



AFRICA REGIONAL SEXUALITY RESOURCE CENTRE

Sexuality in the Media Report

*The Coverage of Sexuality
by the Nigerian Print
Media.
(July-December 2005)*

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PREFACE

The Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Centre, Lagos, Nigeria commissioned this project to investigate what the Nigerian newspapers and magazines between July and December 2005 published on sexuality, sexual health and sexual rights.

This is the second time this project has been undertaken. The findings are indicative of how the press approaches the issues of sexuality, sexual health and sexual rights. In a nutshell, while the newspapers report more on issues of public health concern such as HIV/AIDS, the soft sell magazines report more on sexual violence and sexual scandals mostly for the sensation that they create.

I would like to use this medium to thank the Editor of the Guardian for granting permission to members of the research team to use the Guardian's Library.

We are grateful to the management of Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Centre for making us a partner in this research.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Sexuality issues are very fundamental to human existence. In recent years issues of sexuality, sexual health and sexual rights (S/SH/SR) have assumed important dimensions in politics and policies of many countries especially in the developing countries. In Nigeria, with the spread of HIV/AIDS these issues have assumed new significance. The media plays a central role in disseminating information on sexuality, sexual health and sexual rights. Hence the Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Centre commissioned this research to understand the nature of reports and interests in the Nigerian media concerning the issues of sexuality, sexual health and sexual rights to create a pool of knowledge to guide future partnership between the press and institutions promoting aspects of S/SH/SR. The media can then be employed as a partner in advocacy for desired, educative and empowering information on S/SH/SR to promote safe, responsible, respectful, pleasurable and life enhancing sexual life.

1.1 Aims

This study set out to achieve three basic objectives:

- To examine what has been published in the Nigerian media on sexuality, sexual health and sexual right.
- To determine the quantity and quality of focus.
- To examine how the media through the use of pictures, cartoons, language and positioning of articles, editorials etc. promote or devalue issues of regarding sexuality, sexual health and sexual rights.
- To determine the factors influencing the publishing (or absence) of articles on sexuality, sexual health and sexual rights in the media.

1.2 Definition of Concepts

The following concepts are defined: sexuality, sexual health, sexual rights and the media.

1.2.1 Sexuality

The Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Centre has adopted the WHO definition, which conceives of sexuality as:

“...a central aspect of being human throughout life and encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships (ARSRC, 2003: 17)”

1.2.2 Sexual Health

Sexual health is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well being related to sexuality and not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health makes it possible to have a safe and enjoyable sexual life. It is premised on positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, free of coercion, discrimination and violence (ARSRC, 2003: 17).

1.2.3 Sexual Rights

Sexual rights embrace certain human rights that are already recognized in national laws, international human rights documents and other consensus documents. These include the rights of all persons, free of coercion, discrimination and violence to:

- the highest attainable standard of health in relation to sexuality, including access to sexual and reproductive health care services;
- seek, receive and impart information in relation to sexuality;
- sexuality education respect for bodily integrity;
- choice of partner;
- decide to be sexually active or not;
- consensual sexual relations;
- enter into marriage only with the full and free consent of both persons;
- decide whether or not, and when to have children; and
- pursue a satisfying safe and pleasurable sexual life (ARSRC, 2003: 17).

1.2.4 Mass Media

The media includes all ways by which information is disseminated to the general public. The present study deals only with the print media in exclusion of the electronic media.

2 METHODOLOGY

Five newspapers *Daily Sun*, *This Day*, *The Guardian*, *The Punch* and *The Comet*, and two soft sell magazines, *City People* and *Global Essence* will be identified and searched for publications on different issues on S/SH/SR. All identified issues will be grouped under different headings such as “HIV/AIDS” and “Prostitution”. The results will be presented on frequency tables and analysed. Some journalists in the newspaper houses will be interviewed to know what influences their write-ups on issues of sexuality, sexual health and sexual rights. General opinion of some members of the public was sought to ascertain which newspapers and magazines they read and if they are actually interested in issues of sexuality, sexual health and sexual rights.

