

Stream-Based Differences in Attitude Towards Sex Education Among College Students in Aizawl City

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Abstract:

The present study was undertaken to study attitude towards sex education among college students in Aizawl city. The objectives of the study were to find out the attitude towards sex education and to compare it on the basis of students with regard to their stream of study. The study consist a sample of 262 college students out of which 156 were arts students and 106 were commerce students. Stratified random sampling technique was employed for selecting the sample. The findings revealed that majority (80%) of college students in Aizawl city have high attitude towards sex education; It was found that arts and commerce college students in Aizawl City have high attitude towards sex education. The results also show that there is significant difference in the attitude towards sex education among college students in Aizawl city with regards to their stream of study. Having learnt from the mean score, commerce students (107.52) have high attitude towards sex education than arts students (104.77), which means that commerce college students have higher attitude towards sex education as compared to arts students.

Keywords: Stream of study, Attitude, Sex education, College Students

INTRODUCTION:

Sex education is playing a big role in our country; teaching people how to handle issues related to sex, sexuality, and sexual health as the primary goal of sex education. Sex education is a controversial topic in Indian society, as sex and related topics are still frowned upon. The goal of sex education s to improve people's scientific knowledge of sex- related topics. It explains all of the teaching techniques that help growing children understand and overcome obstacles in life. Teenagers face a number of problems as a result of physical changes and the emergence of sexual desires throughout puberty. In this case, parents and other relatives must understand the need of sex education.

Diverse viewpoints lead to differing interpretations of sex education. The term is misunderstood by some as referring to teaching a child about sexual activity. However, the primary goal of sex education is to promote sexual and reproductive health. It also aims to help the child understand the physiological, psychological, and physical differences between a male and female child, as well as any possible physical connections between them. Another objective of sex education is to give young people the chance to grow and comprehend their values, attitudes, and insights about sexuality as well as to build their interpersonal and relationship abilities. Sex education can also be defined as 'involving a

comprehensive course of action by the school, calculated to bring about the socially desirable attitudes, practices and personal conduct on the part of children and adults, that will best protect the individual as a human and the family as a social institution” (Kearney, 2008). Thus, sex education may also be defined as “sexually education”, which means that it encompasses education about all aspects of sexuality.

In India, sex education is a contentious topic that is occasionally seen as taboo throughout the nation. There are differing views within the community regarding whether or not it should be taught. Out of India’s estimated 1.3 billion individuals, over 2.1 million are expected to be HIV-positive. Despite being a major burden on the lower-middle income nation, its prevalence has decreased since the early 2000s, when the epidemic peaked, and it currently ranks third among the nations with the worst HIV epidemics. In the meantime, sex education in schools has been outlawed or prohibited in several Indian states. India has severely lagged behind several nations, especially less developed and much smaller nations, on a global scale. In order to reduce health and educational problems that affect young people, such as teen pregnancy, school dropout, and STIs, sex education is crucial. Schools are the best venue to offer sex education programs since parents find it difficult to have sex conversations with their children. Constructive sex education programs can be offered by a variety of institutions through meaningful contact with students.

Rationale of the Study

It is evident that extensive study of attitude towards sex education among college students is indispensable through many research works have been studied. Sex education serves as a kind of environmental protection against a harmful media. In the course of sex education, one may overcome sex-related inhibitions and embarrassments. In order to respond to the possibilities that arise for good sexuality education, it is necessary that the individual providing the sex education possess the required factual knowledge and a wholesome mindset. It’s an obligation that ought to be acknowledged. Children who get sex education are guided toward healthy attitudes that foster empathy and respect for others. This is the reason why attitude towards sex education among youth or college students is necessary as it can help individuals make wise decisions based on their awareness of their own sexual identity and interactions with others. A lot of young people have sex before they are emotionally and physically ready. As a result, they increase their risk of contracting HIV. College-level sexual education is crucial for delaying sexual orientation, increasing condom use, and raising HIV/AIDS knowledge. Globally, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) pose a serious health threat. STIs are among the most prevalent illnesses for which adults seek medical treatment. Teens are at a significant risk of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), in addition to pregnancy. An initiative measure has to be adopted to protect and look after children and youngsters who were the victims of sexually abused through sex education. They are to inculcate necessary information and positives attitudes towards sex education. Therefore, it is essential to conduct an in-depth analysis of college students' attitudes towards sex education in order to identify and comprehend the precise situation of the students.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. What is the attitude of College Students in Aizawl City towards Sex Education?
2. What is the attitude of College Students in Aizawl City towards Sex Education with reference to their stream?
3. Is there any variation in the attitude of College Students in Aizawl City towards Sex Education with reference to their stream?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To find out the attitude towards Sex Education among College Students in Aizawl City
2. To find out the attitude towards Sex Education among College Students in Aizawl City with regards to their stream.
3. To compare the attitude towards sex education among college students in Aizawl City with regards to their stream.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY:

There is no significant difference in the attitude towards Sex Education among College Students in Aizawl City with reference to their stream.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

In their studies on attitudes toward sex education among college students in Aizawl, Pachuau & Lalramliana (2022) found that students' academic streams significantly influenced their views. Arts and humanities students held more liberal attitudes, believing it was essential for holistic development, while science and commerce students were more conservative, preferring that families teach the topic.

Similarly, Lalrinsanga & Hrangliana (2021) and Lalzamliani & Lalmuanpuia (2023) both identified professional stream students (e.g., medical and nursing) as having the most positive attitudes due to their professional exposure. In non-professional fields, they noted that arts students were more likely to believe sex education prevents risky behavior, whereas commerce students were more hesitant and skeptical about its effectiveness. Lalzamliani & Lalmuanpuia (2023) further suggested that career goals and academic training shape these perspectives.

