

# Parental Communication as a Tool Kit for Preventing Sexual Abuse among Adolescent Secondary School Students

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## Abstract

This study employed the survey design to investigate the relevance of parent communication in preventing sexual abuse among secondary school students in Nigeria. The instrument for data collection tagged “Parent Communication Strategy for Preventing Sexual Abuse questionnaire” (PCOSPSAQ), was a researcher designed instrument. It was administered to 686 respondents (266 male and 420 female) 500 and 400 sandwich undergraduates of the University of Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State who were parents to adolescent secondary school students. Mean scores were used to answer the research question while t test and Analysis of Variance (ANNOVA) were used to test the six null hypotheses at .05 alpha level. Findings reveal parents’ irresponsibility, ignorance of sexual abuse signs as well as inability to see and stop sexual abuse before it happens as part of the reasons for showing reluctance to communicate with their adolescents on sexual matters. Findings also reveal no significant difference in parents’ pattern of communication on prevention of sexual abuse based on gender, religion and type of family, but significant difference was found on type of parenting and geo political zones. Recommendations include the need for government and nongovernmental organizations to provide adults and parents resources that could boost their awareness on the things they need to do to prevent sexual abuse of their adolescent boys and girls.

**Keywords:** Communication, Parents, Adolescents, Sexual Abuse Prevention

## Introduction

Concern continues to mount day by day in most communities of the world about adolescent behaviour problems of sexual abuse. The concerns are being intensified by certain realisations. Firstly, adolescent birth rates are increasing at a very fast pace whereas, becoming a parent too soon before adults’ abilities are attained and before acquiring necessary resources for parenting pose problems for children and their young parents (Cruise, 2004; Klein, 2005 and Moor, Miller, Sunland, Morrison, Clein, and Blumenthal, 2012). Secondly, increased acts of adolescents’ sexual abuse of peers and children on one hand as well as sexual abuse of adolescents by adults on the other hand presents high risk for healthy productive life of adolescents. Exposing adolescents to involuntary, non consensual sexual activities usually does them more harm than good. It initiates adolescents to untimely sexual practices, exposes them to high risk of unintended pregnancy, abortion, unprepared parenthood and sex related diseases. Sexually active adolescents are extremely vulnerable to high risks of Sexually Transmitted Infections like Human Immuno deficiency Virus (HIV/AIDS) (Stop it Now, 2008). There are enormous disastrous effects of sexual abuse on adolescents’ academic outcome of which problems of school interruption, school termination, self actualization and attainment of future job success are prominent (Cruise, 2004).

As in the case of any other areas of human development, the prospect for adolescents’ healthy productive life partly lies in healthy sexual development. Sexuality, as a vital aspect of adolescents’ life which pertains to change in awareness and curiosity about sexual feeling behaviour, characterized by the onset of puberty, the stage of sexual expression is just a normal stage of sexual development that is of high necessity to human reproduction. Thus, the changes in awareness and curiosity about sexual feeling are naturally experienced as individual child grows and passes from infancy to childhood and even through puberty to adolescence. As a result of the changes in development trend, questions about decision making, social relationships, masturbation in private, experimenting between adolescents of the same age, open-mouthed kissing, fondling and body rubbing, oral/genital contact and voyeuristic towards much younger children are common behaviours that are consistent with adolescents’ healthy sexual development (Stop it Now, 2008). Adolescents are thus matured to engage in romantic and actual activities but doing that involves a lot of risks that affect healthy living.

Although sexuality actually accords adolescence sexual maturity and ability to engage in full sexual

activities, doing that involves a lot of risks because the brain is yet to attain full maturity. The disparity in the level of sexual maturity and brain maturity of adolescents thus accounts for the inappropriateness of decision making in sexual matters. The brains for young adolescents are not neurally mature. Several brain regions in the cerebral cortex and in the hypothalamus that are important for self control and delayed gratification are not fully mature until age 25 (Klein, Moore, Miller, Sunghland, Morrisson, Clei and Blumenthal 2012). Adolescents are as a result less equipped than adults to make sound decisions and anticipate consequences of sexual behaviour. This accounts for a number of wrong decisions taken at this period which do have negative consequences on adolescents' health, school success and attainment of life goals (Wikipedia, 2014).