It would be important to note that results presented should not be considered as absolutes because they are greatly influenced by the assessment of the researcher. For instance, if a case of rape of a 3-year-old girl is reported, it could be treated under “Sexual Abuse of Children” or under “Sexual Violence”. Hence the results should be treated as only indicative not absolute.

3 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

3.1 Editorial Policies affecting Media Reports on S/SH/SR

There was no editorial policy, against the publication of issues of S/SH/SR. All the editors agreed that as long as issues were topical and important to societal existence and development, they would be highlighted and published. Hence the preponderance of publications on HIV/AIDS – *Daily Sun* 14%, *This Day* 75%, *The Guardian* 45%, *The Punch* 41% and *The Comet* 40%. Only *Daily Sun* gave more space to other matters such as sexual violence 19% than it accorded HIV/AIDS. *Daily Sun* reported more on issues of S/SH/SR than any other newspaper as 59% of all the daily issues contained articles on such matters. This was followed by *This Day* 25%, *The Punch* 19%, *The Comet* 19% and *The Guardian* 18%. Also *Daily Sun* reported on light-hearted stories on S/SH/SR. Other papers approached the subjects more seriously, reflecting the official conservative stance of the Nigerian society

towards sexuality. Though there is general conservatism towards matters of sexuality, writers did not seem inhibited whenever they chose to write on such matters.

The soft sell magazines were published weekly and devoted most of their write-ups to issues of S/SH/SR. Nevertheless, most of those write ups were mainly gossip about the love life of some celebrities. They dealt more with S/SH/SR because these subjects make the magazines interesting. While the newspapers concentrated more on issues of public health concern such as HIV/AIDS and Reproductive Health, the magazines concentrated on gossips, sexual violence and sexual scandals, which provide the juicy information that, attract readers to the magazines.

3.2 Issues of S/SH/SR Addressed

The majority of the write-ups on S/SH/SR were on issues of Sexual Health to which the newspapers devoted many of their issues - *Daily Sun* 22%, *This Day* 82%, *The Guardian* 64%, *The Punch* 62% and *The Comet* 57%. Sexuality was the next favourite subject - *Daily Sun* 75%, *This Day* 18%, *The Guardian* 36%, *The Punch* 38% and *The Comet* 40%. In all the papers, there was a near silence on the subject of Sexual Rights – *Daily Sun* 2% and *The Comet* 3%. Indeed, where reported, the rights of sexual minorities such as homosexuals and lesbians were questioned and seen as capable of destroying the fabric of the society.

Table 1: Aspects of S/SH/SR Reported between July and December 2005

Aspects ⇒	Sexuality		Sexual Health		Sexual Rights	
	No	Percentages	No	Percentages	No	Percentages
Newspapers↓						
Daily Sun	82	75%	24	22%	2	2%
This Day	8	18%	37	82%	0	0%
The Guardian	12	36%	21	64%	0	0%
The Punch	13	38%	21	62%	0	0%
The Comet	14	40%	20	57%	1	3%
Magazines						
City People	51	91%	5	9%	0	0%
Essence	44	95%	3	6%	0	0%

The magazines, like the newspapers addressed issues of Sexuality and Sexual Health to the detriment of Sexual Rights as follows: *City People* - Sexuality 91%, Sexual Health 9% and Sexual Rights 0%; *Excellence* - Sexuality 95%, Sexual Health, 6% Sexual Right 0%.

3.3 Where the Write-ups were featured

Write-ups on S/SH/SR were seen on all parts of the newspapers except the headlines, and editorials, which did not feature sexuality news. But the following columns were popular for matters of S/SH/SR:

Daily Sun: Wives Lives, Young at Heart, Woman of Daily Sun, Good Health, Wild and Crazy, Crime Watch, Foreign News, Entertainment and City Sun, The Sun.

The Comet: Rights and Duties, Down the Aisles, Health, Young and Growing, Natural Health, Education, City and State, Africa, Features, Experiences, Society.

This Day: Inside business, Health, State of the States, This Week, Sex Talkback, The Glitterati, This Life, Features, Briefly and Mastering Nature.

