

KNOWLEDGE ON REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOR AMONG SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PEÑABLANCA, CAGAYAN

Edverly T. Malana,
Norma D. Goyagoy,
Karen Gaffud

ABSTRACT

Adolescence is the stage where physical, psychological, and reproductive maturation develops and this is covered by the ages between 10-19 years old. Reproductive and sexual knowledge is very crucial especially to adolescents because this is the time when they are highly risky to sexual behaviors. A lack of awareness and knowledge is the most identified problem that leads to several health risks and consequences such as sexually transmitted diseases and early indulgence in sexual activities that will result in teenage pregnancy and abortion. Thus, this study aimed to assess the knowledge on sexual and reproductive behavior among the SHS students at the selected schools in Peñablanca, Cagayan. This study used quantitative, descriptive, and inferential methods to discern the significant difference between the profile variables and the knowledge on reproductive and sexual behavior in terms of male and female reproductive system, sexually transmitted diseases, contraception masturbation and sex-related activities, pregnancy and abortion, and indulgence in sexual activities. One-way ANOVA and Independent Sample T-test were used to analyze the data being gathered from the respondents. Survey questionnaire was administered to the respondents with a sample size of 325 to gather the data. The researchers were able to collect the data needed for the problem of the study. After obtaining the needed data, the responses were reviewed, tallied, interpreted and analyzed. In lieu, the overall response has shown that there is a statistically significant difference between the profile variables of the respondents on their knowledge in Reproductive and sexual behavior.

Key words: *Knowledge, Reproductive, Sexual behavior, Senior High School, Adolescent*

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines teenagers or adolescents are those people ages between 10 and 19. A report from the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) recently documented that adolescence is the period that constitutes three stages of age, namely, early adolescence (from 10 to 13 years old), middle adolescence (from 14 to 16 years old), and late adolescence (from 17 to 19 years old), while those aged 20–24 years are considered young adults.

It is the transition that is highly exposed to risky sexual behavior (RSB), so if parents do not provide early sexual health education to their children at a younger age, they can have potentially serious consequences (Kassa, GM, et al, 2016). Parents-adolescent communication is essential as they are responsible for keeping their child safe by watching over them, educating them about the risks associated with sexual activity, and promoting the development of positive attitudes and values related to sex as well as avoidance of risky behavior activities (Y. Saadet, 2011).

According to (Fekadu Wakasa, et., al, 2021) secondary school is a new context where many adolescents from different primary schools participate and expand their social networks, potentially leading to the emergence of new sexual behaviors. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have announced several health risks and consequences associated with unprotected sexual activity among teenagers. This includes HIV/AIDS risk, school dropout, unwanted/unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease (STD), unsafe abortion, and psychological problems (CDC, 2021, Chandra-Mouli et al., 2013).

Philippines is one of the Asian countries that experienced and share similar concerns. Teenage pregnancy had become a major issue in the country and a “National Social Emergency” was announced by the National Economic and Development Authority in August 2019. In 2020, the lockdown worsened the situation as the force rules made it difficult for teenage girls and women in general to have access to medical facilities, contraceptives, and healthcare services such as the 2021 baby boom projected by the University of the Philippines Population Institute (UPPI) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) where 9% of women between the ages of 15 and 19 start childbearing (Philippine News Agency, 2019). According to their research, 2.5 million new unintended pregnancies emerged in 2020–42 percent higher than the figures in 2019. Some variables would include forcing women to stay at home, as well as their lack of access to reproductive health care during the lockdown. As a result, this has imposed a big issue towards the achievement of Millennium Development Goals that puts the country on red alert (Philippines News Agency, 2012).

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the method of research used that consists of the research design, respondents of the study and sample size, data gathering tool, Data gathering procedure, and data analysis to be used by the researchers in gathering the data needed.

Research Design

This study used a quantitative, descriptive, inferential action research method which provided necessary quantitative information about the knowledge on reproductive and sexual behavior of the Senior High School students. Descriptive quantitative design is used for exploring the relationship between the demographic profile and their knowledge regarding sexual and reproductive behavior among Senior High School students using a checklist questionnaire to gather data. Furthermore,

Inferential statistic method was utilized to draw conclusions and evaluate the relationship between the demographic profile and their knowledge regarding sexual and reproductive behavior among Senior High School students in Peñablanca, Cagayan.

Respondents of the study

The respondents of the study are the Senior High School (SHS) of the selected schools in Peñablanca, Cagayan which are the International School of Asia and the Pacific (ISAP), Peñablanca.

