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**ROLE OF TEACHERS, PARENTS, RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND THEIR PEERS IN DEALING WITH ADOLESCENT PROBLEMS ARISING FROM EARLY SEXUAL ENCOUNTERS: A CASE STUDY OF LANG'ATA WARD; NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA**

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# **ROLE OF TEACHERS, PARENTS, RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND THEIR PEERS IN DEALING WITH ADOLESCENT PROBLEMS ARISING FROM EARLY SEXUAL ENCOUNTERS: A CASE STUDY OF LANG'ATA WARD; NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA**

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## **Abstract**

**Purpose:** The main purpose of the study was to find out the role of teachers, parents, religious leaders and their peers in dealing with adolescent problems arising from early sexual encounters

**Methodology:** The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population of the study comprised of 1500 youth attending private secondary schools in Langata. A sample size of 10% of the population was used. Therefore the sample was 150 youth attending private secondary schools in Langata which were selected through probability sampling technique. The key instruments for data collection were focus group discussions, interviews and questionnaires.

**Results:** It is also clear that there is an element of fear that the youth have when in the presence of their parents, guardians or religious leaders. Adolescents here are therefore left at the mercy of their peers who they are seemingly more comfortable with; resulting into the acquisition of what may be termed as harmful to them in relation to their sexuality.

**Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy:** The study recommends that Sexuality is a sensitive subject and a lot must be done to ensure that the youth in Lang'ata Ward get the correct information

**Key words:** *Values, norms, practices, adolescent sexual behaviors*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sexual socialization in the world today is no longer in the domain of the family as formal education has since replaced the socialization function. In fact, it is accessible through a combination of multiple social institutions such as the state and school without systematic instruction from reliable adults, resulting into a void of information on relations with the opposite sex (Fuglesang 1997). Having both parents (family) and the church protesting against sex education, only leaves the youth with very little hope or opportunity of understanding sexuality (Kangara, 2004).

In the densely populated Lang'ata ward of Kenya's Nairobi County just like in many locations in other sub-Saharan African countries, the adolescent population have been reported to engage in various sexual practices including vaginal sex, masturbation, oral and anal sex and about 15% of sexually active adolescents reported having multiple sexual partners (Kazaura & Masatu, 2009).

Notably, cross-generational relationships between teenage girls and "sugar daddies" are also common as older men tend to give better gifts but these relationships expose girls to great risk of contracting HIV and AIDS (KDHS, 2003). Weiss et al. (1996), Komba-Malekela and Liljestrom (1994), also highlight on the recent surge in relationships between younger women and older men, which have become particularly pronounced in Africa characterised by large age differences and transactional exchanges.

Studies from Lang'ata ward where this study was carried out show that among unmarried adolescents, 31% of boys, and 24% of girls were sexually experienced and that the girls are more likely to engage in premarital sex especially with older partners (Mensch *et al.*, 2001). A further 43% of girls experience coerced or forced first sex, including their partner not taking 'no' for an answer, threats, money/gifts, or physical force. Findings also show that coerced girls experience sexual relations at significantly younger ages and with significantly older partners, compared to girls for whom sex was consensual (Erulkar & Matheka, 2007).

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Due to the dynamic nature of society, the traditional sexual activity (for the purpose of procreation) has been adversely eroded and replaced by sexual innuendos and articulations of the promotion of sex for pleasure or status quo. Additionally, due to the collapse of the traditional mechanisms of socialization that checked and controlled sexual behaviour as discussed herein, youths, and their peers now largely influence sexual attitudes during adolescence. Adults on the other hand believe that young people are by nature sexually promiscuous and giving them information about sex only makes them more sexually active (Friedman, 1993).

Previously in Africa for instance, most of the documented traditional ethnic communities instituted strict social and physical control measures especially for the sexual behavior of the young people. In this context, sexuality "...served as a source of relations of kinship and affinity thereby the basis of solidarity, reciprocity and co-operation" (Fuglesang, 1997: 1248). In East Africa for example, traditional rituals of initiation where the elderly actively took part in, prepared young people for their adult roles, educated them on consequences of sex, marital responsibilities, and child rearing.

These initiation ceremonies included the '*Jando and Unyago*' in Tanzania, '*Ng'ado Nyangi*' among the Luo of Tarime, Tanzania and Luo Nyanza in Kenya as well as the '*Khuminya and Khulitsa*' among the Abaluhya of Western Kenya. Similarly, communities such as the Atharaka, Abagusii, and Agikuyu, Miji Kenda, and Swahili people, firmly proscribed indiscriminate sexual behavior in adolescence.

