



**GENDER AND SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' LEVEL
OF AWARENESS OF FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION (FLE)
IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA**

**Jerome Anyanwu¹ⁱ,
Ewhe, Joseph Erung²**

¹Dr., Department of Curriculum Studies and
Educational Technology
Faculty of Education,
University of Port Harcourt,
Nigeria

²Department of Educational Foundations,
Faculty of Education,
University of Port Harcourt,
Nigeria

Abstract:

This study investigated the influence of gender on secondary school students' level of awareness about Family Life Education (FLE) in Rivers State Nigeria. The analytic survey design was adopted. Two research questions guided the study. Two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study was comprised of 105,815 Junior Secondary School students in Rivers State. A sample of 1,630 respondents was drawn using simple random sampling and stratified random sampling techniques. A structured questionnaire and Academic Performance Test (APT) were used for data collection. Data were analysed using percentage, mean and z-test statistics. Findings of the study revealed that there is a significant difference between the type of information given to the male and the female secondary school students in Rivers State. Furthermore, it was shown that the female students have high level of awareness about Family Life Education while the male students' level of awareness is low. Based on these findings, it was recommended that, Principals extend their supervisory functions to the effective, inclusive teaching and learning of FLE in secondary schools in Rivers State. The Rivers State Ministry of Education should ensure that the integrative approach to the teaching of FLE in Rivers State is replaced with the subject-based approach.

Keywords: gender, level of awareness, family life education

ⁱ Correspondence: email jewhe@ymail.com

1. Introduction

Across the globe, education is a foundation upon which the potentials of members of a society are harnessed for self-fulfilment and social development. Perhaps, that is why in the 21st Century, different nations have linked their political ideologies, social investment programmes, national population and economic policies to formal education systems. This is evident in the formulation of both the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) whereby education is portrayed as a potent tool for socio-cultural, economic and technological breakthrough.

Education is a necessary weapon for overcoming poverty, disease and ignorance (Nwanna-Nzewunwa, 2010). It is believed that it has a direct impact on economic involvement, child transience, fertility, and individual health (Alam and Nasir, 2016). Education does not merely enable individuals attain their intellectual capacity to the fullest. Rather, it helps them develop emotionally, morally, socially, culturally and physically (Dienye, 2012). Education goes beyond the acquisition of literacy and numeracy or mere accumulation of facts. It provides individuals with lifelong learning skills that surpass specific knowledge and occupational areas. It equips members of society (men and women, boys and girls) with necessary skills for combating immediate and future, local and global social problems. For this reason, Okeke (2016) explains that the school provides the platform upon which children interact informally and participate in a variety of social arrangements under the supervision of adults. In the words of Ogbondah (2016) education is a process of cultural transmission or a process of socialization of the individual to prepare him for adult life in the society. As society continues to evolve with its complexities, education is constantly tailored to suit the present and future needs of the people.

In line with the foregoing, one critical aspect of the school curriculum that has regained global interest in the 21st Century is Family Life Education (FLE). Family Life Education according to Egotanwa and Odedele (2016) is an educational process that is designed to help people in their physical, social, emotional and moral development as they get ready for adulthood. It is a planned process of education that fosters the acquisition of factual information, formation of positive attitudes, beliefs and values as well as development of skills to cope with the biological, psychological, socio-cultural and spiritual aspects of human living (FRN, 2003). Family Life Education (FLE) helps learners to develop positive and factual view about themselves, acquire information and skills they need to take care of their health, prevent HIV/AIDS spread, respect and value themselves and others, and acquire the skills needed to make healthy decisions about their sexual health and behaviour.

At the secondary school level, Family Life Education (FLE) curriculum is designed to provide valid and reliable information about population change and resources development, benefits of delayed marriage, child spacing and family planning, gender issues, Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), HIV/AIDS and primary health care concepts. It encourages individuals to balance their family size with available resources.

