

Module 2: Evidence based approaches to sexuality education for adolescents - Adolescent health and development with a particular focus on sexual and reproductive health - Assignment

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Many Ghanaians believe that sexuality education need not be taught. Children through their development to adulthood should discover and learn by themselves through the hard way making whatever mistakes necessary. This belief serves as the bed rock of the numerous challenges and barriers that sexuality education face today in the country.

- Religious positions in favour of abstinence and against sexuality education. Christianity, Islam and the traditional African religion all advocate pre marital sexual abstinence and therefore believe that any discussion regarding sexuality will be introducing adolescents to immoral acts.
- Inability of the people to analyse or question religious positions. Anybody that holds a position either than that of the reigning religion in an area is considered as evil and malevolent. For fear of religious persecutions and alienations, many people who still believe sexuality education is relevant and necessary in Ghana will simply keep their ideas to themselves.
- Lack of political will. Politicians believe these are very sensitive areas that can make them unpopular so they tend to evade the subject area.
- Lack of teachers or trainer with the right skills to impart sexuality education. Many of the existing teachers and the literate population as a whole have very little knowledge about sexuality education. Without a major upgrading, they will not have much to offer to our adolescents.
- High number of children out of formal education. Sexuality education most often than not is offered to students. With the high school dropout rate in our communities especially for the vulnerable girl child, they are likely to miss this much needed information.
- Inadequate material resources. Considerable amount of resource is required from the already deficient National educational budget for advocacy and design of culturally accepted, relevant and accurate sexuality education packages.

Suggestions on overcoming the barriers

The concept of sexuality education is poorly understood. Many people are against it without knowing what it entails. The first point will be to engage religious bodies and civil society in a comprehensive sensitization, awareness creation and dialogue as a way to bridge the knowledge gap and rally support for the concept. The high HIV infection, the rise in teenage pregnancies and it related abortion complications in our society today as well as the numerous cases of sexual abuses against children that have plagued our news headlines in recent years really set the pace for this type of advocacy program. This idea is likely to work if women in authority take the very first step.

The present crop of teachers and tertiary students will definitely require a well structured program to uplift their level to permit them support the overall objective to scale up sexuality education in the country.

The numerous illiterate children that are into income generation ventures instead of being at school need to be supported. Specific NGOs can target these numerous small groups and tailor interventions to suit them.

Assignment documents

1. [IPPF. From evidence to action: Advocating for comprehensive sexuality education. London: IPPF; 2009.](#)
2. [UNESCO. International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education. Volume I. The rationale for sexuality education. Paris: UNESCO; 2009.](#)
3. [UNESCO. International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education. Volume II. Topics and learning objectives. Paris: UNESCO; 2009.](#)
4. [UNESCO. Levers of Success. Case studies of national sexuality education programmes. Paris: UNESCO; 2010.](#)