The Guardian: AIDS This Day, Relationships, Junior Guardian, African News, Maritime Watch, Science and Health and World Report.

The Punch: Family Affairs, Odd World, Letters, Sunday Health, Special treat, Family Line, Just Singles Affairs, View Point, The Digest, Sunday Woman, Family Arena, South-West

Also in the magazines write-ups on S/SH/SR featured on every part of the magazines but with the following popular columns:

Excellence: Romance Saga, Citadel Grapevine, All the Gossip, Port Harcourt Beat, Abuja High Society and Celebrities.

City People: Exclusive, Women and Infertility, Inside Abuja, Interview, For Singles and Married, Gist from Edo/Delta, Life on the Island, Special Report, Celebrities in Abuja, Inside Calabar and Adam and Eve.

3.4 Comments on the Quality of Publication

The majority of the articles were news items and reports. They contained qualitative knowledge based information, which were educative. They were written in clear and simple to read and understand language. However, some newspapers such as The Guardian are

written for the consumption of an elitist audience while just any group could consume Daily Sun. Some of the write-ups were written to warn people of different dangers. Others tried to give advice on what to do about some health conditions such as impotence and infertility.

In the magazines the majority were written for entertainment and were full of allegations and gossips. Nevertheless, there were some informative and educative reports in the magazines.

3.5 Recurrent Writers

These included:

Daily Sun: S. Biobaku, Andy Asemota, Bisi Olayele, Azoma Chikwe, Ashamu Adegbola

The Comet: Omolara Akintoye, Segun Olanrewaju, Patrick Okohue, Oyeyemi Adedeji, Tunbosun Ogundare and Zebullon Agomuo.

This Day: Onwuka Nzeshi, Godwin Haruna, Juliana Taiwo, Ademla Adeyemo, Adamu Suleiman, Kunle Aderinokun, Chuka Odittah, Agha Ibiam and Ndubisi Ugah.

The Guardian: Bertram Nwannekanma, Bankole Adesina, Alex Monye, Collins Olaymka, Omolara Shodeinde, Izazu Gerry, Peter onwubuariri, Nkechi Onyedika, Kayode Ogunbunmi, Kingsley Maghalu, Chukwuma Muanya, Adamu Abuh, Iyabo Lawal, Alex Olise

The Punch: Adaeze Amos, Fidelis Soriwei, Chinyere Fred-Adegbulugbo, Owa Jacob, Kemi Dayo-Aiyetan, Rotimi Williams, Jibola Oyekunle, Rolake Odutoyinbo Nwagu, Doyin Adebusuyi, Agaptus Anaele, Akin Ayodele

Excellence: Abubakar Abba, Ade Adewale, Bukkie Omotola, Jossy Adeoti, Akin Sokoya, Biodun Faniogun, Funke Akinwale, Johnson Adegboyega, Kunle Rasheed and Kemi Adebisi

City People: Bimbo Odukoya, Sunny Ojeiduma, Dr. Abayomi Ajayi, Jimmy Enjeh and Sola Bodurin

3.6 Audience

All the newspapers directed their write-ups mostly to a general audience – *Daily Sun* 87%, *This Day* 78%, *The Guardian* 82%, *The Punch* 74% and *The Comet* 83%. Only a small

percentage of their articles were directed to specialized audiences especially the youths – *Daily Sun* 6%, *This Day* 9%, *The Guardian* 9%, *The Punch* 9% and *The Comet* 6%. The women - *Daily Sun* 5%, *This Day* 9%, *The Guardian* 6%, *The Punch* 12% and *The Comet* 6%, followed this. Men as a specialized audience came last with *Daily Sun* 3%, *This Day* 4%, *The Guardian* 3%, *The Punch* 6% and *The Comet* 9%.