Family Life Education is not entirely new in Nigeria. Its existence predates the emergence of western civilization in Nigeria and other African societies. Adepoju (2005) noted that before the expansion of Western education in Nigeria, the youths were tutored about manhood and womanhood during circumcision or initiation ceremonies. Impartation of knowledge about contraceptive methods such as virginity, herbs, breastfeeding, the ring and abstinence were exclusively reserved for the married. However, the emergence of modern Family Life Education in Nigerian primary, secondary and tertiary institutions dates back to September 2002 when the National Council on Education felt the need to broaden the Sexuality Education curriculum as a safeguard to the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancy, early marriage, infant mortality, poor maternal health, prostitution, population explosion amongst others. Secondary school adolescents are often confronted with decisions about their sexuality viz-a-viz changes that naturally occur in their bodies. There is the need to 'catch them young.' They need guidance and reliable information about Family Life through Family Life Education.

The inclusion of Family Life Education in secondary school curriculum in Rivers State, Nigeria is therefore not a misplaced priority because its goals are instrumental to sustainable development. Sustainable development is a type of development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It refers to the conservation of resources (human, material, and financial) for the future generations. As a successor to the Millennium Development, Sustainable Development is widely known as Agenda 2030, with reference to the end year by which they should have been attained globally. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO, 2017) explains that sustainable development cannot be achieved by technological solutions, political regulation or financial instruments alone but through creating public awareness to schools and the society.

In spite of the foregoing, education stakeholders in Rivers State and some other parts of Nigeria have divergent perceptions and attitudes towards the teaching and learning of Family Life Education. In some families, open discussions about sex, family planning and other related concepts are forbidden due to cultural or religious beliefs. As a result, there have been heated arguments among stakeholders about who teaches Family Life Education (FLE), at what level it should be taught, who should learn the subject and so on. For instance, in Briggs' (2017) study on post-primary school teachers' viewpoint on reproductive health and contraceptive practices among secondary school girls in Port Harcourt, a significant proportion of the respondents chose mothers rather than teachers as the most appropriate Family Life educators. Similarly, 49.7% of the respondents in Briggs' study reported that there was nothing like Family Life or Sexuality Education in the school curriculum. Nakpodia (2012), on the other hand, maintains that adolescents cannot approach their parents for guidance concerning sex. Parents tend to shy away from discussions on reproductive life because of its erotic nature.

It is pertinent to state that in the midst of this pending confusion, secondary school adolescents in different parts of Nigeria have unlimited access to inappropriate social media contents about Family Life. Thus, a handful of them are often left with no option

than to seek support from ill-fated sources like peers and paedophiles. There is therefore the need to assess secondary school students' knowledge of Family Life Education for sustainable development.

2. Statement of the Problem

Over the last three decades, Nigeria and some other developing nations have witnessed tremendous surge in HIV/AIDS pandemic, poor maternal health, rape, teenage pregnancy, infant mortality, drug addiction, early marriage and school dropout. Consequently, the National Council on Education, in September 2002, called for immediate implementation of Family Life Education curriculum in all institutions of learning in Nigeria. In spite of the Federal Government's efforts seventeen years ago, not much seems to have been achieved in Nigeria and Rivers State in particular. Statistics show that the population of Rivers State increased from 5,198,716 inhabitants in 2006 to a projected head count of 11,910,816 in 2019 <https://nigerianinfopedia.com.ng/most-populated-states-in-nigeria/>. Rivers State had the highest rate of HIV/AIDs prevalence (15.3%) in 2012 and the third-highest (3.8%) in 2019 after Akwa-Ibom and Benue State (Adebowale, 2019). However, youngsters between ages 13 to 17 years old constitute a significant proportion of people living with HIV/Aids in Rivers State.

What then could be responsible for the above scenario? Could it be that adequate sensitization has not been made concerning Family Life Education and its contributions to sustainable development by the relevant agencies? Or could it be that teachers who are supposed to educate students on the benefits of Family Life Education have not been properly trained to do so? The problem of this study therefore is to assess secondary school students' level of awareness of Family Life Education (FLE) for sustainable development in Rivers State.

2.1 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to assess the influence of gender on secondary school students' level of awareness of family life education in Rivers State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were to:

- 1) Determine the type of information given to the male and female secondary school students about Family Life in Rivers State
- 2) Ascertain the male and female secondary school students' level of awareness about Family Life Education in Rivers State.

