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ASSESSMENT AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE SEXUAL ATTITUDE OF NIGERIAN EDUCATED PARENTS IN FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY ABUJA

I.P. OKAFOR, S.A. OGBONNA & I. ABDULLAZIZ

Abstract

The study was a descriptive research. It sampled a total of 500 Nigerian educated parents across ministries and parastatals in the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria, Abuja using purposive sampling techniques. Data was elicited from the sampled respondents using an adapted Payne & Hahn's Sexual Attitude Assessment Scale (PHSASS). Collected data was analyzed using percentages and chi-square statistics. Findings revealed that 64.2% of Abuja parents have traditional sexual attitude, 29.6% have non-traditional sexual attitude, and 6.2% have ambivalent sexual attitude. Thus, it was inferred on the existing literature's illustration of the sexual behaviour of persons having traditional sexual attitude that Nigerian educated parents may not support policies that favour homosexuality, transgender, bisexual, gay, lesbians', prostitution, abortion and other likely unpopular sexual practices. This research work, therefore, recommends that traditional sexual attitude should be encouraged among Nigerians and that the entire citizens should be re-oriented on the negative implications of engaging in sexual aberrations. Strict majors and policies should be put in place for offenders. It was concluded that the possibility of Nigeria having policies legalizing some of these sexual practices in the near future is still very slim.

Keywords: Sexual attitude, Sexual behaviour, Abuja parents, Implication, Traditional and nontraditional.

Introduction

One of the major social changes the world is witnessing today is the change in human sexual orientation and practices. Around the world, sexual orientations like homosexuality, lesbianism, transsexual, bisexual, gay, activities, sado-masochism, abortion, intentional childless meringue, and prostitution that were once classified as aberrations have been normalized. In Britain and the American states of Hawaii and Vermont, homosexuality is legal; homosexual couples enjoy every legal right, heterosexual couples are entitled to all privileges. Also, in England, Wales, and France, prostitutes are legitimate entrepreneurs (Giddens, 2006) and in New York and many other states in America, abortion is a personal choice; it is not outrightly condemned, not even in religious circle (McAnulty & Burnette, 2001). According to Sigmund Freud (1856-939), cited in Reedier, Capaldi, Paris, policy & Herman (1996), "human beings have become polymorphous perverse in their sense of sexual desire and activities". They have developed very complex sexual behaviours that were not known in human traditional societies

Sexuality knowledge is gradually metamorphosing into dramatic changes in the last few decades in the western countries. In the traditional customs societies, sexuality was tied tightly only to the means of production but in the modern age, the idea of only reproduction is no longer the verge but a means of life for people to explore and shape. Sexuality was before

seen as heterosexuality and monogamous in relations to marriage relationship. There is up-rise in people being comfortable with different types of sexual habit and inclination in many different ways which is incline with gay marriages. All these new trend in human sexuality in western societies has been seen as personal issue.

David (1979) a sociologist argued that homosexuality is brought about as a result of evolution and that human sexuality is reasonable and that human beings should show their sexual behaviour in different ways and it is something that is more of biological and symbolic which shows the type of person human beings are and the type of emotions they are passing through. Sexuality is such a different issue that cannot be attributed to biological traits alone but to be attached to social meaning that made human to attribute to it.

There are about 10 varieties of sexuality identities in human beings like straight (heterosexual) in both men and women, lesbian woman, gay man, bisexual woman and man, transvestite man and woman, transsexual man and woman. different sexual practices also can be found in both men and women. This can take place once at home or more than once. One can also have sex with oneself which is called masturbation or with no one (celibacy). In every given society, sexual norms exist that approve and disapprove sexual practices. This is learnt through socialization. In the last few decades in the western world, sexual norms have been linked to ideas of romantic love and family relationships and it differs from culture to culture. Homosexuality is the issue for discussion.