National High School (PNHS) and Don Severino National High School (DSNHS) with the total samples of 325. The number of respondents from each selected school is as follows: 135 were the number of participants from the International School of Asia and the Pacific, 130 from Peñablanca National High School, and 60 from Don Severino National High School. The respondents were selected randomly, both male and female from all strands in the Senior High School Department. The researcher used a probability sampling method specifically the stratified sampling technique to determine the knowledge of the respondents on reproductive and sexual behavior.

Data Gathering Procedure

To gather the needed data for the study, the following were done by the researchers:

The researchers utilized and modified a checklist questionnaire of (Mohmad Iqbal, 2021), which was used for the study entitled “The Level of knowledge and awareness about Sex and Reproductive Health Among Adolescence in Kashmir”. It contains questions to assess the level of knowledge regarding reproductive and sexual health among adolescents. After the approval of the validity of the questionnaires and the letter of permission from the Research Development Center, the researchers personally presented the letter of request to the school principal of the three (3) selected schools. Upon the approval

of the school principal, the researchers multiplied the questionnaires to 325 copies sufficient to accommodate all the respondents.

The researchers conducted and floated the questionnaires through the help of the teachers who attended the class during the gathering of the data from the respondents. Copies of consent and questionnaires were personally distributed to the respondents. All details from the given consent and questionnaires were explained by the researchers to help respondents understand and be able to answer truthfully and precisely the questions and to secure consent for the confidentiality of the respondent's identity. The researchers facilitate the respondents in queries or concerns.

Answered questionnaires were gathered on the same day it was administered. Responses are coded and subjected to appropriate statistical computation and analysis by the professional statistician for reliability. Data were interpreted and after the analysis of data, the researchers made sure to keep all the data confidential by keeping the answered questionnaire secured.

Data Gathering Tool

The researchers utilized and modified a checklist questionnaire of (Mohmad Iqbal, 2021), which was used for the study entitled “The Level of knowledge and awareness about Sex and Reproductive Health Among Adolescence in Kashmir”. It contains questions to assess the level of knowledge regarding reproductive and sexual health among adolescents.

The researchers used a checklist questionnaire: The questionnaire is divided into two (2) parts; (1). Demographic profile regarding their Age, Sex, family structure, religion, parents’ highest education, and parents’ monthly income; and (2). The assessment of the knowledge of the respondents in reproductive and sexual behavior. The respondents rated the assessment on knowledge from 4-Strongly Agree, 3-Agree, 2- Neither Agree/Disagree and 1-Disagree.

RESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter presents the data gathered, the results of the statistical analysis done, and the interpretation of findings. These are presented in tables following the sequence of the specific problem.

TABLE 1.1. DISTRIBUTION OF THE PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS IN TERMS OF AGE

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
15-17	193	59.4
18-20	132	40.6
TOTAL	325	100.00

Table 1.1 showed that the majority of the respondents belong to the age bracket of 15-17 years old with a percentage of 59.4%, followed by the age bracket of 18-20 years old with a percentage of 40.6%. This implies that the age of Gen Z Senior High School students is mostly under the age bracket of 15-17 years old rather than 18-20 years old.

TABLE 1.2. DISTRIBUTION OF THE PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS IN TERMS OF SEX

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
MALE	184	56.6
FEMALE	141	43.4
TOTAL		100.00

Table 1.2 showed that the majority of the respondents are male with a percentage of 56.6% and the lowest are female with a percentage of 43.4%. This implies that mostly of the Senior High School students in Peñablanca, Cagayan that were randomly selected as respondents are male.

TABLE 1.3. DISTRIBUTION OF THE PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS IN TERMS OF FAMILY STRUCTURE

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
PARENTS LIVING TOGETHER	234	72.0
LIVING WITH SINGLE PARENT/BROKEN FAMILY	59	18.2
LIVING WITH RELATIVES	30	9.2
LIVING WITH BOYFRIEND/GIRLFRIEND	2	.6
TOTAL		100.00

Table 1.3 showed that the majority of the respondents are living with their parents with a percentage of 72.0% while the lowest percentage are living with their boyfriend/ girlfriend with 0.6%. This implies that the respondents are living with their both parents since they are still under the supervision of their parents considering that their age is still minor and merely dependent on their parents.

TABLE 1.4. DISTRIBUTION OF THE PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS IN TERMS OF RELIGION

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
ROMAN CATHOLIC	247	76.0
BORN AGAIN	26	8.0
INC	27	8.3
MORMON	7	2.2
JEHOVA	10	3.1
METHODIST	7	2.2
PRESBYTARIAN	1	.3
TOTAL		100.00

Table 1.4 showed that the majority of the respondents are Roman Catholic with a percentage of 76.0% while the lowest is Presbyterian with 0.3%. This implies that majority of the respondent's religion is

Roman Catholic, unlike other religious affiliations since this religion is the most well-known in the province.

