledge about human development, sexual relationships, preparation for parenthood, pregnancy, contraception and sexually transmitted infections and also values is called family life education. Though experts agree that the home is the best place to begin family life instruction, parents themselves are sometimes reluctant and uncomfortable as discussion of these topics may be embarrassing or even a taboo to them. They may not be knowledgeable about family life education. The researchers carried out this descriptive and exploratory study to investigate the perception and attitudes of parents to family life issues and education in a Nigerian suburban community. The result shows that out of the 200 families interviewed, seventy-four percent have heard of family life education; their personal interpretation of family life education is right; ninety-two percent believe the youths need guidance and counseling on sexual matters; fifty-eight percent have ever discussed family life issues and mostly on menstruation and seventy-seven percent believed parents are the best family life educators. The major causes of premarital sex are ignorance and lack of information. Majority of the parents do not believe that sex education will lead to sexual promiscuity. Many also indicated their willingness to participate in a sex education programme for parents, to improve their capacity to deliver home-based family life education. Policy and research implications of the study are discussed.