

## Assessment on the Role of the Nigerian Media in Educating the Children and Adolescent on the Value of Sex Education

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### Abstract

*This study focused on the assessment of the role of the Nigerian media in educating the children and adolescent on the value of sex education, using two educational institutions in Lagos State. The research study adopted the survey method to collect data for an in-depth analysis, the researchers conducted a descriptive study with four objectives and four research questions. A total of 300 adolescents were randomly selected from among the 60865 students enrolled in Cedec International Secondary School and undergraduates of the University of Lagos State (Unilag) as part of a purposive sampling strategy for the research study. Data was gathered through the use of a questionnaire, which was then analyzed and summarized using frequency and percentage. The findings of this research show that most of the adolescents have insufficient knowledge about sex education therefore adolescents require scientific, religious and factual information to help them develop positive sexual attitudes and responsible healthy behaviors. Moreover, most of the respondents agreed to the fact that sex education is effective, but most of them do not have sufficient knowledge so they require knowledge to prevent them from inventing their own mythologies and developing anti-social behaviors. Thus, the study recommends the encouragement of more sex education contents or programme in the Nigerian media through creditable sources such as national televisions and radios.*

### Keywords

Adolescent; assessment,  
nigerian media; children;  
role and value of sex  
education



### I. Introduction

According to Airaoje et al., (2023) sex education is the involvement of children, schools, media, governmental and non-governmental institutions in an inclusive course of action aimed at instilling socially desirable attitudes, practices, and personal conduct in adolescents and adults, where these will best protect the individual as a human and the family as a social institution. As a result, sex education can be defined as a program that teaches students about the elements of human sexuality, including family planning and reproduction. Body image, sexual orientation, sexual pleasure, values, decision-making, communication, dating, relationships, prevention of sexually transmitted infections, and birth control methods are all included in sex education.

Sex education, sometimes called sexuality education or sex and relationships education, is the process of acquiring information and training attitudes and beliefs about sex,

sexual identity, relationships and intimacy. It is also about developing young people's skills so that they are informed about their behaviour, and feel confident and competent about acting on these choices. Aondover et al., (2023) noted that “sex is something you do, and sexuality is who you are”. This way of understanding sex highlights the differences between the act of sex and the individual experience of sexuality, which is an intrinsic part of who we are, one that can't be separated from ourselves anymore than our ethnicity or religious/spiritual beliefs, sexuality is a natural and precious aspect of life and essential and fundamental part of humanity.

Ariba in Hile et al., (2023) warned that since the world has become a global village, events occurring in other parts of the world that were previously remote are becoming an instant influence on patterns of behaviors in other parts. When these influences are negative, their impact on the recipient populations could be catastrophic, unless such populations are well-informed and have evolved the appropriate behaviors to cope with such information. Through the media, the internet and direct interaction with foreigners and visitors from other countries our young population is becoming exposed to pornography, yet this population has not yet been well prepared to handle this information. This could lead to sexual health problems such as rape, incest, premarital sex, teenage pregnancies, STDs, unsafe abortions, etc (Obada et al., 2021).

In another study by AHI (2018), carried out in Lagos, Nigeria the result showed that many young people in a focus group discussion said they learned about sexuality from popular magazines such as Ikebe Superstar, Lolly, fantasy and Hints. The images prevailing in the entertainment media imply that sex is largely risk-free and that everyone is doing it, which is wrong. AHI insisted that if a child is taught what changes to expect as he grows older, he or she will be psychologically prepared to accept those as normal and take charge of his/her life. He will be less vulnerable to receiving wrong information that could lead to risky sexual behaviors (Obada, 2024). To respond to the needs of adolescents and young adults for information and training in behavioral skills, a growing international movement has been supporting the rights of adolescents to receive accurate and balanced information about sexuality and about how to develop healthy relationships and make decisions for themselves. This movement bases its action on internationally recognized human rights standards according to which adolescents have the right to have access to information essential for their health and development (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2013).

