

ABSTRACT

Adolescents' premarital sexual activities are increasing in the countries around the world, many of which are risky, unplanned and unprotected. School-based sex education is a promising medium for reaching many adolescents with fundamental health information and life skills that can prevent unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV/AIDS.

The aim of the study was to assess the knowledge and attitudes of adolescents towards school based sex education in selected secondary schools, Gulu district.

A descriptive cross sectional study was employed to assess the knowledge and attitudes of adolescents towards school based sex education in selected secondary schools, Gulu district. A total of 125 adolescents from different secondary schools within Gulu district were included in this study using probability, simple random sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data. Data were entered in epi-info 3.5.4 which was transferred using Stata transfer into access and analyzed using SPSS version 16.

From the assessment done majority of the respondents (69.6%) mentioned that their culture allowed sex education at the age with most of the respondents 83(66.4%) believing that sex education is very useful. Most of the respondents 83(66.4%) reported having sex education in the school, and 56(44.8%) of the respondents mentioned having sex education often. Majority of the respondents 110 (88.8%) knew something about sex education with half of the respondents 63 (50.4%) defining sex education as learning about sex. Most of the respondents 35 (28.0%) mentioned knowing about sex education from the health workers with majority of the students 39 (31.2%) reported they used radio as the most reliable source of information about sex education. Most of the respondents 111 (88.8%) think sex education is important, majority of the respondents 91(72.8%) attended sex education offered at the school; most of the respondents 83 (66.4%) mentioned that the schools have teachers who teach sex education, majority of the students 56 (45.8%) were motivated on sex education by their peer/friends.

The study showed good knowledge and attitude towards sex education, HIV/AIDS, STIs and family planning and health workers were considered the most sources of information and radio as the reliable source of information. Hence, providing constant supply of basic equipments and materials for sex education books, charts to improve on the gap is necessary.