With regards to the prevalence of sexual abuse, the illicit behaviour problem is obviously perpetuated worldwide wherever human beings exist. In Nigeria, news of coerced, unconsensual, tricked or drug influenced sex involving adolescents in cities or urban centers released through media is a common phenomenon. News and information about such happenings in rural areas however rarely come into the open. Actually, going by the standard of the Nigerian traditional cultural values, sexual exploitation of the child particularly the female is an aberration. Nevertheless, it is no gainsaying that increased adolescents involvement in sexual abuse at urban and rural areas of Nigeria under the guise of civilization syndrome, had landed a number of individuals concerned with one problem or another. As secondary school teachers for some years, the present researchers were privileged to experience cases of sexual assault among secondary school boys and girls involving the use of tricks, force, threat or charms. Almost all of such cases had resulted to untimely pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, termination of school and in some cases, loss of lives.

By definition, sexual abuse refers to non-consenting and non-consensual sexual activity or sexual relationship that is devoid of both partners ability and capacity to make an informed choice without fear or pressure (Children-Teens 2004, NSVRC, 2011 and Stop it now, 2008). Sexual relationship is considered abusive when use of force, drug or alcohol is involved or when sexual relationship involves impaired mental and or emotional capacity manipulation, intimidation, implied or other forms of coercion and significant age difference (Children-Teens 2004 and NSVRC, 2011).

Adolescent sexual abuse refers to sexual exposure behaviour that an adolescent may experience which involves intrusive or sexual aggressive practice either between two adolescents or a child below his age and between an adult and an adolescent. In whichever case, sexual abuse, an extremely impulsive and abnormal behaviour is offensive, harmful and consequently illegal. Of the truth, researches commonly focus on adolescents' sexual abuse by adults. However, abuse of adolescents by their peers as well as children abuse by adolescents which is equally rampant has attracted little or no research focus. According to NSVRC (2011), about one third of children who are molested by someone under the age of 18 are often by older playmates or a baby sitter (Adogu, Udigwe, Udigwe, Chika and Ubajaka 2014). Adolescent sexual abuse in this study thus refers to sexual engagement of an adolescent with another adolescent of same age or with children under the adolescent age on one hand and sexual activity between an adolescent with an adult devoid of adolescent victims' ability and capacity to make an informed choice without fear or forms of pressure but involve the use of force, threat, drugs, alcohol and charm.

For the high prevalence of adolescents' sexual abuse and its associated problems, unintended pregnancies, abortions (the willful termination of pregnancy), untimely sexual initiation, Transmitted Diseases (STD's) and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's) are common public health problems worldwide (Adogu, Udigwe, Udigwe, Ubajaka, 2014). Loss of virginity prior to marriage, a onetime taboo in traditional Nigeria culture is a product of early initiation of adolescent girls into sexual activity. For the proportion of American adolescents who are sexually active, young teen-agers are especially vulnerable to the point that involuntary sexual activity was reported by 74% of sexually active girls younger than 14 years and 60% of those younger than 15. Fifty-five (55) had been molested, 42 had been victims of attempted rape and 44 percent had been raped. Two thirds of a sample of 535 young women from the state of Washington who became pregnant as adolescents had been abused (Boyer, Fine and Fum, 1992 and Saeny, Pettingell and Magee, 2003).

Among Nigerian adolescents, sexual abuse is reportedly rampant that sexually abused adolescents perpetuate their abusive experience both by victimizing and being re-victimized (Lodico, Gruber and DiClemente, 1996). According to Donna et al (2013), adolescent girls is the most vulnerable sub group in Nigerian society today. Females were four times likely to report sexual abuse than males (Lodico et al, (1996)). Adolescent girls living in overcrowded urban areas of Nigeria are often at high risk for sexual abuse thereby increasing their vulnerability to early pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease and AIDs (Donna, Osotimehin, Nudlam and Israel 2013; Owolabi, Onayade Ogunlola, Ogunniyi and Kuti, 2005). Sexual abuse problems of unintended pregnancies and abortion is of high prevalence among adolescent Nigerians to the extent that Anambra State has been identified as having adolescents with poor sexual health indices of pregnancy, abortion, trans-generational and transactional sex as well as multiple partners sexual behaviour.

With regards to prevalence of sexual abuse among adolescent secondary school students, Lodico, Gruber and Diclemente (1996) found that sexual abuse was reported among students of all ethnic groups

contrary to the stand of Saewych, et al (2003) that prevalence of sexual abuse was difficult to estimate in schools population. Observed cases of deliberate, selfish, exploitative and sex-related deviant teacher-students interaction with teachers' use of power of threat failure in examination for sexual favours to intimidate secondary school female students are common places. The effects of such threats and victimizations on failure of adolescent victims have raised questions on the value of Nigerian educational system and on the prospect of achieving the millennium development goals on educational development (Boyi, 2013).