Accordingly, a growing number of reproductive health professionals, schools, clinics and nongovernmental organizations have developed and implemented a wide variety of programs aimed at providing sex education and preventing sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDs (Obada et al. 2021). Typically, those programs strive to delay the initiation of sex, reduce the number of sexual encounters and sexual partners and increase the use of condoms and effective contraceptive methods among young people. Sometimes, such programs also have the goal of promoting testing for sexually transmitted infections and reducing sexual violence. However, many programs focus too narrowly, and offer limited, if any, content on topics such as healthy/unhealthy relationships, gender role norms, communication skills, or sexual violence, which are key components of sexual health (Obada et al., 2021).

Therefore, the existence of these standards implies that the media has the responsibility of developing quality educative broadcast programmes that provide both

adolescent girls and boys, whether in or out of school, accurate and appropriate information to enable them to maintain their sexual and reproductive health. Teens are immersed in a media world. Research supports the idea that sexual media can act as a “super peer” for adolescents, influencing sexual attitudes and behaviors (Mojaye & Aondover, 2022). Media literacy education offers a promising approach to enhancing sexual health education to be more effective for this generation. Media Aware is a web-based comprehensive sexual health education program for high school and tertiary students that are designed to build critical analysis skills related to sexual and/or romantic media messages, sexual health knowledge, and communication skills. A small, feasibility study of the program was previously conducted within one large high school and found several positive immediate impacts of the program on adolescents’ media and health-related outcomes (Scull in Maradun et al., 2021). The current study seeks to extend the promising findings from the feasibility study by evaluating “the role of the Nigeria media in educating the children and Adolescents on the value of sex education”.

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

Busari in Maikaba and Msughter (2019) states that physical, psychological and social attributes of adolescence make young people particularly vulnerable to HIV and other sexually transmitted Diseases (STDs). Adolescents often are not able to comprehend fully the exposure to risk of getting pregnant, abortion or even contracting a sexually transmitted disease. Societies often compound young people’s risk by making it difficult for them to learn about sex education and reproductive health. Moreover, many youths are socially inexperienced and dependent on others. When adolescents are not given or provided the necessary information about sex, they tend to get wrong information from others or wrongly timed information which places them at risk of teenage pregnancies, illegal abortions and STDs.

The media play a prominent and important role in the lives of adolescents. Teens spend over seven hours per day using media excluding school-related media use (Rideout & Robb, in Idris & Msughter, 2022). Almost half of teens say they are online “almost constantly,” and virtually all have access to a smartphone (Pew Research Center, 2018). Sexual and romantic content is commonplace in media. For example, a review of television programs and films found sexual references in over 80% of each. Popular music has become much more sexualized and objectifying over the past five decades. Because of the many ways to conceptualize exposure to pornography (intentional, unintentional, etc.), it has been difficult to get a proper estimate of adolescent exposure. However, a review of research studies leading up to 2017 concludes that at least a sizable minority of adolescents use pornography (Aondover et al., 2023).

Meta-analyses have found exposure to sexually explicit media and mainstream sexual media have significant effects on adolescent sexual attitudes and behaviors. In addition to impacting attitudes and behaviors related to adolescent sexual activity, sexual media exposure is an established contributor to the acceptance of rape myths and research has found that exposure to sexually explicit and sexually violent media is related to more accepting attitudes towards dating and sexual violence. This suggests that sexual media exposure is also related to sexual assault victimization and perpetration, and less willingness to intervene as a bystander (Rodenhizer & Edwards in Aondover et al., 2022). Thus, it is against this backdrop that this study assesses the role of the Nigerian Media in educating children and adolescents on the value of sex education.

## 1.2 Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the level of knowledge about sex education among children or adolescents.
2. To examine children or adolescent attitudes toward sex education.
3. To study the perceptions of children or adolescents towards sex education.
4. To examine the impact of the Nigerian media in educating children and adolescents on the value of sex education.

## II. Review of Literature

Aarti and Christine's (2019) study aims to measure the attitude of children of teenagers aged 13-19 years towards sex education. Thirty children of teenagers from the metropolitan city of Hyderabad were included in the sample. A purposive sampling method was used for this research. Attitude scale towards sex education developed by Dr. Usha Mishra in 2008 was used to measure the attitude of children of teenagers. The results show that the children of today's teenagers have a positive or a high attitude towards sex education thus supporting the hypothesis and contradicting the earlier studies. Therefore, the value of sex education for teenagers has been emphasized by social activists, psychologists and social scientists so that they may not become victims of sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS, sexuality-related complications and to eradicate social evils such as eve-teasing, sexual harassment and also to help the young people gain knowledge on the ability to protect themselves from sexual exploitation and threats. Also, the government could make use of the change in children's attitudes and come up with policies for involving formal Sex Education in educational institutions.