In the ancient Greeks for example, men love boys and it is seen as the peak form of sexual love and it is an accepted norm for the Greeks (Horber 1994). This means that some sexual habits are learnt and not innate. In the United Kingdom and around the world, homosexual has been stigmatized for a long time now. They were tagged with the name 'homophobia' in late 60s and homophobia simply means hatred for homosexual and dislike for their way of life. The term 'fag' or 'queer' was also used to relegate the act of homosexuals. The society also uses the term 'sissy' or 'pansy' to further insult gay men. (Seidman, 1997). Recently, many western societies have started accepting homosexuals but initially they were frowned at because the society was not pleased with their way of life. This hatred for their way of life by the society even cost them their friends, jobs and families.

In London, New York, San Francisco, Sydney and other big cities around the world long for gay and lesbian's communities. In June 1969 in United States a remarkable incidence occurred and it was the clash between the New York Police Department and the gay in New York City called the 'Stonewall Riot' which lasted for two days. (Weeks 1977; D' Emilio 1983). The 'Stonewall Riots' clash made a great impact and also raised the dignity and equal treatment of gays. It also brought about an end to the stigmatization of their life styles. In some African countries like South Africa, homosexual is legalized but lesbians are still under the shell. In Asia and Middle East, male homosexual is not allowed mostly in Islamic dominated areas but Europe has a liberal law that has legalized homosexual. The homosexuals have association protecting them called the International Lesbians and Gay Association (ILGA) which was founded in 1978 with more than 400 members (ILGA, 2004 in Giddens, 2006).

However, except in South Africa where in 1996, homosexual marriage became legal, Africans are known to be traditional in their sexual orientation (Giddens, 2006). For example, in Nigerian, Uganda, Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania and traditional societies, heterosexual orientation is the conventional means of deriving sexual satisfaction and it is the acceptable channel of procreation. Abortion is seen as a serious crime against God; prostitution is disdainfully condemned and the prostitutes are treated like outcasts. Intentional childless marriage is even out the point adult females are socially incomplete until they and give birth (Ludovica, 2014). To show Nigerian non-supportive stance for some of the sexual aberrations, some Northern states of the country adopt strict Islamic Sharia Laws that classify homosexuality and other sexual aberrations as offences punishable by stoning to death. Then in January 2006, the Nigerian National Assembly resolved to push a bill that will stiffen the law on homosexual activities in the country. Such bill, it was intended, will recommend a five-year jail term for homosexual (VOA. 2006). Still to put a stop on aberration sexual life style on 13th January 2013, the then president of Nigeria, Good Luck Jonathan signed into law the same-sex marriage prohibition act which parliament passed in May 2014 and a similar law was also passed in Uganda in December 2013 which imposed life imprisonment for offender of such acts.

However, social analysis is claiming that these Nigerian legal stances on sexual activities may not last; particularly in this century of cross boarder socio-economic interactions that have personalized diverse source of sexual orientation among Nigerian adults and youth; (Oyajobi, 1986). Some of the analysts believe that in the near future, Nigerians and the Nigerian law will express appreciation of homosexuality, abortion, and prostitution as acceptable social dynamics. This prediction raises the need for researches particularly in the area of understanding Nigerians' sexual behaviours or inferring their likely support for some sexual deviancies from sexual attitudes.

One way of ascertaining the possibility of shift in Nigerian sexual policies in favour of some acclaimed sexual aberration the sexual attitude of modern day Nigerians and with this one would be able to predict their behavior. This prediction is possible because human sexual behaviour is a manifestation of human sexual attitudes (Horowitz & Bordens, 1995). Because human sexual attitudes are mental and neutral states of human dispositions towards sexual issues, sexual attitudes tend to exert dynamic and directive influence upon what the human perceives as normal or abnormal sexual practice and what he eventually put up as sexual behaviour. Basically, an individual sexual behaviour and pattern of support for sexual issues can be predicted from his held sexual attitude. This is because an individual attitude defines and directs his feelings, thoughts, intentions and behaviour.