With such institutionalized systems of punishment for sexual offenders, these controls safeguarded the sexual behavior of youth until when they entered into marriage (Kenyatta, 1965; Hilgard et al., 1975; Gyepi & Garbrah, 1985; Akong'a, 1988). For example among the Kalenjin people of Kenya, a man who had carnal knowledge of a girl before either of them were married was considered as a moral weakling and could never be appointed to a leadership position throughout his lifetime. Similarly, girls who safeguarded their virginity until marriage received high status in society and mothers got gifts in addition to the negotiated bride wealth payment (Akong'a, 1988: 4) and a girl on whom clitoridectomy was performed when she was a virgin was highly honored, respected and her parents praised.

It was therefore in the best interest of girls to keep themselves pure until the day of marriage, in order to protect their own honor and integrity and that of their families. Boys in turn underwent periods of learning about respect for girls and how to control their sexuality until marriage (Akong'a, 1986).

Further, the Abagusii community, of Western Kenya, had very well organized yet informal institutions of disseminating sex education and controlling the sexual behavior of the young people. Consequently, the effects that accompany early and irresponsible sex involvement were minimal (Kenyatta, 1965; Kalule, 1987; Akong'a, 1988).

According to Kioli et al (2011), "Makogoro" (grandmothers) provided a good avenue for young girls' induction into sexuality matters. Boys also visited and sometimes slept in their grandfathers' huts (Esaiga) where they received coaching on virtues pertaining to relationships, responsibilities, and sexual behavior. The author points out that during novitiate and girlhood, young women were warned that it was a curse to lose one's virginity, their greatest honor, and pride before marrying. Boys were equally inducted into respect for self and others in regards to sexual morality and the Abagusii culture never permitted pre-marital sex, even during courtship.

Unfortunately, there are scholars who have found out that the same ceremonies seem to promote negative adolescent sexual behaviors. For example Maggie Bangser, 2010 in her article '*Falling through the Cracks, Adolescent Girls in Tanzania Insights from Mtwara*', states that '*...While unyago is a time of social 'permission-giving' for adolescents to have sex this presents serious threats to their health...*'.

Further, she notes that; '*Forms of unyago are also practiced in Mtwara region of Tanzania, is often singled-out as a key cause of early pregnancy...It is perceived to be a highly sexualized social event which contributes to sexuality in as much as they are the teaching tool within a larger model of sexuality and gender roles...*'

## **1.2 Study Objectives**

The main objective of the study was to find out the role of teachers, parents, religious leaders and their peers in dealing with adolescent problems arising from early sexual encounters

## **2.0 THEORETICAL LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 The Problem Behavior Theory (Jessor R. 1991)**

This study also seeks to analyse the association between measures of behaviors, and emergent sexual patterns. The Problem Behavior Theory stands guided by the principle that continuous and dynamic interactions between the environment and a person leads to the formation of human behavior.

- Its main tenets are that these relationships are defined by 3 major systems, which in turn foretell /predict the problem behavior or one's involvement in a problem behavior.
- The personality system, which includes expectations of achievement, locus of control, alienation, self-esteem, and religiosity;
- The perceived environment system, which includes perceived support, control, and expectations from parents and peers;

The behavior system, which includes both conventional (e.g., church attendance) and unconventional (e.g., ever been expelled) behaviors.

Thus, the three systems have various factors across and within them that regulate /govern one's susceptibility to engaging in behaviors that violate social norms or those which remain regarded as deemed problematic by society. This general level of predisposition dubbed Psychosocial Conventuality mirrors a person's obligation to attitudes, values, and expectations of conventional society.

### **3.0 Empirical Review**

Sexual activity among Kenyan youth is said to begin early, often characterized by serial monogamy (one partner after another); with adolescent liaisons that are usually brief and easily replaced. By the time a person is ready to consider settling into marriage, they have already experienced many partners. Despite this multiplicity of partners, sexual activity is usually unprotected, giving rise to early pregnancy and unsafe abortion, school dropout, STIs including HIV and Aids, and economic hardship.

According to KDHS (1998), 44 per cent of girls, aged 15-19 years have had sexual intercourse and 19 % continue to be sexually active. The median age at first sexual encounter for boys is 16.8 years, compared with 16.7 years for the girls. Although boys enter into sexual unions on average five years later than the girls do, they start sexual activity at about the same age. Notably, majority of the studies on adolescents in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda are from the rural areas and very few scholars have put their emphasis on the urban youth. This behavior is perceived as being more and more 'risky and amoral' yet there is very little attempt to bring out the un-risky or moral part of the very same behavior.