Musa et al., (2020) investigated the level of awareness of sex education among secondary school adolescents in Niger state, to assess the level of the already initiated comprehensive sex education program by the federal Ministry of health. The study utilizes an empirical survey design. In order to obtain data for the research, stratified random and judgmental sampling technique were adopted. The instrument used to elicit information from the respondents was a well-structured questionnaire. Result from the study shows that it is important to impact knowledge about sex and sexuality to adolescents. As, many of the respondents show positive attitude towards sex education (65%), they knew its effectiveness (54%) and consequence of risk behaviors (86%) but lacked appropriate knowledge (42%). Based on these findings, it is therefore imperative that adolescents need more sex education at all levels with full parental participation.

Cortínez and Luengo (2021) observed that adolescence is the time during which the personal and sexual identity develops. The specific characteristics of adolescents and the lack of maturity facilitates the acquisition of sexual risk behaviors such as relaxation in the use of barrier contraceptives or the use of toxic substances, alcohol or drugs during sexual relations, increasing of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unwanted pregnancies. Health education in sexuality is one of the best ways to prevent risk behaviors and to promote healthy and responsible sexuality. While there have been different works in sex education in adolescents, there is still a lack of a comprehensive systematic literature review that including randomized and non-randomized clinical trials and quasi-experimental pre-post studies addressing education programs that provide information on healthy and responsible sexuality. Further, it is noted that a protocol drafted in consideration of the existing approaches is needed to present a basis for a systematic literature review in this area. The study, therefore, proposes a review protocol that will evaluate the impact of comprehensive sex education



programs in the level of knowledge about STIs, behavioral level concerning the frequency of use of effective contraceptive methods and level of knowledge about sexual identity, diversity and/or responsible sexuality, after the intervention.

Within this context, several scholars have conducted studies and made significant attempts to examine the effectiveness of sex education in adolescents. The study posited that the educational implications of such ideas is that on the absence of adequate progressive sex education at all levels of child's developmental stage, children tend to invent their own mythologies about human sexuality which when reinforced by active social pressure (such as pornography, media, sexual magazines, and novels) their own natural sexual feelings plus their reproductive needs spells sexual health disastrous problems. The findings of the existing studies show that most of the children or adolescents have insufficient knowledge about sex education therefore adolescents require scientific, religious and factual information to help them develop positive sexual attitudes and responsible healthy behaviours.

However, the world has transformed into a global village where teenagers or children are tech-oriented and can access any information at the palm of their hands no matter how sensitive or harmful the information may be. Thus, in such scenarios or circumstances, the media have a critical role to play in educating not only adolescents but also children on the need to educate their children on sex education, healthy behaviours to adopt and considering the urgency of the matter and in light that no researcher has attempted to conduct a study in a bid to analyze the role of the Nigerian media in educating children and adolescents on the values of sex education. The gap in the existing literature has substantially addressed as this study examine the role of media in educating children or adolescent on the value of sex education in Nigeria.

## **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

This study adopted the Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory and Sigmund Freud's Psychosexual theory. Bandura's social learning theory which was established in 1963 is a more advanced version of learning theory that uses operant conditioning as its foundation. This theory acknowledges two processes known as imitation and identification, which are useful in explaining how gender identity and sexual orientation develop as a result of sex education. Adolescents learn about sex and gender in part through imitation or imitating, according to social learning theory. These teenagers could be copying their children or other exciting scenarios they've witnessed (Onyejelem & Aondover, 2024a). Various types of sex education difficulties can be learned through imitation, according to experts. In high school, for example, the most attractive or sexiest girl in the senior class may see that other females are modeling her behavior and clothing. A boy may also watch a film in which the main character's actions appear to attract him, and then try to imitate those actions in his activities. This emphasizes the importance of mass media as a source of sexuality models that young people emulate and with which they identify.