2.2 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- 1) What type of information is given to the male and female secondary school students about Family Life in Rivers State?
- 2) What is the level of awareness of the male and female secondary school students about Family Life Education in Rivers State?

2.3 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- 1) There is no significant difference between the type of information given to the male and female secondary school students about Family Life in Rivers State.
- 2) There is no significant difference between the male and female secondary school students' level of awareness about Family Life Education in Rivers State.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Family Life Education

The family is one of the most important social institutions. It performs numerous vital roles in the socialisation of individuals. It is known as the first school of citizenship. One is born in family, grows in it, works for it and dies in it. One develops emotional attachment to it. Family is the backbone of social structure. (Stahmann, 2011). Education on the other hand is a process that enables the learners to acquire acceptable skills, attitudes, competencies, values of society in readiness to live a meaningful life and to contribute meaningfully to social development. Education is a systematic process through which society transmits its culture from generation to generation. It is further explained as a process, which every society establishes or devices to ensure that its heritage of the past, its ways of life or ways of living, which make up its culture are passed on to the young (Wosu, 2017). Odedele and Egotanwa (2016), therefore conceptualized Family Life Education as an educational process designed to help people in their physical, social, emotional and moral development as they get ready for adulthood, marriage among others. It can also be explained as the practice of equipping and empowering family members to develop knowledge and skills that enhance well-being and strengthen interpersonal relationships through an educational, preventive and strengths-based approach. According to Adeboye (2015), FLE prepares family members to work towards achieving wellness, development and its sustainability. It is sometimes likened to the medium through which a family is planned.

3.2 Objectives of Family Life Education

According to the United Nations (2015), the following are the major objectives of family Life Education:

- 1) To help every individual both young and old have proper knowledge and understanding of the concept of family, its roles and function. Knowledge of Family Life Education helps individuals to recognise the various tasks that need to be undertaken for the well-being and maintenance of the family.
- 2) It aims at developing the ability to deal with family relationship and responsibility. Family life education helps in establishing and maintaining satisfying relationships with members of the family, with friends and with others whom they come into contact with.

- 3) Family life education aims at developing life skills to cope with different situations. Family life education develops the knowledge, values and skills, necessary for adult life, marriage, parenthood, participation in the social life of the community. It also helps in communicating effectively with others and in making wise decisions about all matters related to family life, personal relationships and various memberships of the community.
- 4) Family life education aims at helping in understanding and coping with changes in one's own life and changes in the society. It helps an individual to understand and cope with changes in the adolescent life and with the society in which they live; for example, the breaking down of traditional social structures, the changing roles of men and women, marriage practices etc.
- 5) Family Life Education aims at developing knowledge about physiological processes of one's own body. It also creates an awareness regarding proper age of marriage, sex and proper time for reproduction, the consequences of adolescent pregnancies and parenting and of alternatives to pregnancies and contraception.
- 6) It develops the realisation of the role of family in promotion of civil society and duties towards the community, nation and humanity.

In Rivers State, Family Life Education was integrated into the secondary school curriculum in 2006, that is, three years after its introduction (Isiugo-Abaniha, Isiugo-Abanihe, Nwokocha, Omololu, and Udegbe, 2015). Documented reports show that, the level of implementation of the Family Life Education (FLE) curriculum at the secondary school level varies among private, public, urban and rural schools in Nigeria. This is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Classes receiving FLE instruction in the different types of schools in Nigeria