Adolescent sexual behavior in Lang'ata Ward may not differ from the rest of Nairobi County, where sexual activities have been documented to start at an early age. Additionally, research studies conducted in the larger Nairobi County; border more towards sources of adolescent sexual information, pregnancy, child bearing, abortion, contraceptive knowledge and use. These studies also emphasize on the fact that while adolescent girls obtained information from their mothers, friends, or teachers, many of the boys get it from watching pornographic or high-end sexual movies, the internet, books, or magazines and from their peers.

This unfortunately means that there are very few documented studies in libraries demonstrating how the complex social environments we have today, lead to the transformation of adolescent sexual behavior or its effects.

In support of this Rweyemamu (2007) states that,

*'...most libraries have vast materials on urban youth in relation to HIV/Aids and not on sexual socialization'.*

Assertions such as these, have only spurred the desire to study and understand the real essence of adolescent sexual behaviors in relation to social transformation. Moreover, this study sought to find out the effects of societal changes on the sexual behavior of the youth with an aim of untangling and bringing to light for example the effects of having multiple partners as a young person.

#### **4.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population of the study comprised of 1500 youth attending private secondary schools in Langata. The population was arrived at after noting that there were 6 private secondary schools in Langata each with approximately 250 students. A sample size of 10% of the population was used. Therefore the sample was 150 youth attending private secondary schools in Langata which were selected through probability sampling technique. The key instruments for data collection were focus group discussions, interviews and questionnaires.

#### **5.0 RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

##### **5.1. Perceptions of Youth and the Role of Stakeholders in dealing with Adolescent Problems Arising from Early Sexual Encounters**

This section discusses about roles of stakeholders concerning the knowledge of sexuality and presented the findings of the second objective. The findings are tabulated follows;

##### **5.1.1 Perceptions/myths**

In Table 5.1 the respondents were asked about the perceptions/myths they have heard in relation to sexuality and 10% of them indicated that they have heard that someone would not be normal if they abstained for long periods. Another 10% stated that they were told that if one has sex while young, they will become perfect sexual partners upon getting married. This confirmed the notion that it is important to have a certain level of sexual prowess before getting married or settling down with one partner.

Of all the respondents 20% of them stated that they have heard that a person would become sick if they did not have sexual relations while 15.6% said that those who abstained did so probably due to a curse than run within their family.

14.4% of the respondents had been told that anyone who engages themselves in sexual relations before marriage, would be shunned by his/her peers while the same percentage of youths believed that those who engaged in sexual relations only cemented their love and the act would lead to marriage. Lastly, there are those who were told to keep off those of the opposite sex as it was a taboo and this was 15.6% of the respondents.

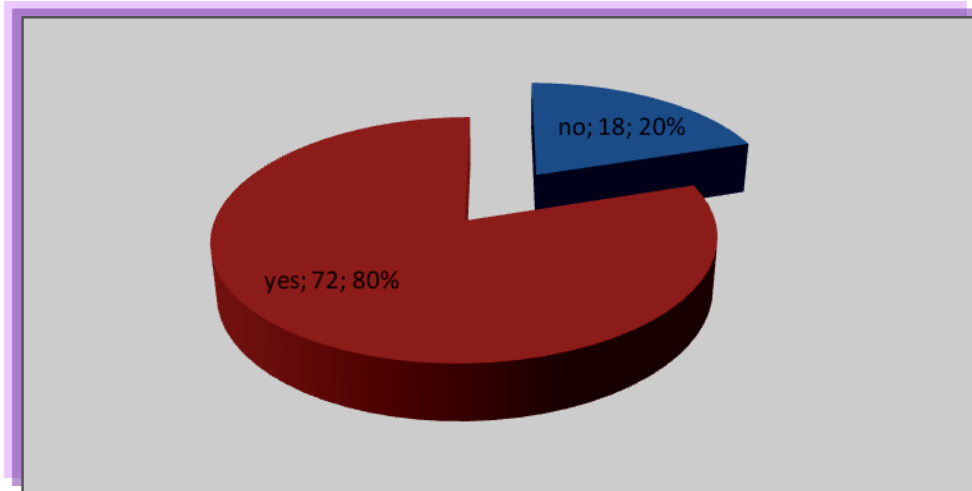
**Table 6.1: perceptions/myths**

PERCEPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Someone is not normal if you stay without having sex for long	9	10.0
If you have sex while young you will be perfect or have a higher prowess level you get married.	9	10.0
If you stay without having sex you become sick.	18	20.0
Abstinence is a curse that runs in a family	14	15.6
It is not good to be around someone of the opposite sex.	14	15.6
Sexual relations only cemented their love and the act would lead to marriage.	13	14.4
Someone is supposed to be shunned if engage himself or herself in sexual relations before marriage.	13	14.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### 5.1.2 Media's responsibility