Once behaviour is learned, its likelihood of being repeated is determined by its consequences, which can be good or negative (Bandura, 1982). According to this notion, if a behavior is not reinforced, the performer is less likely to perform or repeat it. Over time, successful activity experiences build a sense of competence, or self-efficacy, in completing the activity (Bandura, 1982). The notion of self-efficacy has been widely employed in the development of intervention programs aimed at reducing teenage sex-related problems, such as the usage of condoms to prevent the transmission of sexually transmitted illnesses and HIV infection, as well as unintended births. These programs provide teenagers the chance to put what they've learned about sex education into practice while also helping them succeed in

life. According to the notion, having a sexual self-concept during adolescence is a critical developmental milestone (Onyejelem & Aondover, 2024b). This is when teenagers strive to make sense of and arrange their sexual experiences in order to comprehend the patterns and motivations behind their sexual behaviours.

According to Andersen and Cyranowski (1994), who cite the social learning theory, sexual self-concept not only aids teenagers in organizing their prior experiences but also provides them with information to draw on for current and future sexual ideas and experiences. Sexual self-concept influences men's and women's sexual behavior, as well as the future development of relationships. Therefore, Albert Bandura's social learning theory on human sexuality development is critical in drawing an understanding of the role of the Media and children in the development of healthy sexual behaviours in adolescents through strategic and impactful programmes on sex education (Onyejelem, 2023).

According to Freud (1925), the human personality is made up of three complimentary elements, Id, ego, and superego are the three. These aspects get integrated as a child progresses through the five phases of psychosexual development namely oral, anal, phallic, latency, and genital. In each of the five phases of development, the Id-directs children's urges/instincts for pleasure are manifested in distinct places of the body known as the erogenous zone. All stages of development, according to Freud, play a role in the development of behavior and personality. However, for the sake of this study, a premium is given to the last two stages namely: latency and genital, where adolescence begins and more sexuality issues are core, although these stages take precedence over earlier ones (Onyejelem, 2018).

According to Freud (1925), sexual energies decrease during this stage and children's superegos or consciences begin to grow more. Adolescents begin to act in morally acceptable ways and embrace the ideals of their children and other influential adults in the community. It is equally the period where children redirect their sexual desires to socially approved activities like sports and casual friendships (Governor et al., 2024). But in this, children may understand basically what entails in human sexuality, but society has primed them to ignore the urges/manifestations and concentrate on what is desired for healthy living, which in turn goes in consonance with established family and societal norms. This form of education is nothing less than sex education, as children are made not to engage in any immoral sexual acts, but they channel their desires and energies to societal recommended activities.

During this stage, sexual impulses resurface based on successful completion of earlier stages where adolescents are expected to engage inappropriate sexual behaviors that may lead to gender role development, self-identity, marriage, sexual healthy life, and reproduction. Freud (1925) indicated that human beings have strong sexual feelings from a very early age, so sex education is vital as the child progresses on the growth ladder. According to Freud, a successful passage through the stages will lead to understanding one's sexuality and vice versa. It is noted that an inability to progress through latency and genital stages is likely to lead to sexual problems such as psychosexual disorders during adolescence through adulthood. These psychosexual disorders may be categorized into sexual dysfunction, paraphilia, and gender identity disorders. Thus, the application of the theory is essential to the study as it explain the various adolescent stages a child passes through and the role of the parent in shaping and modifying various beliefs, orientations and perspectives in order to achieve a healthy human sexuality development. Therefore, if these stages are not controlled through parental education on sex issues and the child understanding of their sexuality, this may lead to disorders and dysfunctions in the child sexuality. In light of this, Sigmund Freud's Psychosexual theory of human sexuality development is critical to this study.

### III. Research Method

This study adopts the positivist approach of research which subscribes to the quantitative method of data generation. The study employs survey method and the population of this study constitutes all students of Cedec International Secondary School 5865 (cedecinternationalschools.org) and University of Lagos State, 55000 (Unilag.edu.ng) which is 60865 in total. Purposive sampling was employed in selecting the respondents for the study. The study used 300 respondents using questionnaire as the primary instrument for data collection. Following the collection of responses to the survey questions, the data will be evaluated using percentage tables and frequency tables.