Zones	State	Classes where FLE is taught			
		Urban public	Urban private	Religious	Rural
FCT	Abuja	ALL	-	-	-
	Bauchi	JSS1 & SS1	JSS1-JSS3	SS1-SS3	SS1-SS3
North-East	Adamawa	SS1-SS3	SS1-SS3	JSS1 & SS1	SS1-SS3
	Gombe	ALL	JSS1 & SS1	JSS1-SS2	SS2
North-West	Jigawa	SS1-SS2	ALL	SS1-SS2	-
	Kaduna	JSS1-JSS3	-	-	JSS1-JSS3
North-Central	Kwara	JSS2	JSS2-JSS2	JSS1-JSS3	JSS1-JSS3
	Niger	SS1-SS3	ALL	SS1-SS2	JSS2-JSS3
	Plateau	JSS1-JSS3	JSS1-JSS3	JSS1-JSS3	JSS1-JSS3
South-East	Enugu	JSS1-JSS3	JSS1-SS2	JSS1-JSS3	JSS1-JSS3
	Ebonyi	ALL	JSS1-JSS3	JSS1-JSS3	JSS1-JSS3
	Imo	JSS1-JSS3	SS1-JSS2	ALL	ALL
South-West	Lagos	SS1-SS3	JSS1-JSS3	JSS2-JSS3	ALL
	Ekiti	ALL	-	ALL	ALL
	Oyo	JSS1-SS3	JSS1-JSS3	ALL	ALL
	Akwa-Ibom	ALL	ALL	ALL	SS1-SS3
South-South	Rivers	JSS1	JSS1-JSS3	JSS1-JSS3	SS1-SS2
	Edo	JSS1	JSS2-JSS3	JSS2	JSS1-JSS3

Source: Isiugo-Abaniha, Isiugo-Abanihe, Nwokocha, Omololu, & Udegbe, (2015:63).

Table 1 shows that in Rivers State the teaching of Family Life Education (FLE) varies among classes and types of schools. It is evident that only JSS 1 students receive FLE instructions in urban public secondary schools. In urban-private and religious secondary schools, it is taught from JSS1 to JSS3. Whereas, in rural secondary schools, FLE is taught from SS1-SS2 only.

3.3 Importance of Family Life Education

The importance of Family Life Education are as follows:

- 1) Family life education helps in proper understanding of family life cycle: The impetus for Family Life Education is based on the pervasive nature of the family life cycle. Each new phase of the cycle gives rise to new learning needs. In the past learning needs were met through informal learning activities such as reading, seeking advice from peers and professionals (doctors, religious leaders and priests) and reflecting on personal experience. Some of these activities are now being offered as Family Life Education through formal learning programmes in secondary schools. National programmes for planned parenthood, for example, have been established in a number of countries to promote improved standards of living among young people. The belief that parenting, skills, knowledge and attitudes can be learned through programmes of education as opposed to learning through observation has given rise to a host of such programmes around the world (Anders, 2017).
- 2) Family Life Education provides skills for preventive action and knowledge for decision making particularly among adolescents: Each new generation of children faces health challenges, but those faced by today's school age group seem particularly daunting. Children are confronted at an early age by situations that require knowledge for decision making and skills for preventive action. Very often adolescents find themselves under strong peer pressure to engage in high risk behaviour like drug and alcohol abuse and sometimes sexual abuse which can have serious negative effects on their lives. These issues should be addressed to the young and adolescents through family life education (Anders, 2017).
- 3) Family life education provides an educational role: The family has always existed as a basic social grouping among human beings, irrespective of the difference in its structure and functioning. There is of course no universal pattern. Families may be nuclear joint or extended, monogamous or polygamous; patriarchal etc. The structure and functions of the family are in transition, and its education role is one which is dynamic in nature.
- 4) Family life education acts as a crisis manager: Adolescents are growing up in a world in which they have to make more decisions for themselves than was done by any previous generations. They tend to experiment more with their lives, make choices and take risks, and learn by their own experiences rather than by those of others (Vierros, 2017).

- 5) Family life education helps in understanding one's own role with changing family structure and functions: The rate of social change in most societies needs to redefine the roles of adult family members. Where tradition once established the norms for family behaviour, parents are now being challenged to re-examine their role and to accommodate the demands of changing family structures and functions (Houlden, 2015).

3.4 Gender and Students' Level of Awareness of Family Life Education

Gender refers to the categorization of members of society into sexes, that is, women and men. It also refers to those characteristics and roles which society assigns, ascribes or imposes on individuals as men and women, boy and girls. Okeke (2019:14) asserts that *"Gender goes beyond the biological differences between the sexes to include the socially determined characteristics, thus resulting to societal perception of the individual and his/her assigned roles"*.