TABLE 1.5. DISTRIBUTION OF THE PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS IN TERMS OF PARENTS HIGHEST EDUCATION

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
ELEMENTARY GRADUATE	35	10.8
ELEMENTARY UNDERGRADUATE	10	3.1
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	117	36.0
HIGH SCHOOL UNDERGRADUATE	18	5.5
COLLEGE GRADUATE	117	36.0
COLLEGE UNDERGRADUATE	28	8.6
TOTAL		100.00

Table 1.5 showed that the majority of the respondents' parents are College graduates and High School graduates with a percentage of 36.6% while the lowest percentage is Elementary Undergraduates with 3.1%. This implies that the parents' highest educational attainment of the respondents are high school graduates and college graduates. High school graduates because of financial problems and College graduates because they want to pursue their desires in life and have a better future.

TABLE 1.6. DISTRIBUTION OF THE PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS IN TERMS OF PARENTS MONTHLY COMBINED INCOME

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
3000-10000	102	31.4
11000-15000	37	11.4
16000-20000	73	22.5
21000-30000	98	30.2
31000-40000	15	4.6
TOTAL		100.00

Table 1.6 showed that majority of the respondents' parents monthly combined income ranges 3,000-10,000 with a percentage of 31.4% while the lowest percentage is 31,000-40,000 with 4.6%. This implies that the majority of the respondents' parents' monthly combined income is between 3, 000-10, 000 and 31,000-40,000 because of their line of work with low salaries.

TABLE 2.1. ASSESSMENT OF THE RESPONDENT'S KNOWLEDGE IN TERMS OF MALE AND FEMALE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

STATEMENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
VERY KNOWLEGABLE	71	21.8
KNOWLEGABLE	226	69.3
PARTIALLY KNOWLEGABLE	25	8.6
NOT KNOWLEGABLE	0	0
TOTAL	325	100.00

Table 2.1 showed that the majority of the respondents are knowledgeable regarding the assessment of respondents' perceptions in terms of male and female reproductive system. This implies that majority of the respondents are knowledgeable regarding this subject matter because basic knowledge regarding male and female reproductive system is already introduced to them.

Age-appropriate sex education is mandated in some nations, such as the Netherlands, for all children four years old and older. This program's primary objective is to instill respect in pupils for both their classmates and their own bodies and sexualities. Pupils who have a grasp of the components and operations of the reproductive system will be better equipped to study about puberty, menstruation, conception, and pregnancy (WHO, 2002). It is recommended by these guidelines that children understand basic information about reproductive anatomy and changes that occur during puberty (FoSE, 2012; SIECUS, 2004; UNESCO, 2009) between the ages of 5 and 8.

TABLE 2.2. ASSESSMENT OF THE RESPONDENT'S KNOWLEDGE IN TERMS OF SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES, CONTRACEPTION MASTURBATATION AND SEX- RELATED ACTIVITIES

STATEMENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
VERY KNOWLEGABLE	3	.9
KNOWLEGABLE	243	74.8
PARTIALLY KNOWLEGABLE	79	24.3
NOT KNOWLEGABLE	0	0
TOTAL	325	100.00

Table 2.2 showed that majority of the respondents knowledgeable to the assessment of respondents' knowledge in terms of sexually transmitted diseases, contraception masturbation, and sex-related activities with a percentage of 74.8. This implies that they are well informed and aware of sexually transmitted diseases, the risk, and how they can be acquired from other individuals. They are also knowledgeable on the appropriate usage of contraception such as condom and birth control pills. Meanwhile, they are also knowledgeable in terms of masturbation and sex related activities because this is part of the adolescent's psychosexual development as they reach the age of puberty.

In the study of, (Snyder, 1970 cited by Hurlock, 2016) with regard to adolescents' interest in knowing about sex, it was revealed those girls are more curious about birth control, abortion, and pregnancy while boys want to know about enjoyment of sex, sexual intercourse, and birth control. Both sexes' major interest is in sexual intercourse, its context and its consequences. Nevertheless, most people consider sexual activity an essential part of their lives and critical for the preservation of human species.

TABLE 2.3. ASSESSMENT OF THE RESPONDENT'S KNOWLEDGE IN TERMS OF PREGNANCY AND ABORTION

STATEMENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
VERY KNOWLEGABLE	38	11.7
KNOWLEGABLE	233	71.7
PARTIALLY KNOWLEGABLE	54	16.6
NOT KNOWLEGABLE	0	0
TOTAL	325	100.00

Table 2.3 showed that majority of the respondents are knowledgeable in the assessment of respondents' perceptions of in terms of pregnancy and abortion with a percentage of 71.7. This implies that the respondents are knowledgeable regarding on how they can become pregnant and they are aware regarding the complication and risk of abortion in case that they happen to do it.