Results in **Figure 6.1** indicated that majority 80% of the respondents agreed with the statement that the media is responsible for changing the face of sexuality in the world today, especially among the adolescents while only 20% of the respondents disagreed with the same statement. The findings imply that majority agree that the media is responsible for the changing face of sexuality and breakdown of norms, values and practises in the world today.

**Figure 5.1: Media's responsibility**



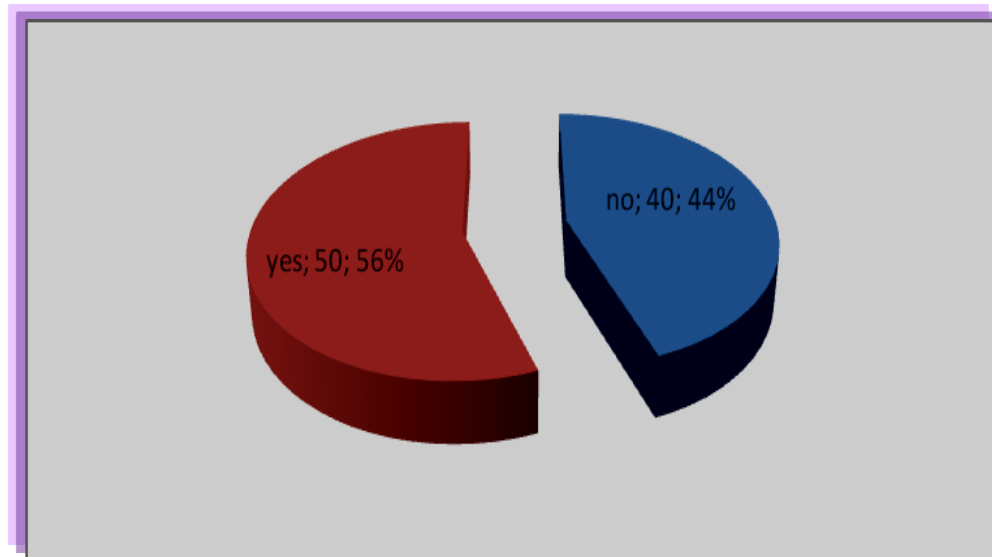
### **5.1.3 Programmes at place of worship**

From Figure 5.3 results indicated that majority 56% of the respondents agreed with the statement that their place of worship offer programmes for the youth, while only 44% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. The findings show that there are religious leaders who are actively involved in the moulding of youth within the given guidelines of their holy doctrines while others continue to shy away from offering such programmes within their place of worship; something which is very positive.

Nevertheless, the percentage margin is not large enough for the Lang'ata community members to sit back and assume that the worries, needs or questions of the youths with regards to their sexuality have adequately been taken care of.