Finally, Zoramthanga & Lalremruati (2022) found that while socio-cultural norms are influential for all students, academic streams act as a modifying factor. They observed that even with conservative backgrounds, arts and social science students showed a slightly more positive attitude toward sex education, likely influenced by their exposure to subjects that promote critical thinking.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:

The present study was descriptive survey in nature. Data was collected and analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively.

- Population and sampling technique: The population of the present study comprised of all students of different colleges in Aizawl City. The sample of the study comprised of 262 college students in which 156 were Arts students and 106 were Commerce students and it was selected by employing stratified random sampling technique.
- Tools used: "Attitude scale towards sex education" developed by DR (Smt.) Usha Mishra. The scale consists of 32 items in which 16 items were positive and 16 items were negative.
- Data Analysis: The data were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively using statistical techniques like percentages, mean, standard deviation. Further, t-test was used for the purpose of comparison.

MAJOR FINDINGS:

Objective No. 1- To find out the attitude towards Sex Education among College Students in Aizawl City

Table No. 1: Attitude towards Sex Education among College Students in Aizawl City

Score Range	Stanine Grade	Interpretation	No. of Students - 262	Percentage
Above 129	9	Very High Attitude towards Sex Education	9	3%
120-129				
110-119	8	High Attitude towards Sex Education	209	80%
100-109	7			
90-99	6	Moderate Attitude towards Sex Education	44	17%
80-89	5			
70-79	4			
60-69	3	Low Attitude towards Sex Education	0	0%
50-59	2			
40-49	1	Very Low Attitude towards Sex Education	0	0%
Below 40				

From Table No 1, it can be seen that majority i.e., 80% of college students in Aizawl City have high attitude towards sex education; 3% of them have very high attitude towards sex education and 17% of them have moderate attitude towards sex education. It can also be seen that there are no students with low and very low attitude towards sex education. Thus, it can be interpreted that majority of college students in Aizawl City have high attitude towards sex education.

Objective No.2 - To find out the attitude towards Sex Education among College Students in Aizawl City with regards to their stream

Table No. 2: Attitude towards Sex Education among College Students in Aizawl City with regards to their streams

Score Range	Stanine Grade	Interpretation	Arts Students - 156	Commerce Students - 106
Above 129	9	Very High Attitude towards	4	5
120-129			(3%)	(5%)
110-119	8	High Attitude towards	120	89
100-109	7		(77%)	(84%)
90-99	6	Moderate Attitude towards	32	12
80-89	5		(20%)	(11%)
70-79	4			
60-69	3	Low Attitude towards	0%	0%
50-59	2			
40-49	1	Very Low Attitude	0%	0%
Below 40				

From table 2, it can be seen that majority i.e., 77% of arts college students in Aizawl City have high attitude towards sex education, 3% of them have very high attitude towards sex education and 20% of them have moderate attitude towards sex education. It can also be seen that there are no students with

low and very low attitude towards sex education. Thus, it can be interpreted that majority of arts college students in Aizawl City have high attitude towards sex education.

Table 2 also showed that majority i.e., 84% of commerce college students in Aizawl City have high attitude towards sex education, 5% of very high attitudes, and 11% of the commerce students had moderate attitudes towards sex education. It can also be seen that there are no students with low and very low attitude towards sex education. Thus, it can be interpreted that majority of commerce college students in Aizawl City have high attitude towards sex education.

Objective No. 3 - To compare the attitude towards sex education among college students in Aizawl City with regards to their stream

Table No. 3: Comparison of the attitude towards Sex Education among College Students in Aizawl City with regards to their stream

Component	Group compared	N	Mean	SD	SED	't' value	Sig. level
Sex Education	Arts	156	104.77	7.22	0.77	3.56	.01
	Commerce	106	107.52	6.82			

The above table No 3 shows that the 't' value relating to the attitude towards sex education of college students in Aizawl city with regards to their stream is significant at .01 level. Therefore, the hypothesis – “There is no significant difference in the attitude towards sex education among college students in Aizawl city with regards to their stream of study” is rejected. It implies that there is significant difference in the attitude towards sex education among college students in Aizawl city with regards to their stream of study and commerce students have high attitude towards sex education than arts students as the mean score of commerce college students is more favourable than that of arts college students.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION:

The overall findings of the result shows that majority (79.77%) of the college students in Aizawl City have high attitude towards sex education. Therefore, imparting knowledge about sexual health among the youth is constantly necessary and should be introduced in educational activity or programme to avoid uncertain sexual behavior and desirable change among them. The results also show that there is significant difference in the attitude towards sex education among college students in Aizawl city with regards to their stream of study. This implies that a student's educational environment is a key factor in shaping their perspective. Having learnt from the mean score, commerce students (107.52) have high attitude towards sex education than arts students (104.77), which means that commerce college students have higher attitude towards sex education as compared to arts students. This suggests that academic background can influence how students perceive and value sex education. The study posits that the academic environment itself can play a role in reducing the stigma associated with the topic.

Thus, it can be stated that academic environment will be a great factor to inculcate to remove stigma about sex education. By understanding college students' attitudes and needs, policy makers, academicians, and educators can develop effective sex education programme and strategy promoting healthy relationship, informed decision-making, overall well being, interactive and engaging teaching methods, encouraging open communication and discussion, comprehensive and inclusive curricula. The ultimate goal of such strategies is to promote healthy relationships, informed decision-making, and the overall well-being of the students.

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