No doubt the need to understand and regulate human sexual behaviour is important internationally as it has been identified as one good way of promoting healthy living and rich human interpersonal relationship. It is one way of checking spread of sex related diseases (Payne & Hahn; 2002 & Giddens, 2006). Human sexual attitude can be categorized into three. An individual can be said to have a traditional sexual attitude and thereby be described as holding conforming, conventional, religious, static and stoical views about human sexual practices. On the other hand, an individual can have a nontraditional sexual attitude and thereby be described as holding deviating, unconventional, modernized and excitable views about sexual practices. In between these two categories is an ambivalent sexual attitude in

which an individual so describe as having porous or permeable views about sexual practice (Payne & Hahn, 2002 & Giddens, 2006).

Literature already established the notion that an individual having nontraditional sexual attitude is very likely to support homosexuality, abortion, prostitution, intentional childless marriage, teaching of comprehensive sex education to elementary students, and be less gender-role sensitive than an individual who has traditional sexual attitude (Payne & Hahn, 2002; Haralambos & Holdborn, 2008). It is on this background that this study was structured to investigate and determine whether Nigerian parents living within Abuja metropolis have traditional or nontraditional sexual attitude towards some sexual orientations. Abuja is one of the main residences of any parents that may have influence on Nigerian policy formulation. Knowing the sexual attitude of this subset of Nigeria parents can help in inferring what sexual behaviour or practice would be classified by this Nigerian law as appropriate in the near future.

Research Question

The following research question were therefore raised and answered in the study:

- (1) What are the sexual attitudes of Abuja educated parents?
- (2) Does the sexual attitude of Abuja educated parents vary on the basis of gender?
- (3) What are the implications of the sexual attitudes of Abuja educated parents on the future of acceptable sexual practices in Nigeria?

Hypothesis

From the raised research questions, the following hypothesis was generated for test in this study:

H_{01} : There is no significant difference in the sexual attitude of Abuja educated parents on the basis of gender

Methodology

The study was descriptive survey. It employed purposive sampling technique to on five hundred (500) parents across federal ministries and parastatals within the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. An adapted instrument entitled Payne & Hahn's Sexual Attitude Assessment Scale (PHSAAS) was used to elicit the needed data. The instrument has 20 items with 5 Scale response options ranging from Agree Strongly (AS) to Disagree Strongly (DS). Since no already determined validity and reliability coefficient were available for the instrument. The instrument was validated by the researchers, through face and content validity approaches and its reliability of coefficient $r.8.22$ was determined using test-re-test approach. Respondents' responses to the items on the instrument were analyzed using percentages and the Payne & Hahn's (2002) already designed Scoring Pattern (PHSP) given as follows: Agree Strongly = 1 mark, Agree Moderately = 2 marks, Uncertain = 3 marks, Disagree Moderately = 4 marks and Disagree Strongly = 5 marks.

In the PHSP, the highest obtainable score on the items is 100 (5×20) and the lowest is 20 (1×20). A total score of each respondent is taken as his/her points on the items. Thus, using this scoring pattern, the point-ranges were interpreted as follows:

- 20-34 points = A very traditional sexual attitude
- 35-54 points = A moderately traditional sexual attitude
- 55-65 points = A rather ambivalent sexual attitude
- 66-85 points = A moderately non-traditional sexual attitude
- 86-100 points = A very non-traditional sexual attitude

Based on the above categorization of scores, data was further analyzed using percentages and chi-square statistics. Only research questions 1 and 2 were answered using statistical applications. Research question 2 was transformed to a hypothesis which was subsequently tested using chi-square statistic. Research question 3 was answered hypothetically, in the conclusion, by inferring the possible implications of the sampled parents' sexual behaviour based on the statistical description in table 1.

Answering Research Question

The raised research questions were answered as follows:

Research Question 1: What are the sexual attitudes of Abuja educated parents?

Table 1: Percentage Description of Parents Sexual Attitude

Categories of Abuja Parent's Sexual Attitudes

Traditional Attitude		Ambivalent Attitude		Non Traditional Attitudes			
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
113	22.6	208	41.6	13	2.6	18	3.6
						106	21.2
						42	8.4

Data in Table 1 show that 64.2% (22.6% of male and 41.6% of female) of the sampled parents have traditional sexual attitude (i.e. their scores/point on the items in the research instrument ranged from 20-54), while 29.6% (21.2% of male and 8.4% of female) of the parents expressed having non-traditional sexual behaviour (i.e. their scores/points ranged from 66-100). Only 6.2% (2.6% of male and 3.6% of female) Sampled parents expressed having ambivalent sexual attitude (i.e. their scores/points ranged from 55-65).