**Figure 5. 3: Programmes at place of worship**

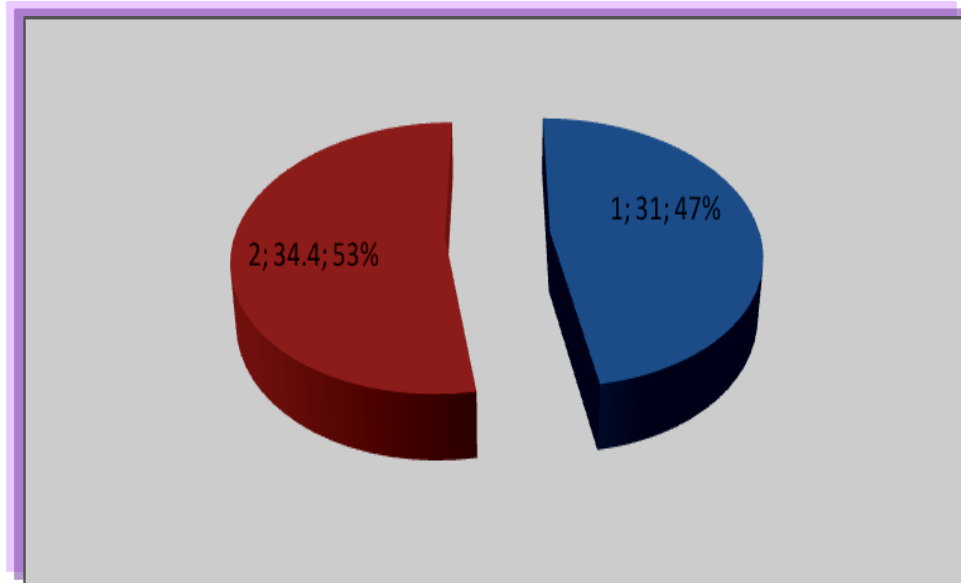


#### **5.1.4 Parental attitudes towards adolescent sexuality**

Results in Figure 5.4 indicated that majority 53% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that their parent/s would get angry if they try to talk to them about sex their parent/s does not want to hear what they have to say when it comes to sex, The findings imply that majority agree that their parents are always ready and willing to discuss issues of sexuality with them.

This shows that many parents today freely talk about sex with the youths something which is synonymous with the traditional set ups. While 30% of the respondents agreed that and further stated during the focus group discussions; that they would not dare talk about, raise or ask or even share sexuality related issues with their parents or guardians. However, 2% of the respondent neither agree nor disagree with the statement.

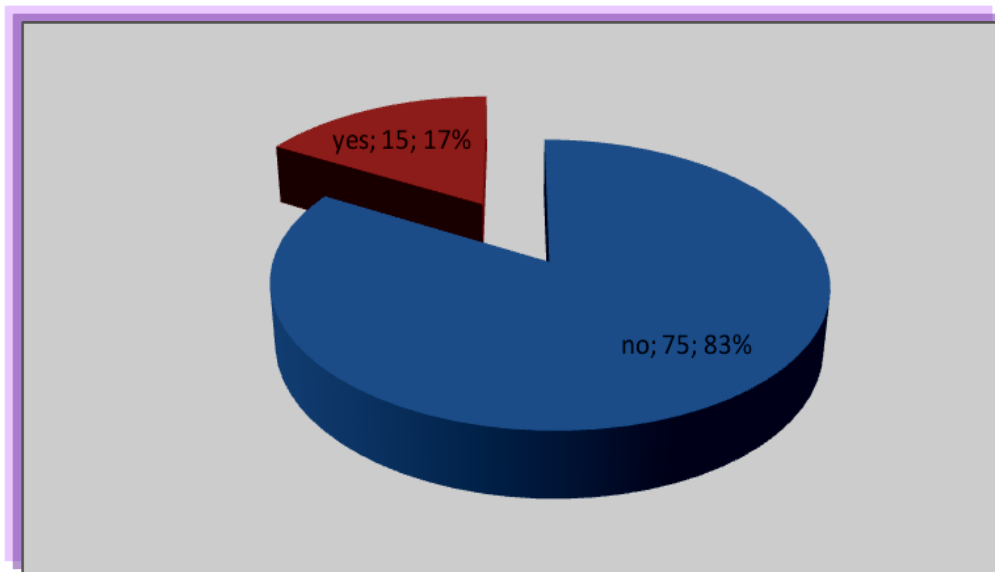
**Figure 5. 4: Parental attitudes towards questions regarding sexuality.**



**5. 1.1: Guidelines in relation to having/choosing a boyfriend/girlfriend.**

In Figure 5.5 it is indicated that majority 83% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that there are no particular guidelines in relation to having a boyfriend or girlfriend, while only 17% of the respondents agreed with the statement, the findings imply that majority disagree that no particular guidelines are present in relation to having or choosing a boyfriend or a girlfriend.

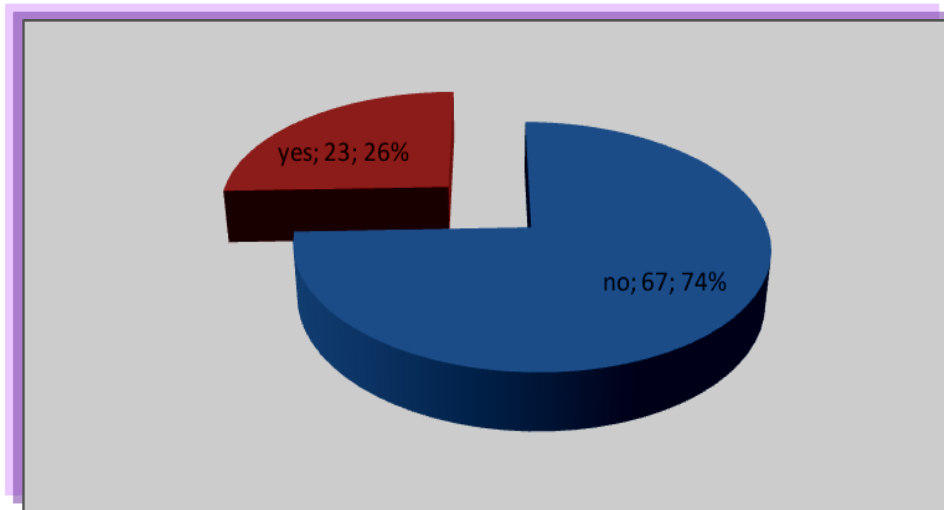
**Figure 5.5: Guideline in relation to having a boyfriend/girlfriend**



