

Title: Determinants Of Sexual Behaviors and Practices Of Young People In Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

Background

Despite the availability of various sexual health education and behavioral change communication strategies, young people still engage in risky sexual behaviors that expose them to contracting sexually transmitted infections and living unhealthy lives, yet studies on the factors influencing these behaviors are few. Understanding the factors associated with the sexual behaviors of young people are crucial for proper design of programs and interventions to prevent, treat, and care for them. The aim of this study was to assess the determinants of sexual behaviors and practices of young people in Nigeria.

Methods

A cross-sectional study was conducted among 18–35 year olds in Nigeria. A self-referred convenience sampling procedure was followed. Data were collected on socio-demographic profile, reproductive and sexual health attitudes and practices; and exposure to pornography, using structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics with SPSS version 20 software package.

Results:

Overall, a total of 1026 youth participated in the study. The highest proportion of respondents in the study was found among the 18 – 24 years age group (51.4%) and those who have never been married (57.4%). 68% of respondents have had sex which is predominantly high among age 18 – 24 years old group, 89% cohabiting respondents have had sex in exchange for money/favor, while 51%, 3.8%, and 54% reported having oral, anal and vaginal sex in the past 12 months. Being single, having a university education and living in the urban region were associated with increased likelihood to engage in sexual activity, while alcohol consumption frequency, exposure to pornography, traditional religion, and lower educational attainments were associated with high risk sexual activities. Unprotected sexual intercourse, transactional sex, multiple sexual partners, and those who preferred oral and anal sexual style was highest in respondents that watched pornography.

Conclusion:

Respondents age, cohabiting relationship status, education status below primary school, not living with parent, food security, unemployment and exposure to pornography are major influencers of youth's sexual behaviors and practices. Sexual health education and behavioral change communication strategies targeting young people are highly recommended. Efforts need to be exerted on ensuring youth friendly health centres are functioning and varying reproductive health commodities are available for young people that practice risk behavior.

Country of research: Nigeria

Key Population: Men who have sex with men (MSM), Sex workers (SW), Youth

Related to women and girls: Yes

Related to children: Yes