For the need to curb the wave of sexual abuse and help stem down its accompanied physical, emotional long term stress and hardship that have tendency to plague adolescent victims into adulthood, quick and sensitive actions of adults and particularly parents is essentially worthwhile. Helping to prevent the traumatic experience of shock unhappiness anger, and inability to concentrate in school by one's sexually harmed abused child is a task that parents' communication can achieve (NSRVC, 2011). Also, protecting others from sexual abuse before it happens by means of parents' communication is attainable by parents. Using communication as a tool kit, parents can strongly influence their teen's sexual behaviors (NSRVC, 2011). Parents communication, when used to talk to adolescents about their activities, hopes and anxieties, there is increased likelihood that an adolescent who is worried about his or her own behaviour will be able to tell some of them to parents and receive guide (Stop it Now, 2008; NSRVC, 2011).

Affirming the relevance of parents' need for awareness and knowledge of sexual harmful behaviour warning signs to timely and effective communication outcome, Heritage Foundation (2014) argued for the need for parents particularly mothers' quick awareness of warning signs. The signs according to Stop it Now (2008) include adolescents insisting on physical contact with a child even when the child insists, inability to control appropriate sexual behaviors involving another child after being asked to stop and taking younger to secret places or hideaways to play 'special' undressing or touching game

### **Statement of the Problem**

The persistent high prevalence of adolescent sexual abuse worldwide and its associated traumatic physical, emotional, long term stress, unintended pregnancy, abortion, unhealthy productive life and at times loss of life is of high concern to psychologists. Despite the various intervention programmes of sex education and abundant resources available for guide to school, communities and organizations, for prevention of sexual abuse before it happens, the problem still lingers.

The problems of adolescent sexual abuse are not only grave, they are far reaching especially that sexual abuse truncates success in school mostly by rubbing students' victims of attention and invariably results into school termination in most cases. It is the premise of this study that parents' communication with their adolescents can strongly influence their sexual behaviour problem before they start romantic experiences.

The study therefore sets out to establish the influence of parents' communication as a tool kit for preventing sexual abuse among adolescent secondary school students in Nigeria, reasons why some parents show reluctance in communication with their adolescents over sexual abuse and patterns of parents' communication on prevention of adolescents' sexual abuse.

Two research questions were raised for the study:

1. Why do some parents show reluctance in communicating with their adolescents over sex matters?
2. Is there any significant difference in parents' pattern of communication on adolescents' sexual abuse prevention based on gender, age, religion, type of marriage, type of parenting and geo-political zone?

### **METHODOLOGY**

The design for this study is a survey which seeks to ascertain influence of parents expressed pattern of communication on prevention of adolescent sexual abuse and its implication for teaching and learning. The area of study is Kwara State College of Education campus, Ilorin-Kwara State capital. All five hundred (500) and four hundred (400) Sandwich undergraduates of Ekiti State University, Ilorin campus, of the Departments of Guidance and Counseling, Educational Management and Library Science who are also teenagers parents constituted the population of the study. Six hundred and eighty-six (686) of such parents were randomly selected as sample for the study. The instrument for data collection was a researcher developed questionnaire designed "Parent Communication Strategy for Preventing Sexual Abuse Questionnaire among adolescent secondary school students (PCOSPSAB). The instrument was constructed on a four point response scale format of strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) was dully face and content validated. The estimate of the reliability index established using Cronbach Apha Formula was 0.76. Copies of the questionnaire were personally administered to the subjects according to their course types and were collected immediately after completion. Out of the 750 copies of the instrument administered, the 686 dully completed copies were used for the study. The research question and hypothesis tested were tested using mean scores, t-test and Analysis of Variance statistics respectively.