Table 2: Audience

Audience ⇒	Youths		Men		Women		General	
	No of times	%	No of times	%	No of times	%	No of times	%
Daily Sun	6	6%	3	3%	5	5%	94	87%
This Day	4	9%	2	4%	4	9%	35	78%
The Guardian	3	9%	1	3%	2	6%	27	82%
The Punch	3	9%	2	6%	4	12%	25	74%
The Comet	2	6%	3	9%	2	6%	29	83%
Magazines								
City People	5	9%	4	7%	6	11%	41	73%
Essence	3	6%	2	4%	5	11%	37	79%

The magazines also addressed particular audiences as follows: *City People*: youth 9%, Men 7%, Women 11%, General 73%; *Excellence*: Youth 6%, Men 4%, Women 11%, General 79%.

3.7 Specific Subjects of S/SH/SR reported

Table 3 below shows specific subjects of S/SH/SR reported and the frequency of reports during the period under review.

3.7.1 HIV/AIDS

Issues concerning HIV/AIDS were the most widely reported subject on S/SH/SR in all the newspapers investigated (*Daily Sun*, 26.9.05: 29). Reports included activities to stem its spread, warnings against the devastating effects, activities to help those living with HIV

Table 3: Specific Subjects of S/SH/SR reported between July and December 2005

Newspapers	Daily Sun		This Day		The Guardian		The Punch		The Comet		City People		Excellence	
Subjects Reported														
HIV/AIDS	15	14%	34	75%	15	45%	14	41%	14	40%	4	7%	4	9%
Sexual Violence	20	19%	1	2%	1	3%	1	3%	4	11%	7	13%	6	13%
Sexuality Education	1	1%	1	2%	2	6%	1	3%	4	11%	-	-	2	4%
Marriage	5	5%	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3%	4	7%	3	6%
Reproductive Health	5	5%	2	4%	3	9%	2	6%	2	6%	5	9%	3	6%
Sexual Orientation and Identity	4	4%	-	-	-	-	3	9%	1	3%	3	5%	2	4%
Infidelity	5	5%	-	-	2	6%	2	6%	1	3%	5	9%	3	6%
Premarital Sex	2	2%	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3%	-	-	-	-
Virginity	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3%	-	-	-	-
Prostitution	4	4%	1	2%	2	6%	2	6%	1	3%	4	7%	3	6%
Love and Romance	8	7%	-	-	4	12%	3	9%	-	-	6	11%	4	9%
Sexual Scandals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	11%	7	15%
Sexual Harassment	9	8%	2	4%	1	3%	1	3%	1	3%	2	4%	-	-
Sexy Looks	9	8%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Female Genital Mutilation	1	1%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sexual Abuse of Children	6	6%	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3%	-	-	1	2%
Incest	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3%	2	4%	4	9%
Sexual Problems	6	6%	-	-	-	-	3	9%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Relationship	3	3%	2	4%	2	6%	2	6%	1	3%	2	4%	1	2%

Disappointments														
Casual Sex	1	1%	2	4%	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4%	3	6%
Sex and Drugs	1	1%	-	-	1	3%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Use of Condom	3	3%	-	-	1	3%	-	-	-	-	2	4%	1	2%
Bigamy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2%	-	-
Bestiality	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2%	-	-

and call on the generality of the population to help those living with the disease as about 20 million Nigerian women are said to be living with the disease (*This Day*, 29.9.05: 5). A case of deliberate spread of HIV/AIDS by a businessman was reported (*Sun*, 25.8.05: 12). The frequency of report – *This Day* 75%, *Guardian* 45%, *Punch* 41%, *Comet* 40% and *Daily Sun* 14% shows the continuing public concern with this pandemic, which is threatening Nigeria in particular and Africa in general.

The magazines only reported moderately on the issue - *City People* 7% and *Excellence* 9%. This usually centres on celebrities who are HIV positive (*City People*, 12.8.2005: 66; *Excellence*, 6-12.9.2005: 40).

3.7.2 Sexual Violence

Sexual violence was reported as follows: – *Daily Sun* 19%, *Comet* 11%, *Guardian* 3%, *Punch* 3%, and *This Day* 2%. Rape was the most reported form of sexual violence against women and young girls. Culprits included, serial rapists, armed robbers, members of the police force and teachers (*Sun*, 6.7.05: 4). Justice is rarely done as the culprits are rarely caught. This lack of justice is said to encourage the increase in rape cases (*This Day*, 23.8.05: 5). The case of robbers rapping women seemed to have been on the increase as it was widely reported by all the newspapers. Most especially, University female students were very frequently raped according to reports (*Daily Sun*, 6.7.05: 4).

