AN ASSESSMENT OF THE INFLUENCE OF LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION ON REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH BEHAVIOUR OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS' IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN KIBERA, NAIROBI.

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ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a very fundamental stage in life where emotional, physical and biological transformation takes place in preparation for future development of a girl. Throughout this period many young girls struggle to cope with the changes in their day to day life. This changes call for physical, emotional & social skills in order to deal with challenges that the changes bring along.

One key development during adolescent years is the development of the reproductive system. This study focused on the reproductive health behaviour & knowledge of adolescence and how Life Skills Education has supported the school going girl in Kibera to manage and handle the changes of this stage in day to day life and especially in regards to reproductive health. It is evident that when reproductive health of an adolescent is not well managed, the future could present multiple challenges that could hinder the realization of the potential of the individual girl.

This study aimed at assessing the exposure of the girls to LSE and the benefits that LSE can realize. It also looked at the challenges that are faced during the learning process.

While appreciating the many other aspect of the adolescent age that hinder the young people’s potential, reproductive health behaviour remains a key concern hence this study.

Today’s adolescents face challenges that prior generations did not face for multiple reasons. In an effort to prepare this age group to cope and deal with the challenges of adolescence, the Ministry of Education in conjunction with the Kenya Institute of Education introduced Life Skills Education as part of the school curriculum to train school going adolescents on handling relevant core areas of this stage. The main goal of the Life Skills approach is “to enhance young people’s ability to take responsibility for making choices, resisting negative pressure, meet the demands of everyday life and avoiding risky behaviour”

A randomly selected sample of adolescent girls attending public school in Kibera between the age of 15-19 years was targeted making 10% of the school going girls in the study area. Key findings noted the need for more emphasis on dealing with peer pressure, problem solving and stress management, these being difficult areas for this age group. It also found that self awareness and basic knowledge of adolescence was well understood and interpreted.

Key recommendation included development of age friendly content and strategy of implementation. In conclusion LSE remains extremely relevant to this age-group.