**Table 1:** Frequency counts, percentages and mean distribution of respondents

ITEM GROUPING	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE	MEAN
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	266	38.78	18.63
Female	420	61.22	18.53
<b>Age</b>			
38-48	413	60.20	18.88
49 and above	273	39.80	18.10
<b>Religion</b>			
Christianity	372	54.23	17.93
Islam	314	45.77	18.10
<b>Course of Study</b>			
Guidance and Counseling	413	59.0	20.97
Education Management	140	20.0	21.88
Library Science	133	19.0	22.63
<b>Type of Marriage</b>			
Single Family	147	21.0	18.52
Regular Family	539	77.0	18.58
<b>Type of Parenting</b>			
Child is mine	511	74.46	9.28
Child is ward	161	23.44	2.91
Child is grand	14	2.0	4.67
<b>Geo-political zone</b>			
North Central	294	42.0	3.26
North East	119	17.0	3.76
North West	105	15.0	5.14
South East	70	10.0	7.17
South West	56	8.0	5.78
South South	56	8.0	6.65

**Research question one:** Why do some parents show reluctance in communicating with adolescents on sexual abuse?

**Table 2:** Means, standard deviation and ranking order of parents' responses on reasons for reluctance to communicate with adolescents on sexual abuse.

S/N	ITEMS	$\bar{X}$	SD	RANKING
1.	Irresponsibility	3.16	1.03201	1 <sup>st</sup>
2.	Ignorance of sexual abuse, inability to see signs and stop what is happening to their adolescents	3.12	8.2226	2 <sup>nd</sup>
3.	Likelihood of showing no disturbance nor embarrassment if their teen boys sexually abuse someone or if their teen girl is found pregnant through sexual abuse	2.79	.79512	3 <sup>rd</sup>
4.	Careful not to disrupt the flow of freedom attached to adolescent	2.58	.93310	4 <sup>th</sup>
5.	Consider their adolescents as matured individuals who are capable of making reasonable decisions on their own	2.46	.88100	5 <sup>th</sup>
6.	Avoidance of any attempt to disturb the much more valued comfort and happiness of adolescent than any discussion	2.40	1.0050	6 <sup>th</sup>
7.	Merely responding to traditional mores and cores that forbid discussion on sexual issues.	2.21	.99793	7 <sup>th</sup>

Results revealed in Table 2 show that the first three reasons for parents' reluctance in communication with adolescents on sexual abuse are irresponsibility, ignorance of signs or sexual abuse and likelihood of showing no disturbance or embarrassment if their teen boys sexually abuse others or their teen girls are found pregnant through sexual abuse. Next is carefulness not to disrupt the flow of adolescents' freedom as individuals who are capable of making reasonable and matured decisions. Also next is avoidance attempt not to disturb the much valued comfort and happiness of adolescent and the seventh being mere response to traditional mores and cores forbidding adults' discussion of sex matters with children.

### Hypothesis Testing

**Table 3:** T-test analysis of difference on parents' pattern of communication with adolescents on prevention of sexual abuse based on gender, age religion and type of family

S/N	Group	N	X	SD	df	t-cal	cal.t	Decision
Ho <sup>1</sup>	Male	266	18.63	2.72				
	Female	240	18.53	4.01	684	.133	1.98	
	P>0.05							
Ho <sup>2</sup>	Age 38-48	413	18.88	8.87				
	49 above	273	18.10	2.98	684	4.396	1.98	P<0.05
Ho <sup>3</sup>	Christianity	378	17.93	3.51				
	Islam	322	18.70	4.61	684	-.943	1.98	P>0.05
Ho <sup>4</sup>	Single Family	147	18.52	4.07				
	Regular Family	539	18.58	3.42	684	-.069	1.98	P>0.05

Result on Table 3 revealed that there is no statistically significant gender difference in parents' pattern of communication with adolescents on prevention of sexual abuse based on gender as shown by the calculated value of .133 which is lower than the critical table value of 1.98 at .05 alpha level as seen in table 2 Ho1 above. The null hypothesis was thus accepted. The t-test for the second null hypothesis on the significant difference in pattern of parents' communication with adolescents on prevention of sexual abuse based on age revealed statistically significant difference with calculated t value of 4.396 which is greater than the critical t-value of 1.98 at .05 alpha level as seen in table 2 Ho 2 above. The null hypothesis was thus rejected.

The null hypothesis on significant difference in patterns of parents' communication with adolescents on prevention of sexual abuse based on religion revealed no significant difference. The calculated t-value of -.934 is lower than the table value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance as seen in table 3, Ho 3 above. The hypothesis was accepted. The null hypothesis which sought for significant difference in parents' pattern of communication with adolescents on prevention of sexual abuse based on type of marriage revealed no statistically significant difference. The calculated t-value of -.07 is lower than the table value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significant as shown on table 3, HO 4 above. The null hypothesis was thus accepted.