Gender is a concept that amplifies social role differentiation in any society. The term gender refers to the economic, social, political and cultural attributes and opportunities, associated with being male and female (European Commission, 2010). Ija in Amadi and Ugwu (2011), considers gender as the psychological and socio-cultural interpretation of male and female on the basis of their expected role, contributions and assigned duties.

In every traditional African society, disparities exist between the role of men and women as well as boys and girls. Masculinity which is usually associated to the male sex is a symbol of success, higher status and opportunities. On the other hand, the feminine gender, relegated to the female sex, is a symbol of subordination. Thus, women are often deprived, relegated and neglected in society.

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Political instability and violence, poverty, negative cultural values, attitudes and practices that foster female genital mutilation, early marriage and sexual harassment are some of the leading contributors to gender inequity and inequality in education. Lack of gender responsiveness among the teachers in the curriculum, teaching methodology,

teaching and learning materials, school management systems and the overall school environment account for gender imbalance in education (Ombati & Ombati, 2012).

In teaching, research has established that in most schools, female students can become nearly invisible, as teachers interact more frequently with boys, asking them better questions and providing more precise and helpful feedback. Studies show that teachers tend to answer boys more often than girls in mathematics and science classes and pay more attention to girls in 'softer' classes, thereby sending messages about gender capacities. Okusanya and Isabu (2010), reported poor knowledge of young people about HIV/AIDS infection and observed disparity based on gender and location. Knowledge was worse in young females, rural dwellers and in Northern Nigeria. Family Life instructions should be gender balanced. Both male and female cast members must be seen to do justice to the other. Where for instance there is wife battering in a drama presentation, the husband must be made to suffer for this barbaric act in the course of the drama. Therefore teachers, researchers, artists, illustrations, programme managers, radio and television workers need to analyse their scripts to remove gender biases. It would be useful to dwell on illustrations in texts and posters for programme management. The presentation of illustrations matter in terms of cultural relevance and gender sensitivity or balance.

Neither women nor men must be given any special preference. All it takes is the consciousness and one will have the gender lens on. One very important exercise that could help programme planning and implementations is the evaluation of programmes specifically from a gender view point. When programmes are evaluated and reports circulated, it would be helpful to other programme managers. In a Family Life Education (FLE) programme within the school system, the subject curricula, pupils text, teachers guides, poster films etc, need be analyzed and subjected to gender balance tests. Since, they form the basis for instruction for the curricula and co-curricular teaching and learning transactions, they are crucial. The views of both teachers and students could be tilted to their own gender-type. Culture sometimes assists to stamp the values as the right one. When gender sensitivity is established, the advantages derivable become very apparent. The programmes become acceptable to both men and women, boys and girls. When such programmes become acceptable and popular, the implementation will be effective. The constraints of the programme will be reduced to the barest minimum.

A saying goes that what a man can do, a woman can do it, even better. Again, beside every successful man, there is always a woman. In the light of this, Ogalagu (2017) claims that the principle of egalitarianism should be entrenched in all facets of human endeavours. The principle states that, all people are equal and so they should be given equal treatment and opportunities. Gender equality has gained popularity in contemporary times in response to discrimination of all sorts against women. Ogalagu (2017), has it that in those days female children were not given any opportunity to be useful to themselves and the society at large. It is on this strength that Haralambos and Holdborn (2008) warned that there should be equity among the populace in terms of allocation of positions and responsibilities in family life. Let there be equal participation

of women and men in all areas of family and household responsibilities in order to promote gender equality. There should be no discrimination of the labour market into masculine and feminine occupations by employers. It is noteworthy that Family Life Education inculcates the practice of gender equality in families. Understanding between men and woman does not only make the family peaceful but the whole society becomes a haven for one and all.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

The analytic survey research design was adopted in carrying out this study. Survey research design is generally used to investigate the current status of an existing phenomenon. It involves data collection from a sample of a given population which guarantees the generalisation of the findings of the research. In this type of research, large volume of quantifiable data is collected through questionnaires, observations and interviews. In the present study, data was collected from a sample of public secondary school students and used to describe their current level of awareness about Family Life Education.

4.2 Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised all the public Junior Secondary School students in Rivers State. There are 105,815 students in 238 public Junior Secondary Schools in Rivers State (Rivers State Universal Basic Education Board, 2019).