Hypothesis Testing

Ho: There is no significant difference in the sexual attitude of Abuja educated parents on the basis of gender.

Table 2: Chi-square Description of Difference in Parents' Sexual Attitude on the Basis of Gender

Gender	TSA	ATSA	NTSA	Total	df	X ² cal.V	X ² tab.V
Male	113 (148.94)	208 (172.06)	13 (14.38)	232	2	69.58	5.99
Female	18 (16.61)	106 (68.69)	42 (79.32)	268			

Key

TSA=Traditional Sexual Attitude

ATSA=Ambivalent Traditional Sexual Attitude

NTSA=Non-Traditional Sexual Attitude

As shown on Table 2, the X^2 calculated value of 69.58 is higher than the X^2 tabulated value at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is rejected and it was concluded that a significant difference existed in the sexual attitude of Abuja parents on the basis of gender.

One of the internationally ratified legal responsibilities of every nation towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) is the need to ensure healthy living productive economic life, and promote positive sexual behaviour among citizens. A nation's understanding of the possible trends in her citizens' sexual behaviour can go a long way in helping her develop health policy and education programmes with which to positively socialize her youth in particular and make her citizens functional.

Negative sexual behaviours have been identified as anti-progressive life. It is already known that such behaviours hinder effective living standard, healthy life, and educational attainment (Payne & Hahn, 2002; FRN, 2004; Agbonna, 2008). Many complex health problems facing the world today have their roots in the promotion of sexual aberrations. For example, the first record of HIV/AIDS in the world was among the homosexuals and many health and security hazards are experiences through abortion and prostitution (Giddens, 2001; Payne & Hahn, 2002; Diop- Sidibe, 2005). Thus, any national policy that promotes development of sexual attitudes that support sexual aberration is endangering the progress of the nation.

However, the findings of this study revealed that Nigerian educated parents in Abuja in particular have traditional sexual attitude that may oppose perpetration of some sexual aberrations. One implication of this is that the possibility of Nigerian government coming up with legislation that will legalize some of the sexual aberrations is minimal. This conclusion is possible judging from the fact that the subsets of Nigerian adults that the study drew its data from are influential in sexual behavioural learning and modification. They are parents, educated and residents of Abuja, the seat of Nigeria policy formulation, who directly or indirectly will have influence on what sexual attitudes the Nigerian youths develop (being parents) and who may have a say in sexual related policy formulation for Nigeria.

One indisputable fact is that parents play key roles in shaping sexual policies and practices both at the family and governmental levels. Thus, an understanding of parental sexual attitude is one way of extrapolating Nigeria's future policies on some of these issues. Nigeria, as an African nation, can develop its health policies. Much of her desired youth development plans and general moral revamp among its youth and old citizens can effectively materialize if it affirms her non-supportive stance for sexual aberrations through anti-homosexuality, abortion and prostitution policies.

Conclusion

Based on the findings in this study, it was revealed that Abuja parents are more traditional in their sexual attitude than being non-traditional (64.2% 29.6%). Thus, it can be inferred that Abuja parents have opposite policies trying to legalize sexual aberrations like prostitution, abortion, and homosexuality. This implies that the possibility of declaring these sexual

behaviours as acceptable and legal by the Nigerian health and sexual policies is still insignificant. However, as another side of the findings of this study indicted, whether parents will be traditional or non-traditional in their sexual attitude depends significantly on the gender of the parents. What can further be inferred from this is that gender will play significant role in determining parents' support or opposition of some sexual policies in the country.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following are recommended:

Nigerian government should further develop traditional sexual attitude among its citizens possibly through mass orientation of people on the negative implications of engaging in sexual aberrations or through establishing stiffer policies to discourage such sexual practices;

Further researches should be carried out to investigate the implications of promoting traditional sexual behaviour on individuals' human rights.

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