**5.1.6: Boy/girl relationships**

Results in Figure 5.6 indicated that majority 74% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that boy/girl relationships is allowed in their place of worship, while only 26% of the respondents agreed with the statement, The findings show that there are strict rules or guidelines dictating how boys and girls are supposed to relate in while in their places of worship. This basically means that despite the fact that some religious places of worship do not provide sexuality education within their premises they have salient rules governing adolescent behaviour.

**Figure 5. 6: Boy/girl relationships**



**5.1.7: Reaction of Congregants to sexual behavior/relations.**

When asked about the views of the older congregants in their places of worship towards adolescent sexual behaviour, a majority the respondents pegged at 41% said that older people often told them that the relations are immoral; 11% of the respondent said they were told that it is a curse, 21% of the respondent said that they were told that having sexual relations at their age was an abominable act. A further 11% of the respondents said that they heard that these relations often lead to immorality among the youths. The remaining 9% of the respondent said that older people often told them that should have only one partner while 6% of the respondent said they were informed that having sexual relations is ok as long as they take care of themselves.

**Table 5. 2: Perceptions obtained from older members of their religious institutions.**

PERCEPTION	FREQUENCY	PER CENT
It is a curse	10	11.1

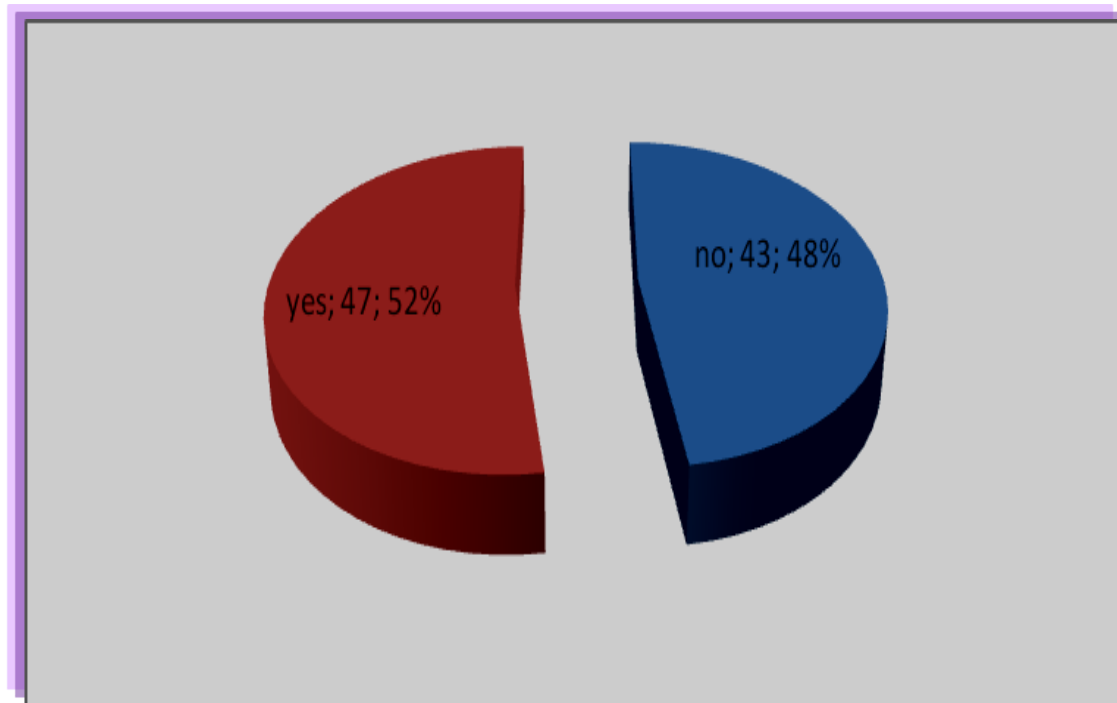
<b>It is an abomination</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>21.1</b>
<b>Should have one partner</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10.0</b>
<b>They are immoral</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>41.1</b>
<b>They are not bad as far as you are taking care of yourself.</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5.6</b>
<b>They lead to immorality</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11.1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### **5.2: Adolescent sexuality and the school.**