4.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

A sample of 1,630 respondents (students) was selected for the study. The sample was drawn using stratified random sampling and simple random sampling techniques. It cut across the three senatorial zones in Rivers State. Two Local Government Areas were selected from each of the three senatorial zones namely, Emohua, Ikwerre, Khana, Gokana, Bonny and Ahoada East respectively. Three schools were also sampled in each of the six local government areas making a total of 18 Junior Secondary Schools. Then, Taro Yamane's 1967 Formula was used to determine the required sample size of 386 representing 5% of the population. The researchers decided to increase the sample size to 1,630 which represents 20% of the population. This decision was taken in order to increase the chances of acceptability and generalization of the research findings.

4.4 Instruments of Data Collection

The instruments used for data collection were structured questionnaire, Academic Performance Test (APT) and observation technique. The APT contained 25 multiple-choice questions on Family Life Education. It was used to test the respondents' level of awareness of Family Life Education (FLE). They were instructed to choose the correct answers by circling their best options only. Each correct option circled was awarded 4

per cent. 25 correct answers therefore equal 100%. The cut-off mark was 40%. In order to determine the students' level of awareness about Family Life Education, the following grading system was used:

- 80 - 100% Very High;
- 60 - 79% High;
- 40 - 59% Moderate;
- 0 - 39% Low.

The questionnaire, on the other hand, was divided into two sections. Section A contained items that elicit information about the respondents' name of school, sex, age, class, religion, and place of residence. Section B contained 25 items used to answer research questions 4-7 on students' sources and types of information about FLE, effect of FLE on sustainable development, and the challenges to effective teaching and learning of family life education. The questionnaire was designed based on the modified, 4-point Likert Scale of:

- Strongly Agree (SA) = 4;
- Agree (A) = 3;
- Disagree (D) = 2;
- Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1.

The criterion mean was 2.50.

4.5 Validity of the Instrument

The Academic Performance Test (APT) and the 30-item structured questionnaire were given to three research experts in the Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt for scrutiny. Adequate corrections were effected by the researcher before distributing the instrument to the respondents.

4.6 Reliability of the Instruments

In order to ascertain the reliability of the Academic Performance Test and the questionnaire, 30 copies of the instruments were distributed to 30 public secondary school students outside the sampled schools. Cronbach Alpha statistics was used to ascertain the reliability of the questionnaire while Kuder Richardson (KR 21) formula was used to determine the reliability of the Academic Performance Test. Reliability coefficient of 0.73 and 0.88 were obtained. It meant that the instruments were reliable enough for the study.

4.7 Data Collection and Analysis

The instruments were distributed to the respondents in their various schools. Six research assistants were trained to support the researchers in distributing the research instruments. Data were analyzed using percentage, Mean and z-test.

5. Result

Research Question 1: What type of information is given to the male and female secondary school students about Family Life in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation on the type of information given to the male and female secondary school students about Family Life

S/N	Items	Male N = 858		Female N =772		$\bar{x}_1\bar{x}_2$	Remarks
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD		
1	Family planning	2.76	0.97	3.30	1.00	3.03	Agree
2	Spread of HIV/AIDS	2.58	1.12	3.06	0.88	2.82	Agree
3	Population growth and consequences	3.07	0.87	2.23	1.27	2.65	Agree
4	Responsible parenthood	2.14	1.25	2.76	1.06	2.45	Disagree
5	Consequences of sexual immorality	2.88	0.86	2.82	0.74	2.85	Agree
6	Problems of gender inequality	2.69	0.77	2.80	0.90	2.74	Agree
7	Consequences of early marriage	2.82	1.04	3.21	0.94	3.01	Agree
8	Sources of population	2.73	1.11	2.86	1.11	2.79	Agree
9	Types and functions of the family	3.15	0.78	3.23	0.72	3.19	Agree
10	Infant/maternal health	1.94	1.20	2.82	1.06	2.38	Disagree
Grand Mean		2.68	1.00	2.91	0.97	2.79	Agree

Analysis of data presented in Table 2 confirms that differences exist in the type of information given to the male and female secondary school students about Family Life Education (FLE). The computation of data in Items 1-10 of the questionnaire revealed that the female students have a grand mean of 2.91 while the male students have a grand mean of 2.68. On the whole, it is revealed that the female students receive instructions on family planning more frequently than the male students as shown in Item 1 (\bar{x} =3.30). On the other hand, analysis of responses to Item 3 (\bar{x} =3.07) proves that the male students are given instructions on population growth and its consequences more frequently than the female secondary school students in Rivers State

Research Question 2: What is the level of awareness of the male and female secondary school students about Family Life Education for sustainable development in Rivers State?

