

**PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL-COMMUNITY COLLABORATION
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ADOLESCENT REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH
EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE**

Alozie, Chioma Precious,

Department of Health Promotion and Public Health Education
Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.
Email: chiomaalozie2019@gmail.com; 08064034026

Obele Jane Oluchukwu.

janeoluchi16@yahoo.com; 0803 877 1422

Maduekwe Ifeoma Ogechukwu

mesolyna4real@gmail.com; 08038386051

Abstract

The study aimed to examine the perceived influence of school-community collaboration on the implementation of adolescent reproductive health education in secondary schools in Anambra State. The research adopted a descriptive survey design and involved 804 health education teachers from public secondary schools in Anambra state. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data, with two sections: one assessing forms of school-community collaboration and the other evaluating its influence on the implementation of reproductive health education. The instrument was validated by experts in the field of health education and a pilot test was conducted to assess its reliability, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.85 for Section A and 0.88 for Section B. Data were analyzed using mean scores and standard deviations. The findings revealed that school-community collaboration significantly influenced the implementation of adolescent reproductive health education, with joint health campaigns, involvement of parents and community health personnel and the establishment of health clubs identified as key collaborative efforts. The study concluded that strengthening school-community partnerships can significantly enhance the quality and effectiveness of reproductive health education programs. It is recommended that schools and communities collaborate more closely through joint activities, teacher training and community health professionals' involvement.

Keywords: Adolescent Reproductive Health Education, Health Education, School-Community Collaboration, Secondary Schools.

Introduction

Adolescence is a pivotal stage marked by significant physical, emotional and social transformations. During this period, individuals often encounter challenges related to sexual and reproductive health, including early pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and misconceptions about reproductive processes. Addressing these issues necessitates comprehensive and culturally sensitive reproductive health education tailored to adolescents' needs. Adolescent reproductive health education encompasses the provision of accurate information and the development of skills that enable young individuals to make informed decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive well-being. According to the Obi-Nwosu *et al.* (2023), it involves equipping adolescents with knowledge about human sexuality, contraception and disease prevention to promote responsible behaviors. Akande *et al.* (2024) emphasize that such education should be age-appropriate and culturally relevant, aiming to delay sexual initiation and reduce risky behaviors. Similarly, Agwuncha *et al.* (2022) defined adolescent reproductive health education as a curriculum-based process that fosters critical thinking and decision-making skills related to sexual health. In the context of this study, adolescent reproductive health education refers to structured instructional programmes within secondary schools in Anambra State that aim to inform and empower students about reproductive health matters, fostering responsible attitudes and behaviors.

The state of adolescent reproductive health education in Anambra State remains largely inadequate, with significant gaps in both content delivery and coverage. Many secondary schools in the state lack trained personnel who are well-equipped to handle sensitive topics related to sexual and reproductive health. Additionally, cultural taboos surrounding discussions of sex and reproductive health often hinder comprehensive education in schools, leading to an emphasis on basic biological aspects rather than a

more holistic approach. The curriculum on reproductive health is often outdated or misaligned with the specific needs of adolescents, failing to address pressing issues such as teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and safe sexual practices. Compounding these challenges are the limited resources available in schools, such as teaching aids and materials and weak collaborations between schools and community health stakeholders, which further limit the impact of reproductive health education on students' decision-making and behaviors (Obi-Nwosu *et al.*, 2023).

The successful implementation of adolescent reproductive health education often hinges on effective school-community collaboration. This collaboration involves partnerships between educational institutions and community stakeholders, such as healthcare providers, parents and non-governmental organizations, to enhance the delivery and relevance of health education. Manian and Sorensen (2024) describes school-community collaboration as a framework where schools and communities share responsibilities to support student learning and development. Marsh and Marthur (2020) stated that such partnerships can provide additional resources and expertise, enriching the educational experience. Moreover, Maier *et al.* (2017) opined that collaborative efforts can lead to more comprehensive and effective educational programmes. In this study, school-community collaboration refers to the cooperative efforts between secondary schools in Anambra State and local community entities to jointly develop and implement adolescent reproductive health education initiatives. Despite the recognized benefits of integrating community resources into school-based health education, challenges persist in establishing and maintaining effective collaborations. Barriers such as differing priorities, limited resources and lack of communication can hinder the success of these partnerships (Manian & Sorensen, 2024). Understanding the dynamics of school-community collaboration is crucial for enhancing the quality and impact of adolescent