### IV. Results and Discussion

**Table 1.** Knowledge of Sex Education

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	197	65.7%
No	103	34.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: (Field Research, 2024)*

Table 1 shows that 197 respondents with 65.7% opinioned that they have heard about sex education before while 103 respondents opinioned that they are not aware of sex education with 34.3%. Thus this clearly shows that a significant majority are still uneducated or ignorant about sex education. Musa (2020) findings show that it is important to impact knowledge about sex and sexuality to children and adolescents.

**Table 2.** Platform for Sex Education

Response	Frequency	Percentage
The internet	155	51.7%
Magazines	57	19%
From my peers/ friends	64	21.3%
From my children	24	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: (Field Research, 2024).*

The above table shows that 155 respondents with 51.7% mentioned that the internet was their source of sex education, 57 respondents with 19% opinioned that magazines was their source of sex education, while 64 respondents with 21.3% opinioned that peers or friends was their source of sex education and the remaining 24 respondents with 8% opinioned that their children was their source of sex education.

**Table 3.** Perception of Sex Education Programmes by Children and Adolescent

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
educative programs aided at improving body image, sexual orientation, values and decision-making	129	43%
process of acquiring information, training attitudes and beliefs about sex, sexual identity, relationships and intimacy	106	35.3%
unimportant programs with little to no impact on adolescents and children	39	13%
inappropriate programs that could have a negative impact on society	26	8.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: (Field Research, 2024).

Table 3 shows with an overwhelming majority of 129 respondents with 43% think that sex education programme are educative programs aided at improving body image, sexual orientation, values and decision-making, while 106 respondents with 35.3% think that sex education programme is a process of acquiring information, training attitudes and beliefs about sex, sexual identity, relationships and intimacy, 39 respondents with 13% think that sex education programme are unimportant programs with little to no impact on adolescents and children and 26 respondents with 8.7% think that sex education programme are inappropriate programs that could have a negative impact on society. Cortínez and Luengo (2021) observed that adolescence is the time during which the personal and sexual identity develops. The specific characteristics of adolescents and the lack of maturity facilitates the acquisition of sexual risk behaviors such as relaxation in the use of barrier contraceptives or the use of toxic substances, alcohol or drugs during sexual relations, increasing of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unwanted pregnancies.

**Table 4.** Feeling after Watching Sex Education Programmes

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Educated and confident	134	44.7%
Annoyed and disgusted	41	13.7%
Shy but informed	121	40.3%
None of the above	4	1.3%



<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>
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Source: (Field Research, 2024).

Table 4 shows that 134 respondents out of the 300 with 44.7% felt educated and confident after watching sex education programme, 41 respondents with 13.7% felt annoyed and disgusted, while 121 respondents with 40.3% felt shy but informed and the remaining 4 respondents with 1.3% opinioned none of the above.

**Table 5. Is Sex Education Important**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes, absolutely	184	61.3%
No, will have negative impact	116	38.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: (Field Research, 2024).

Table 5 shows that 184 respondents with 61.3% think that sex education programmes are important and should be encouraged to air more of such programs with in Nigeria media while the remaining begs to differ with the statement. Table 5 shows that 222 respondents with 74% are comfortable with the idea of promoting healthy sexual development and fostering positive attitudes and values which sex education stands for, while the remaining 78 with 26% disagree thus are clearly opposed with the above statement with their response.

**Table 6. Sex Education Helped Children/Adolescent to Understand Sexual Urge**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	93	31%
Agree	152	50.7%
Disagree	35	11.7%
Strongly disagree	20	6.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: (Field Research, 2024).

Table 6 shows that 93 respondents with 31% strongly agree that sex education has helped them to understand and deal with their sexual urge, while 152 respondents with 50.7% agree, 35 respondents with 11.7% beg to differ and the remaining 20 respondents with 6.7% are strongly opposed to the above statement with their response.

**Table 7. Sex Education is the Best Way to Educate Children/Adolescents on Illicit Sex and its Consequences**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>No of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
Strong Agree	91	30.3%

Agree	144	48%
Disagree	41	13.7%
Strong Disagree	24	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: (Field Research, 2024).