In Table 3 it is shown that the sampled 858 male secondary school students got 36.71%. On the other hand, the 772 female secondary school students got 63.29%. These figures indicate that the male secondary school students' level of awareness of FLE is low while that of the female students is high.

Table 3: Percentage of level of awareness of the male and female secondary school students about Family Life Education

Sex	N	Total score	Percentage (%)
Male	858	28173	36.71
Female	772	48576	63.29

Note: 0-39% = Low, 40-59% = Moderate, 60-79% = High, 80-100% = Very High

5.1 Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the type of information given to the male and female secondary school students about Family Life for sustainable development in Rivers State.

Table 4: z-test analysis of the type of information given to the male and female secondary school students about Family Life

Gender	N	\bar{x}	SD	df	z-cal	z-cri	P-value	Remark
Male	858	2.68	0.36	1628	12.913	1.960	0.001	Ho rejected
Female	772	2.91	0.37					

* P < 0.05 significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4 showed that with the degree of freedom 1628 at 0.05 level of significance, the t-calculated value of 12.913 is greater than the t-critical value 1.96 and p-value of 0.001 is less than 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is significant difference between the type of information given to the male and female secondary school students about Family Life for sustainable development in Rivers State

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the male and female secondary school students' level of awareness about Family Life Education for sustainable development in Rivers State.

Table 5: z-test analysis of the male and female secondary school students' level of awareness about Family Life Education for sustainable development

Gender	N	\bar{x}	SD	df	z-cal	z-cri	P-value	Remark
Male	858	1.31	0.83	1628	29.950	1.960	0.001	Ho rejected
Female	772	2.52	0.78					

* P < 0.05 significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 5 showed that with the degree of freedom 1628 at 0.05 level of significance, the t-calculated value of 29.950 is greater than the t-critical value 1.96 and p-value of 0.001 is less than 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is significant difference between the male and female secondary school students' level of awareness about Family Life Education for sustainable development in Rivers State.

6. Discussion of Findings

6.1 Type of Information Given to Secondary School Students about Family Life in Rivers State

Research question one investigated the type of information given to the male and female secondary school students in Family Life Education in Rivers State. Table 2 confirmed that there is a significant difference between the types of information given to the male and female secondary school students in Rivers State. This finding is in line with that of Okusanya and Isabu (2010) whose study revealed poor knowledge of young people about HIV/AIDS infection and observed disparity based on gender and location. Knowledge was worse in young females and rural dwellers in Northern Nigeria.

6.2 Gender and Secondary School Students' Level of Awareness of Family Life Education in Rivers State

In response to research question two which sought to ascertain the male and female secondary school students' level of awareness about Family Life Education in Rivers State, Table 3 revealed that the female secondary school students in Rivers State have a high level of awareness of Family Life Education while the male students have a low level of awareness about family life. Table 5 revealed that there is a significant difference between the male and the female secondary school students' level of awareness about Family Life Education (FLE) in Rivers State. Ombati and Ombati (2012) decried that act of gender responsiveness among the teachers in the curriculum, teaching methodology, teaching and learning materials, school management systems and the overall school environment account for gender imbalance in education.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- 1) Principals should extend their supervisory functions to the effective, inclusive teaching and learning of Family Life Education (FLE) for sustainable development in Rivers State.
- 2) The Rivers State Ministry of Education should ensure that the integrative approach to the teaching of Family Life Education (FLE) in Rivers State is replaced with the subject-based approach.

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Jerome Anyanwu, Ewhe, Joseph Erung
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