The magazines reported more on sexual violence – *City People* 13% and *Excellence* 13%. As in the Newspapers Sexual Violence reported were mostly issues of rape.

3.7.3 Sexuality Education

Not much was reported on this issue. However, a need for HIV/AIDS education was noted to help stop the spread of the disease. It was suggested that such education should be introduced

into the curriculum in tertiary institutions to educate the students on how to protect themselves and others from HIV/AIDS (*Guardian*, 24.7.05: 5). Nevertheless, one of the reports claimed that sexuality education which talks about safe sex could be dangerous because it confuses the youths and encourages free sex (*Guardian*, 2.12.05: 5). Hence abstinence was reported as the best cure for AIDS (*Guardian*, 4. 12.05: 5)

The magazines were not interested on sexuality education, which received attention only from *Excellence* 4%.

3.7.4 Marriage

Issues concerning marriage were reported. Marriage was still seen as the most desirable stage of relationship between man and woman and divorce was seen as a tragic, unnecessary and unwanted end to this honourable institution (*Comet*, 10.9.05: 25). Nevertheless, a 70-year-old man was reported to demand for a divorce from his 60year old wife or else he would kill himself (*Comet*, 4.9.05: 3).

Marriages and divorce of celebrities continued to be interesting subject for report in the magazines – *City People* 7% and *Excellence* 6%.

3.7.5 Reproductive Health

This arrested the attention of the journalists - *Daily Sun* 5%, *This Day* 4%, *The Guardian* 9%, *The Punch* 6%, and *The Comet* 6%. Issues reported included abortion, STIs and infertility (*This Day*, 3.12.05: 7). An article informed on how to combat infertility (*Comet*, 13.11.05: 33) and how to confront the challenges of reproductive health (*The Punch*, 29.7.2005: 45).

The magazines - *City People* 9% and *Excellence* 6%, just like the newspapers, were interested in reproductive health issues especially infertility (*City People*, 20.6.2005: 23).

3.7.6 Sexual Orientation and Identity

Homosexuality and lesbianism received some interest. Generally these sexual preferences were condemned (*The Guardian*, 25.12.05: 37) and even a young man is said to have been arrested in Abuja after disclosing is homosexuality (*The Punch*, 18.10.05: 18).

The magazines also reported on homosexuality (*Excellence*, 20-26.9.2005: 39; 23-29.8.2005: 8). A marriage is said to have crashed due to homosexuality (*City People*, 21.9.2005: 27).

3.7.7 Infidelity

Cases of infidelity practiced both by husbands and wives were reported. However, the husbands were more likely to engage in it than their wives. Many men prefer their sisters-in-law and their housemaids (*The Punch*, 16.7.05: 23). Reports showed that this was a rampant occurrence and a major threat to the institution of marriage and the family.

City People 9% and *Excellence* 6% also reported cases of infidelity involving among others, sisters-in-law and housemaids (*Excellence*, 25-31.10.2005: 9).

3.7.8 Pre-marital sex

The youths were encouraged to desist from pre-marital sex as a means of protecting themselves against HIV/AIDS, STIs and unwanted pregnancies.

3.7.9 Virginit

Only one report had directly to do with virginit. Virginit was encouraged among young girls. This led a community to give scholarships to confirmed virgins in a colourful ceremony although this attempt was reported as a failure as not finding virgins to receive the scholarships was a near impossible task (*The Comet*, 16.10.05: 29).

3.7.10 Prostitution

This attracted journalistic attention – *Daily Sun* 4%, *This Day* 2%, *The Guardian* 6%, *The Punch* 6%, and *The Comet* 3%. There were stories about the arrest of a woman who grooms young women for prostitution overseas (*Daily Sun*, 29.12.05: 15). There was also a report about a woman who retired from prostitution at the age of 63 (*The Comet*: 16.7.05: 9). Also there was a story about the profitability of the profession, which has attracted teenagers to the profession (*This Day*, 17.9.05:79) and they have hundreds of customers (*The Punch*, 29.9.05: 10).