**Table 4:** Analysis of Variance on parents' of communication pattern on prevention of adolescents' sexual abuse based on type of parenting and geo-political zone.

Communication Patterns	sources of variation	sum of squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fratio	t-cal	S
Types of Parenting	Between Groups	465.134	2	232.557	3.455	2.45	.036
	Within Groups	6528.706	684	67.306			
	Total	6.993840	686	200.447			
Geo-political	Between Groups	982.481	5	196.496			
	Within Groups	6011.359	681	63.951	3.073	2.68	.013

The results in table 4 reveal statistically significant difference in parents' pattern of communication with adolescents on sexual abuse based on type of parenting and geo-political zone. Results revealed calculated f ratio 3.455, df 2 and f critical ratio 2.45. Since the calculated f ratio is greater than the critical f ratio, hypothesis 5(Ho5) which states that there is no significant difference in parents' pattern of communication on prevention of sexual abuse based on types of parenting was rejected. Result indicates that type of parenting significantly influences parents' pattern of communication on prevention of adolescents' sexual abuse. Results on table 4 also reveal significant difference in parents' pattern communication with adolescents on prevention of sexual abuse based on geo-political zone. Since the calculated f-ratio 3.073 is greater than the f critical ratio 2.68, degree of freedom, 5 at 0.05 level of significance, hypothesis 6, (H6) table 4 was rejected based on the result. Since the results revealed on table 4 as analysed using the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were significant, it was

necessary to identify which of the parenting groups and geo-political zone's mean scores led to the significant difference noted in table 4. This was done using the Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) as shown in tables 5 and 6 below respectively.

**Table 5:** Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) showing difference in parents' pattern of communication with adolescents on prevention of sexual abuse based on type of parenting

Duncan Grouping	Mean	N	Groups	Parenting Type
A	9.28	525	1	child is mine
B	4.67	14	2	child is grand
C	2.91	3	3	child is ward

Duncan multiple range test (DMRT) was used to determine which of the parenting group(s) mean scores revealed in table 5 was responsible for significant results. Results of the DMRT show that groups 1,2 and 3 with mean scores 9.28, 4.67 and 2.91 respectively differed significantly from one another. Based on the results, hypothesis five (Ho5) was rejected. The significant difference noted was due to the fact that all groups differed significantly from one another as shown in table 5 above.

**Table 6:** Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) showing significant difference in parents' pattern of communication with adolescents on prevention of sexual abuse based on geo-political zone.

Duncan's grouping	Mean	N	Group	Geo-political Zone
A	7.54	56	6	South-South
B	17.37	294	4	North-Central
C	17.78	119	3	North-East
D	23.50	105	1	North-West
E	18.45	70	2	South-East
F	16.54	56	5	South-West

Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) was used to determine which of the geo-political zone(s) mean score(s) revealed on table 4 was responsible for significant difference. Results of the DMRT show that groups 1,2,3,4,5, and 6 with mean scores 23.50,18.45, 17.78, 17.37, 16.54and 7.5 respectively differed from one another. Thus the significant difference noted was due to the fact that all groups differed significantly from one another. On the basis of the result, the hypothesis was rejected.

## Discussion

The study revealed that there is no significant difference in the pattern of parents communication with adolescents on prevention of sexual abuse based on gender, religion and type of family but significant difference was found based on age, type of parenting and geo-political zone. The study revealed that parents' perception of need to communicate with adolescents depends on whether they were able to perceive possible associated link of sexual abuse with emotional, physical, long-term stress, pregnancy and other risks of sexual abuse as well as the need to prevent such. Results revealed that parents engage in communication because they do not want to face embarrassment and shame if their male children sexually abusing others nor see their female teens sexually abused.