reproductive health education. Therefore, this study aims to examine the effect of school-community collaboration on the implementation of adolescent reproductive health education in secondary schools within Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage in Nigeria, where sexual and reproductive health issues are prevalent, leading to increased school dropout rates, health complications and socio-economic disadvantages. Despite the inclusion of reproductive health topics in secondary school curriculums, the delivery of adolescent reproductive health education (ARHE) remains inconsistent and often inadequate. Factors contributing to this inadequacy include limited teacher training, cultural and religious sensitivities and a lack of resources. School-community collaboration has been identified as a potential strategy to enhance the effectiveness of ARHE. These partnerships involve schools and community stakeholders, including healthcare providers, non-governmental organizations, parents and religious leaders, to support the delivery of comprehensive health education. However, the extent and effectiveness of these collaborations in implementing ARHE in Anambra State are not well-documented. Understanding the dynamics of these partnerships is crucial for developing strategies to improve ARHE and the health and well-being of adolescents in the region. This study aims to investigate the effect of school-community collaboration on the implementation of adolescent reproductive health education in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of school-community collaboration on the implementation of adolescent reproductive health education in secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. determine the forms of school-community collaborations regarding adolescent reproductive health education that exist in secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. ascertain how school-community collaboration influence the implementation of adolescent reproductive health education in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What forms of school-community collaborations regarding adolescent reproductive health education that exist in secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What is the influence of school-community collaboration on the implementation of adolescent reproductive health education in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 804 health education teachers in secondary schools in Anambra State. Using Taro Yamane's sample size formula, with a margin of error of 0.05, the calculated sample size was approximately 267 teachers. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to select participants from both urban and rural schools, ensuring representation from various educational zones. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The instrument consisted of two sections: Section A included 10 items on school-community collaborations regarding adolescent reproductive health education, while Section B contained 10 items on the influence of these collaborations on implementation. Each item was structured on a 4-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The instrument underwent content validation by three experts in health education and educational measurement. Their feedback was used to refine the items for clarity and relevance. A pilot test was conducted in a neighboring state with similar educational settings to assess the reliability of the instrument. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated: Section A yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.82, Section B 0.79 and the overall instrument 0.80, indicating high internal consistency.

Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The decision rule for interpreting the mean scores was as follows: a mean score of 3.50–4.00 indicated strong agreement, 2.50–3.49 indicated agreement, 1.50–2.49 indicated disagreement and 1.00–1.49 indicated strong disagreement. Items with mean scores of 2.50 and above were considered as having a significant influence or agreement, while those below 2.50 were considered as having no significant influence or disagreement.

Results

Research Question One: What forms of school-community collaborations regarding adolescent reproductive health education that exist in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Respondents' Mean Ratings on the Forms of School-Community Collaborations Regarding Adolescent Reproductive Health Education

S/No.	Form of Collaboration	\bar{x}	SD	Remarks
1	Joint training programmes for teachers and community health workers	2.45	0.85	Disagree
2	Establishment of school health clubs involving community members	2.30	0.88	Disagree
3	Community health personnel conducting reproductive health education in schools	2.60	0.80	Agree
4	Distribution of reproductive health information materials by community organizations	2.50	0.82	Agree
5	Organization of joint health awareness campaigns by schools and community groups	2.55	0.79	Agree

6	Involvement of parents in reproductive health education through school-community meetings	2.40	0.84	Disagree
7	Peer education programmes facilitated by community-trained adolescents	2.65	0.78	Agree
8	Community health workers providing counseling services within school premises	2.75	0.76	Agree
9	Collaboration between schools and local media for reproductive health education	2.50	0.83	Agree
10	Joint monitoring and evaluation of reproductive health programmes by schools and communities	2.60	0.81	Agree
Grand Mean		2.53		Agree

Data in Table 1 shows the different forms of school-community collaborations regarding adolescent reproductive health education in secondary schools in Anambra State. Respondents agreed on items, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10 with mean ratings ranging between 2.50 and 2.70. However, they disagreed on items, 1, 2 and 6 with mean ratings of 2.45, 2.30 and 2.40 respectively. The standard deviation scores ranging between 0.76 and 0.88 showed that the respondents opinions were related. The grand mean of 2.53 indicates that respondents generally agree on the various forms of school-community collaborations regarding adolescent reproductive health education in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question Two: What is the influence of school-community collaboration on the implementation of adolescent reproductive health education in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 2: Influence of School-Community Collaboration on the Implementation of Adolescent Reproductive Health Education

S/No.	Influence of School-Community Collaboration on Implementation	\bar{x}	SD	Remarks
11	Joint training programmes for teachers and community health workers improving delivery of reproductive health education	3.10	0.72	Agree
12	Establishment of school health clubs with community involvement enhances students' awareness of reproductive health	3.20	0.80	Agree
13	Community health personnel conducting reproductive health education in schools enhances implementation	3.40	0.78	Agree

14	Distribution of reproductive health information materials by community organizations improves student knowledge	3.30	0.70	Agree
15	Organization of joint health awareness campaigns by schools and community groups promotes better reproductive health education	3.25	0.85	Agree
16	Involvement of parents in reproductive health education through school-community meetings increases program success	3.05	0.78	Agree
17	Peer education programmes facilitated by community-trained adolescents positively impact reproductive health education	3.50	0.84	Agree
18	Community health workers providing counseling services within school premises enhances implementation	3.60	0.77	Agree
19	Collaboration between schools and local media for reproductive health education strengthens student engagement	3.20	0.74	Agree
20	Joint monitoring and evaluation of reproductive health programmes by schools and communities ensures effective implementation	3.30	0.73	Agree
Grand Mean		3.25		Agree