The magazines – *City People* 7% and *Excellence* 6% also showed interest on the subject of prostitution especially on campuses of tertiary institutions (*Excellence*, 20-26.9.2005: 33).

3.7.11 Love and Romance

This appeared in the form of love stories, sexual affairs and falling in love and dating (*The Punch*, 23.10.05: 47). Money was said to be important in determining ‘true’ love these days (*The Punch*, 14.12.05: Just Singles Affairs).

Love and Romance arrested the interest of the magazines – *City People* 11% and *Excellence* 9%. These were stories of both licit and illicit love affairs between different people.

3.7.12 Sex Scandals

The magazines reported cases of sexual scandals – *City People* 11% and *Excellence* 15%. Interestingly most of them were sexual misdemeanour between religious officials such as pastors and female members of their congregations. Also lawmakers such as senators and parliamentarians were prominent in sexual scandals (*Excellence*, 30.8-5.9.2005: 32; 4-10.10.2005: 815-21.11.2005: 11; *City People*, 7.9.2005: 7).

3.7.13 Sexual harassment

This issue was recurrent in *Daily Sun* 8%, which invited students who experienced sexual harassment to report to the newspaper for publication. There was a report of a lecturer caught in a hotel with a female student in a sex for marks meeting (*Daily Sun*, 10.7.05: 23). In another case such behaviour resulted in a sack of the lecturer (*The Guardian*, 19.08.05: 6). A beauty queen complained of being sexually harassed by lecturers who all wanted to sleep with her (*Daily Sun*, 17.12.05: 34). Nevertheless, another writer warned against demonising the lecturers and argued that sexual harassment is everywhere in the Nigerian society. Sexual harassment in a sex-for-role bid was reported in Nollywood (*Daily Sun*, 25.9.05: 12). One write-up informs how people can deal with sexual harassment at workplace (*The Punch*, 7.10.05: 43).

3.7.14 Sexy Looks and Sexual Fantasy

Sexy looks were discussed especially half nudity which is the fashion among students and film stars and which encourages sexual fantasy. Such state of near nudity was seen as unbecoming of African girls and women (*Daily Sun*, 23.8.2005: 12). However, *Daily Sun* published everyday on page 3 Daily Sun Girl. These are beautiful girls, who help to raise the fantasies of young men. Sun Girls are now used as posters in the bedrooms of some young men and are secretly admired by the elderly.

Likewise, the soft sell magazines utilise sexy photographs of young women on all editions to entice readers to buy. Hence, though openly sexy looks are condemned especially by the older generation, they seem to be popular as articles of consumption in papers.

3.7.15 Female Genital Mutilation

There was only one report on this issue. In it women were asked if they were circumcised and their views on female circumcision (Daily Sun, 20.11.2005: 14-15). Though FGM is supposed to be very wide spread in Nigeria, the majority of those questioned were not circumcised. Those circumcised spoke of the pains they went through. Many were circumcised in baby age so they did not perceive any adverse health outcome. While a few were for it, the majority were against it.

3.7.16 Sexual Abuse of Children

This was reported and vehemently condemned. Perpetrators included teachers, neighbours and uncles (Sun, 18.12.05: 17; Comet, 4.09.05: 33). The girl child was the subject of the abuse.

The magazines reported the sexual abuse of children mostly in the form of rape (*Excellence*, 6-12.9.2005: 11; 18-24.10.2005: 16).

3.7.17 Incest

This was reported between siblings (Sun, 23.5.05: 32; Comet, 21.8.05: 33).

Incest came up in the magazines a number of times between father and daughter, brother and sister, and stepmother and stepson. A northern Governor allegedly habitually sleeps with the daughter (*City People*, 21.9.2005: 27).