Children in Nepal are sufficiently informed about teenage pregnancy, its causes, effects, and prevention strategies since they are mandated to receive age-appropriate sex education starting at age 4. Genetic diseases and abnormalities of the chromosome have been the cause of abortion in over half of the cases. Yet, there are additional factors that can impact an abortion, such as anomalies in the uterus, infectious infections and untreated maternal conditions, the mother's age during pregnancy, a history of abortions, the age at which the woman first menstruated, and menstrual disorders (D. Vaima, K. Kleinhaus, 2015).

TABLE 2.4. ASSESSMENT OF THE RESPONDENT'S KNOWLEDGE IN TERMS OF INDULGENCE IN SEXUAL ACTIVITIES

STATEMENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
VERY KNOWLEGABLE	8	2.5
KNOWLEGABLE	67	20.6
PARTIALLY KNOWLEGABLE	191	58.8
NOT KNOWLEGABLE	59	18.2
TOTAL	325	100.00

Table 2.4 showed that majority of the respondents are partially knowledgeable with the assessment of respondents' perceptions in terms of indulgence in sexual activities with a percentage of 58.8. While the lowest percentage are "very knowledgeable" with a percentage of 2.5. This implies that they have inadequate knowledge and less informed about sex-related activities for the reason that they have not yet engage in physical relationship with opposite sex at least once in their life. However, only few respondents are very knowledgeable regarding this matter which indicates that they already have an experienced associated with sexual activities.

According to the findings of the 2013 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality (YAFS 4) study, researchers from the University of the Philippines Population Institute (UPPI) and the Demographic Research and Development Foundation Today, 32% of young Filipinos aged 15 to 24 have already engaged in pre-marital sex (PMS), 9% higher than the 2002 survey. It is discovered that 3.5% of them had experienced FUBU, or regular intercourse without emotional attachment, and 7.3% of them had already had casual sex. Nevertheless, some teenagers also mentioned that they were afraid that if they had become sexually active too young, they would become pregnant unintentionally or contract HIV (De haas et al., 2017).

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This contains the summary of findings gathered from the thorough study of this research. It also includes conclusions drawn in the findings and the researcher's recommendations highlighting the solutions to the discovered problems as well as directions for future research endeavors.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study found that most of the respondents are Gen Z, the majority are males, Roman Catholic, living with their both parents, and the parent's highest educational attainment are college graduates, and a parent's combined monthly income ranges from 3,000-10,000.

According to the findings of this study, the respondents are knowledgeable in terms of Male and female reproductive behavior, sexually transmitted diseases, contraception masturbation and sex-related activities, and pregnancy and abortion. While on the other hand, they are partially knowledgeable in terms of indulgence in sexual activities.

Furthermore, there is a significant difference in the knowledge of the respondents when grouped according to their age, sex, family structure, and parents' highest educational attainment. Respondents ages 18-20 are knowledgeable on male and female reproductive systems while 15-17 years old, females, who have college undergraduate parents are partially knowledgeable on indulgence in sexual activities. In addition, those respondents who are living with their boyfriend/girlfriend are knowledgeable about pregnancy and abortion. This is evident by the p-value of less than 0.05 which is the margin of error set by the study.

Based on the result, the researchers came up with an action plan which is the program entitled: Knowledge in Reproductive and Sexual behavior Seminar and Symposium: A Program to enhance learners and knowledge on Reproductive and Sexual behavior among SHS students in Peñablanca, Cagayan to equipped them with the knowledge and concepts around sexuality and reproduction, and skills to help make an informed decisions to prevent sexual and reproductive associated consequences, unplanned pregnancy and STI's.

CONCLUSION

The result of this study showed that the respondents are not “very knowledgeable” about reproductive and sexual behavior however, they are “knowledgeable” in terms of the male and female reproductive system; sexually transmitted diseases; contraception, masturbation, sex-related activities; pregnancy, and abortion. On the other hand, they are “partially knowledgeable”, particularly about indulgence in sexual activities. Moreover, there is a significant difference in their knowledge when grouped according to their age, sex, family structure, and parents' highest educational attainment. Therefore, rejected the null hypothesis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions presented, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. School Guidance counselors and school nurses should continue to work collaboratively in addressing the needs of students regarding sex education and reproductive health of the students.
2. Allotting more time in conducting sexual education should also be widened for the students to gain more knowledge.
3. The researchers recommend the implementation of programs such as symposiums regarding sexual and reproductive health among parents, serving as a guide in educating their children.

4. The researchers highly encourage parents to openly discuss sexual health with their children to raise awareness

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