Results in Figure.5.7 indicated that majority 52% of the respondents agreed with the statement that their counsellor/PSHE/ Form tutors openly discuss problems in relations to their sexuality, while 48% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. This shows that many are still not comfortable speaking about sexuality with their teacher or within the school set up. Thus is an indication that most of the interventions mentioned herein would not be as effective as intended even if they were used in the school front.

It is also a confirmation of the agreement by the youths that everything they need with regards to sexuality can be readily obtained from the media namely the internet or on line sources; most of which have no parental controls or guidance.

**Figure 5. 7: Counsellor/PSHE/form tutor discussions.**



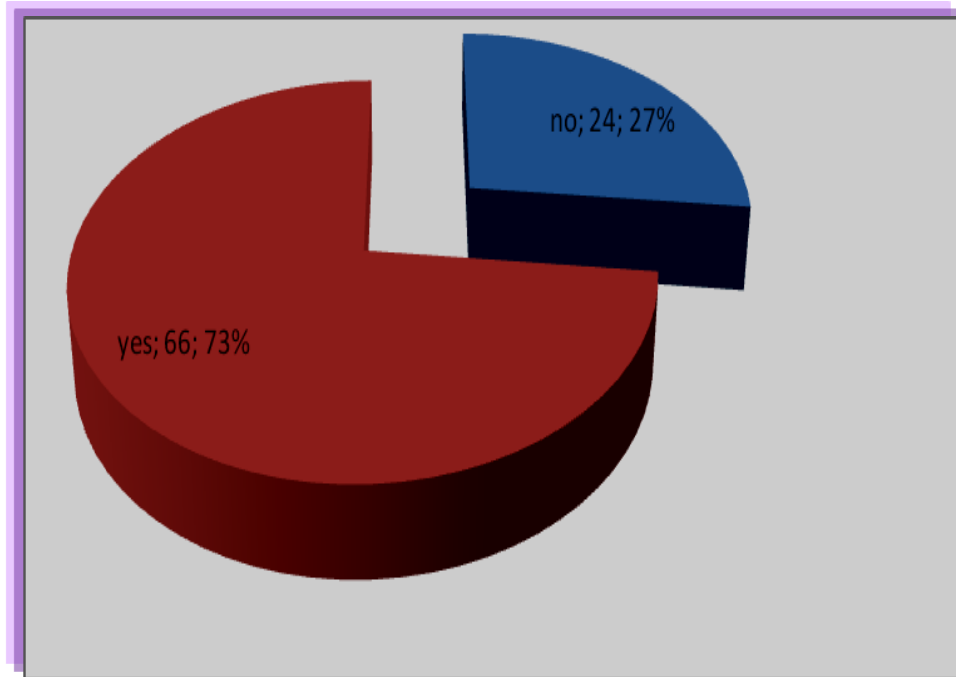
### **5.2.1: Issues of contraception**

Results in Figure 5.8 indicated that majority 73% of the respondents agreed with the statement that they discuss the issues of contraception, while only 27% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. The findings imply that there is working knowledge on the use and misuse of contraception among the youths. However this does not mean that they actively practise what they learn about.

Further in Table 5. 2, The 22% of the respondent stated that their counsellor/ PSHE/ form tutors often told them that the use of contraception reduces the risk of unwanted pregnancies that lead to abortion, 20% of the respondent said that they were told it leads to immorality, and 18% of the respondent said that they were informed that certain types of contraceptives leads to infertility.

The remaining 11% of the respondent said that contraceptives prevent unwanted pregnancy, 10% of the respondents said that their counsellor/PSHE/form tutors discourage use of condoms while 10% said that they are demonic.