3.7.18 Sexual Problems

Recurrent sexual problems reported included impotence, weak erection (Punch, 11.9.05:9), low sperm count, inability to satisfy a female partner sexually and sexual obsession. Women with heart diseases were reported as prone to sexual problems (*This Day*, 22.07.05: Health).

3.7.19 Disappointment in relationships

Jilting was the major type of disappointment experienced both by men and women although many more women were jilted more than the men. Result could sometimes be fatal (*Comet*, 6.8.05: 5).

Disappointments in relationships were reported. Mostly, cases of women snatching other women's husbands and lovers were reported (*City People*, 12.7.2005: 53).

3.7.20 Casual Sex

Reports centred on the love of casual sex by men who despite the health implications and the implications to their marital lives still indulge in it (*Daily Sun*, 17.9.05: 11).

3.7.21 Sex and Drugs

Sex and drugs were reported in which it was stated that drugs do not necessarily aid sexual performance that there are other things that aid sex (*Daily Sun*, 27.12.05: 32).

3.7.22 Condom use

This was reported in connection with activities to control the spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (*Daily Sun*, 20.12.2005: 32).

There were reports informed on why people preferred sex without condom (*Excellence*, 6-12.12.2005: 6).

3.7.23 Bigamy

A case of bigamy was reported.

3.7.24 Bestiality

This was reported in connection with a man who allegedly slept with a goat.

4 CONNECTION WITH OTHER HEALTH ISSUES

Issues reported were sometimes connected to other health matters. Most issues of S/SH/SR were connected one way or the other to HIV/AIDS which was the central theme of most reports.

- HIV/AIDS was associated with tuberculosis, fevers, diarrhoea, skin infections and common colds.
- Sexual violence was reported as contributing to HIV/AIDS, STIs, depression, low self-esteem, diverse psychological problems and fear.
- Sexuality education was associated with knowledge, which could help to stem the tide of unwanted pregnancy, teenage pregnancies, STIs and HIV/AIDS.
- Marriage was connected to happiness, a necessary pre-condition for good health and well-being. Fidelity in marriage could prevent sexually transmitted diseases including

- HIV/AIDS. Marital problems could trigger off high blood pressure, mental condition and even death.
- Associated with reproductive health was fertility and wellbeing. Nevertheless, the negative associations were unwanted pregnancies, abortions, infertility, high blood pressure, irritability, depression, insomnia and dietary problems.
 - Sexual identity such as homosexuality and lesbianism was associated with pervasion and madness.
 - Infidelity was reported in connection with rising cases of HIV/AIDS and STIs among married people.
 - Premarital sex was related to abortion, HIV/AIDS, STIs and psychological problems.
 - Virginity was associated with good reproductive health and prevention of HIV/AIDS and other STIs.
 - Prostitution was related to the spread of HIV/AIDS and STIs.
 - Love and Romance when the going is good was associated with happiness and general well being. If it went wrong, it was associated with depression, headache, low self-esteem and general unwellness.
 - Sexual harassment was associated with many health implications including lose of self-esteem, depression, HIV/AIDS and STIs.
 - Sexy looks were associated with possible rape with all its health implications. However, the women involved in this type of fashion thought it promoted well-being.
 - Female Genital Mutilation was related to excessive pain and possible reproductive health complication.
 - Sexual abuse of children was connected to sexual pervasion of the culprits. The children involved were said to end up with several health conditions including depression, STIs, HIV/AIDS and deviant behaviours in adulthood.
 - Incest like sexual abuse was associated with sexual pervasion, deviant sexual behaviours, and psychological problems.
 - Sexual problems were associated with impotence, infertility, high blood pressure, diabetes and heart diseases.
 - Relationship disappointments resulted in a state of depression and physical attacks resulting in wounds.
 - Casual sex was reported in connection with HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancies and abortion.

- Condom use was associated with the prevention of unwanted pregnancies, STIs and HIV/AIDS.

5 MEDIA REPORTS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Reports fitted into the socio-economic context of the country. Though issues of S/SH/SR were liberally reported, reports maintained a conservative outlook.