The outcome of this study agrees with Guilano, Jacard, Dittus(2012) and Esinberg, Bearinger and Michael (2006) that parental decisions or intentions to engage in conversation are functions of expectancies, social norms, self concept, emotions and self efficacy. Only parents with high expectations of successful academic attainment of their children will thus likely engage in discussion with their adolescents on moral, emotional and religious implications to sexual intercourse to help them think maturely and focus in schools. Result of the study also agrees with the findings of Adogu et al (2014) that with absence of communication with adolescents, sexually abused adolescent parent of substandard education and substandard living may pass to their children a legacy of substandard education thereby creating a cycle of poverty that is hard to break. According to the finding of Adogu et al (2014), most studies conducted among adolescents reveal that termination of schooling is associated with unintended pregnancy among students. A recent study in Nigeria reported by Adogu et al (2014) revealed that 43% discontinued schooling and in Congo, up to 52.4% of adolescents gave up schooling. The parents of this study do not differ significantly in their patterns of communication "listening carefully to adolescent to hear what he or she has to say about sexual issues and problem confronting him and encouraging him or her to say no when he or she does not want to be tricked, hugged or kissed". This result is considered encouraging as it exposes teens to reasons for abstinence from sex and also to signs that they need to take cognizance of in order to escape from the harms that sexual abuse present.

Results of this study reveal significant difference in the patterns of parents' communication with

adolescents on prevention of sexual abuse based on age, type of parenting and geo-political zone. The outcome of this study is in consonance with the findings of Slap, Lot, Huang, Daniyan, Zink and Succop (2002) that some psychosocial problems of sexual abuse experienced by adolescents emanate from type of parenting and cultural diversities. Parenting style is associated with early sexual activity among adolescents, an event partly explained by history of forced sexual intercourse. In situations whereby an adolescent of single parent status experiences poor communications with parents with regards to guidance in sexual matters such adolescent is apt to seek alternative medium of communication like Facebook, Twoo and others that readily provide means and avenues for teen boys and girls to download and post indecent messages at random. Some female students engage in sending nude pictures to their male counterparts and for foreign patronage that use such for pornographic magazines. The end result of such waywardness at time is sexual abuse of such adolescent and its associated problems loss, of interest in schooling and lack of concentration in academic work.

The result also agrees with that of Slap et al (2002) that students' sense of connectedness to their parents and school regardless of family structure decreases the likelihood of sexual activity and fostering this sense may help reduce risky sexual behaviour. The connection built by parents discussion with the teens about the standard of behaviors all appear to impact their decision to engage in sexual activity or not (Eseiberg et al, 2006).

The outcome of this study also agrees with the findings of Guilano, Jacard, Dittus and Collin (2012) that decisions to undertake discussion on sexual matters with teenagers by parents is the function of cultural norms. Sexual abuse is a profound stressor that complicates the development and health of adolescent. The prevalence is high in Nigeria as depicted by studies carried out among female adolescents in Port Harcourt which reported 98.8% prevalence of 31.6% with 78.9% pregnancy recurrence. Conversely a study in the North Central part of Nigeria reported a much lower adolescent pregnancy level of only 5.1%. Limitation to prompt communication on sexual abuse with adolescents in this study due to traditional mores' demand despite the influence of modernization and industrialization on traditional culture of the present Nigeria is obviously not an effective strategy to help them concentrate in school by fixing their minds on school activities and attain academic excellent rather than the poor results that is prevalent of Senior Secondary School Examination today.

### **Conclusion**

From this study it has been gathered that sexual abuse among secondary school students in Nigeria is rampant and that parents' pattern of communication on prevention of adolescent sexual abuse differ on the bases of age, parenting style and geo-political zone. Also, parents' desire to communicate or not with their adolescents on sexual matters is determined by the level of their awareness of the associated risks of sexual abuse and the implications of such on their adolescents' physical, emotional, health, as well as educational outcomes.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are offered for effective communication of parents with adolescents on sexual abuse:

- The Federal government and relevant non-governmental organizations should make concerted efforts to help increase both societal and parents' awareness of sexual abuse risks in dailies and other relevant agencies to aid Nigerian parents' knowledge on what to do to prevent sexual abuse of their adolescents as is done in developed countries.
- Local Governments across the Federation should be empowered to create a unit of Family-Health matters and the staff of the unit assigned with the task of periodic visitations to all communities-urban and rural and orientate parents on danger signs of sexual abuse, what precautions to take and when. This move will go a long way to help prevent sexual abuse and lack of interest in school work among adolescents.
- Adolescents are encouraged to freely discuss with their parents their experiences, concerns, interest and problems relating to sexual abuse to enable their parents know the relevant directions of guide to employ.
- Parents are also encouraged to offer ongoing communication about sexual touching and other related topics to create trusting relationship with children.
- On daily basis, parents, particularly mothers should engage in discussion with their sexually active boys and girls on the social and moral consequences of sexual abuse. With that venture, it is likely they will show less interest engaging in sexual intercourse at adolescence

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