Table 7 show that 91(30.3%) respondents strong agree that sex education is the best way to educate children or adolescents on illicit sex and its consequences, majority of respondents who are 144 (48%) agree with the above statement, 41(13.7%) respondents disagree with the above statement and beg to differ, while 24 (8%) respondents strongly disagree with their response to the above statement and thus cover 100% when totaled.

**Table 8.** Sex Education Make Children/Adolescent to be Responsible

<b>Responses</b>	<b>No of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
Strong Agree	84	28%
Agree	101	33.7%
Disagree	51	17%
Strong Disagree	64	21.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: (Field Research, 2024).

Table 8 illustrate that 84 (28%) respondents strong agree that sex education make one to be responsible, 101(33.7%) agree with the above statement, 51(17%) respondents disagree with the above statement, while 64(21.3%) respondents strongly oppose with their response to the above statement and strongly disagree. Similarly, Bandura's social learning theory which was established in 1963 is a more advanced version of learning theory that uses operant conditioning as its foundation. This theory acknowledges two processes known as imitation and identification, which are useful in explaining how gender identity and sexual orientation develop as a result of sex education. Adolescents learn about sex and gender in part through imitation or imitating, according to social learning theory. These teenagers could be copying their children or other exciting scenarios they've witnessed.

**Table 9.** Sex Education Can Change Children/Adolescent Sexual Attitude

<b>Responses</b>	<b>No of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
Strong Agree	82	27.3%
Agree	142	47.3%
Disagree	32	10.7%
Strong Disagree	44	14.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: (Field Research, 2024).

Table 9 show that 82(27.3%) respondents strong agree and believe that sex education can change one's sexual attitude, 142(47.3%) respondents also agree with the above statement, 32(10.7%) respondents disagree with the above statement and beg to differ, while

44 (14.7%) respondents strongly disagree with their response to the above statement. Aarti and Christine's (2019) results show that the children of today's teenagers have a positive or a high attitude towards sex education thus supporting the hypothesis and contradicting the earlier studies. Therefore, the value of sex education for teenagers has been emphasized by social activists, psychologists and social scientists so that they may not become victims of sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS, sexuality-related complications and to eradicate social evils such as eve-teasing, sexual harassment and also to help the young people gain knowledge on the ability to protect themselves from sexual exploitation and threats.

**Table 10.** How Effective have the Media Impacted in Educating Children/Adolescent Through their Contents

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very Effective	59	19.7%
Effective	64	21.3%
Not Sure	70	23.3%
Less Effective	64	21.3%
Not Effective	43	14.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: (Field Research, 2024).*

Table 10 shows that 59 respondents with 19.7% believe that the media have been very effective and thus have positively impacted and educated children and adolescents through their contents on television in Nigeria, 64 respondents with 21.3% agree with the above statement, 70 of the respondents with 23.3 are uncertain of what to respond and thus opinioned not sure, 64 respondents with 21.3% beg to differ and thus opinioned less effective, while the remaining 43 respondents with 14.3%. According to Andersen and Cyranowski (1994), who cite the social learning theory, sexual self-concept not only aids teenagers in organizing their prior experiences but also provides them with information to draw on for current and future sexual ideas and experiences.

## V. Conclusion

Sexual education is fundamental to children and adolescent at all levels of child's developmental stage, children tend to invent their own mythologies about human sexuality which when reinforced by active social pressure (such as pornography, unaccredited media sources, sexual magazines, and novels) their own natural sexual feelings plus their reproductive needs spells sexual health disastrous problems. Thus, the Nigerian media may function as sex educators for many adolescents; unfortunately, in some cases, the media messages often glamorize risky sexual behaviours and unhealthy relationships and neglect sexual health behaviours and communication. Despite this, the study revealed several immediate impacts of the programme for children, including reductions in the perceived realism of media messages, increases in sexual health knowledge, and reductions in normative beliefs about the frequency of risky sexual activity. The findings of the study point to a potential mediating mechanism of the media programmes that warrant additional

research. Media are central in the lives of children and adolescents; this study suggests that media literacy education may redress the potentially negative impact of unhealthy sexual media messages by building critical media message processing skills in children and adolescence.

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