- HIV/AIDS was still by and large associated with indiscriminate sex and was highly moralised.
- Poverty was indicted for the risky sexual behaviours of many young girls and women leading to pre-marital sex, casual sex, prostitution and infidelity, all of which were capable of causing HIV/AIDS. Poverty is embedded in the socio-economic conditions of the Nigerian society. Poverty has led to the inability of HIV/AIDS patients to afford the necessary treatment with many hoping on the free treatment promised by the different state governments and federal government.
- The stigmatisation and abandonment of HIV/AIDS patients reflects the socio-economic context of Nigeria. This leads to:
 - The abandonment of AIDS patients, orphans and widows by family, friends and relations.
 - The refusal of some hospitals to attend the HIV/AIDS. Hence it has been said that the majority of patients die of the trauma of stigmatisation rather than the disease itself (5.12.05: 9).
 - The call for a faith-based approach to the battle against the disease. Since the majority of Nigerians belong to one faith or the other their faith organisation might easily affect their sexual behaviour and might also be able to extend religious brotherly help to those living with HIV/AIDS and to the AIDS widows and orphans.
- The prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Malawi was associated with possible famine (*This Day*, 6.11.05: 16).
- The promotion of abstinence for the youths and virginity for the maidens as the only way of stemming the tide of HIV/AIDS is in consonance with the socio-cultural milieu, which sees marriage as the only institution under which sex should be experienced.

- The condemnation of sexy dressing is in keeping with the socio-cultural context, which sees such fashion as unbecoming of a responsible woman. It was associated with promiscuity, prostitution and moral bankruptcy.
- Ostracizing and public shaming of culprits of incest was in keeping with the socio-cultural practices of Nigeria as a way of discouraging such behaviour.

6 POLICY AND LEGAL OUTCOMES

- Reports did not show any policy and legal outcomes on issues of S/SH/SR.
- In some cases of sexual violence, police arrests were made.
- In some cases some jail sentences were passed:
 - One 51-year-old man was reported to have been jailed in Yola for abducting and impregnating a teenage girl (Sun, 20.12.05: 3).
 - A Nigerian Defence Corp member who was jailed 12 months for raping a 14-year-old girl.

7 CONCLUSION

This study examined media reports on issues of S/SH/SR. The following findings were made:

Issues of S/SH/SR received a fair coverage in the daily newspapers. The leading issue reported and discussed in various ways was HIV/AIDS. Other issues of S/SH/SR were connected with HIV/AIDS. It is hoped that this frequent report on HIV/AIDS has created the necessary awareness among the people and encouraged positive action to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Poverty and sexual violence were indicted contributing to the spread of HIV/AIDS. Sexual violence especially rape was reported as rampant. Rape especially by armed robbers who break into people's houses at nights and rape women especially young girls were very rampant. Sometimes such rape occurred even in passenger buses by night and even by daylight. It is possible that HIV/AIDS is contracted through such an encounter.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is still a need for more information on HIV/AIDS especially about other possible routes of spread other than sex since it seems that the newspapers associate the disease mostly with sex.

- The message about HIV/AIDS should be disseminated not only on newspapers but also on graphically made and easy to read and digest handbills and pamphlets since the majority of Nigerians even the educated ones do not read newspapers.
- The soft-sell magazines seem to enjoy a lot of readership among the “common” people. Hence, important life-saving messages on sexuality should be incorporated into such magazines. Those NGOs that deal on sexuality issues should adopt those magazines as partners in progress rather than shunning them.
- Nigeria is ripe for a youth magazine prepared excitingly with a lot of photographs with empowering information on sexuality, sexual health and sexual right. It could be a means for the youth to gather important information and forum for them to express their opinion and ask questions. Such youth magazines have played important roles in sexuality education elsewhere and have been a constant companion to growing up youths elsewhere. It must be remembered that the youths hardly read newspapers because they find them boring.
- Sexual violence such as rape and incest must be severely punished by law in order to curb it.
- Government should fight crime such as armed robbery so that women are not exposed to rape by such criminals and accompanying consequences and trauma of rape.