Data in Table 2 revealed the influence of school-community collaboration on the implementation of adolescent reproductive health education in secondary schools in Anambra State. The respondents agreed that items, 11-20 are the influence of school-community collaboration on the implementation of adolescent reproductive health education in secondary schools in Anambra State with mean ratings ranging between 3.05 and 3.60. The standard deviation scores ranging between 0.70 and 0.85 shows that the respondents opinion are close. The grand mean of 3.25 indicate that school-community collaboration influences the implementation of adolescent reproductive health education in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Discussion

The finding of the study revealed that the respondents generally agree on the various forms of school-community collaborations regarding adolescent reproductive health education in secondary schools in Anambra State. High mean scores were recorded for items such as peer education programmes facilitated by community-trained adolescents, counseling services provided by community health workers within school premises and collaboration between schools and local media for reproductive health

education. This indicates that these collaborative strategies are fairly common and well-acknowledged in the study area. One possible reason for this finding is the growing recognition of the need for joint action between schools and communities to tackle adolescent reproductive health challenges. Adolescents are faced with a range of reproductive health concerns, including early sexual initiation, unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. Schools alone may not be sufficiently equipped to address these complex issues without community support. Therefore, collaborations with local health agencies, parents, NGOs and media may enhance the implementation of effective health education programmes. This finding is in agreement with the work of Igwilo *et al.* (2020) who found that community-based strategies significantly improved adolescents' access to reproductive health information in Nigerian schools. Similarly Zakayo and Lwelamira (2011) reported that peer-led and community-supported reproductive health education programmes led to improved knowledge and safer sexual behaviors among in-school youth in southwest Nigeria. In a related study, Nyingifa *et al.* (2025) concluded that school-community linkages, especially with health service providers, improved both the reach and effectiveness of reproductive health education. Furthermore, Nyingifa *et al.* (2025) observed that integrating school health clubs with community involvement produced better health outcomes in Nigerian schools, as students received reinforcement both at school and within their immediate communities.

Furthermore, the finding of the study revealed that school-community collaboration influences the implementation of adolescent reproductive health education in secondary schools in Anambra State. The respondents generally agreed that when schools engage community stakeholder, like parents, local health professionals, youth organizations and media—they are better able to deliver comprehensive and effective reproductive health education. A plausible explanation for this finding is that

collaboration provides schools with extended resources, diversified knowledge and community trust. Health professionals bring specialized knowledge, while local leaders and parents help contextualize health messages and reinforce learning at home. This collective approach enhances both implementation and sustainability of reproductive health programmes. This result agrees with Agu *et al.* (2024) who found that embedding community participation in sexual and reproductive health programmes in secondary schools significantly improved students' knowledge and responsible behavior. The study emphasized that when schools involve community actors in planning and delivery, programmes are more relevant and better received by adolescents. Similarly, Akande *et al.* (2024) reported that mobile health (mHealth) interventions that were developed in collaboration with community-based health workers and integrated into school health programmes in Ilorin, Nigeria, led to measurable improvements in students' reproductive health knowledge and positive attitudes toward safe practices. Further evidence is provided by Ilori *et al.* (2020), whose study in Oyo State indicated that students exposed to reproductive health programmes delivered through school-community collaboration demonstrated higher levels of awareness and utilization of health services. Schools that worked closely with community health centers were more successful in implementing age-appropriate, inclusive and culturally sensitive health education.

Conclusion

The study investigated the perceived influence of school-community collaboration on the implementation of adolescent reproductive health education in secondary schools in Anambra State. Based on the findings, it was concluded that various forms of collaboration, like partnerships with community health workers, involvement of parents and local media and joint organization of awareness programmes are practiced to varying degrees across schools. The study also revealed that these collaborative efforts have a

positive influence on the effective delivery and implementation of reproductive health education. Specifically, the study found that when schools actively engage community stakeholders in planning, delivering and evaluating adolescent reproductive health programmes, there is a noticeable improvement in both the content quality and accessibility of such education for students. This underscores the vital role of community participation in complementing the efforts of schools to address the reproductive health needs of adolescents. Therefore, enhancing school-community collaboration should be seen as a strategic approach to improve health outcomes among adolescents. Sustained partnership between schools and community actors can help bridge existing gaps in knowledge, access to services and behavioral support systems, thereby contributing to a more comprehensive and impactful reproductive health education across secondary schools in Anambra State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Ministry of Health should develop formal frameworks that encourage secondary schools to partner with local health professionals, community-based organizations and youth-friendly centers in delivering adolescent reproductive health education.
2. Principals of secondary schools should establish a school health committee that includes teachers, parents, students and representatives from the local health community. This committee should oversee planning, implementation and evaluation of reproductive health programs.
3. The Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Ministry of Health should organize joint capacity-building workshops for teachers and community health

workers to ensure consistent messaging and culturally appropriate content when delivering reproductive health education to adolescents.

4. Principals of secondary schools should regularly organize sensitization meetings and health forums where parents and guardians are educated on the importance of reproductive health education and their roles in reinforcing the lessons at home.

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