**Figure 5. 8: Issues of contraception**



**Table 5. 3: Counsellor/PSHE/form tutor thoughts/views on contraception.**

VIEWS	FREQUENCY	PER CENT
Discourage use of condoms.	9	10.0
Discourage use of pills.	8	8.9
Some contraceptives lead to infertility.	16	17.8
They are demonic.	9	10.0
They lead to immorality.	18	20.0

<b>They prevent unwanted pregnancy.</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11.1</b>
<b>They reduce abortion.</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>22.2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.0</b>

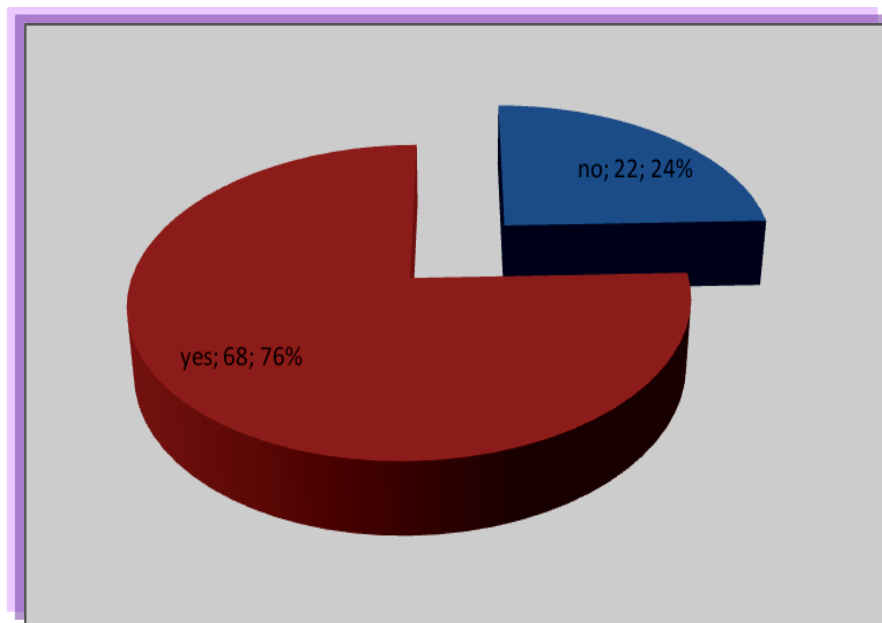
### 5.2.2: Programmes on sexuality

With regards to programmes on sexuality Figure 5.9 indicated that majority 76% of the respondents agreed with the statement that their school should have programmes about sexuality, while only 24% of the respondents disagreed with the statement.

This show that in many instances the counsellor/PSHE/form tutors are open to discussing sexuality issues when approached, but the adolescents would like programmes within the school curricula or timetable where everyone would have a chance to air their views or ask questions.

The percentage of those who disagreed with the inclusion of sexuality programmes in their school are those who came from communities who already have working structures in place and have older members guiding them on sexuality matters within the communities that they hail from.

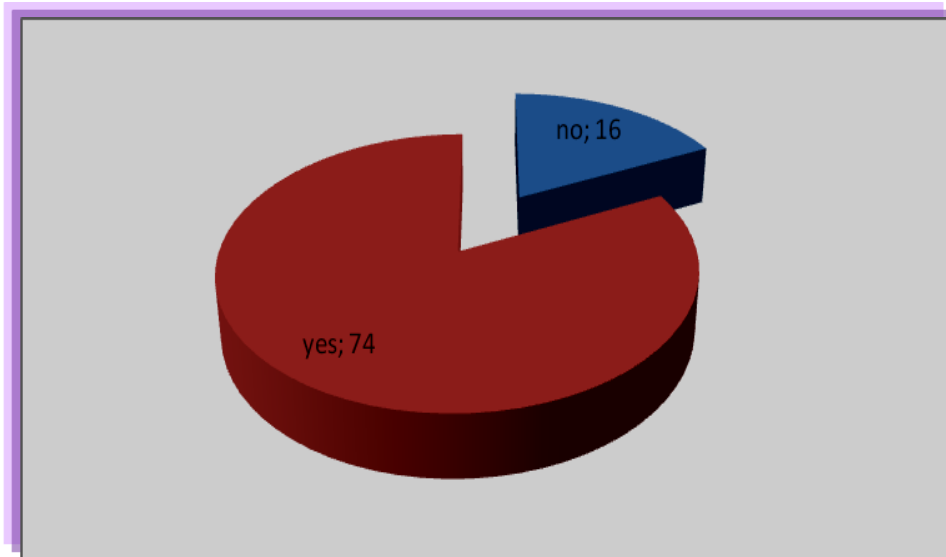
**Figure 5. 9: Programmes about sexuality.**



### 5.2.3: Invite sexuality experts

Results in Figure 5.9 indicated that majority 74% of the respondents agreed with the statement that they would want their school to invite sexuality experts to offer seminars or talk on sexuality, while only 16% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. This corresponds with the findings stated in section 6.2.2 above.

**Figure 5.10: Invite sexuality experts to schools.**



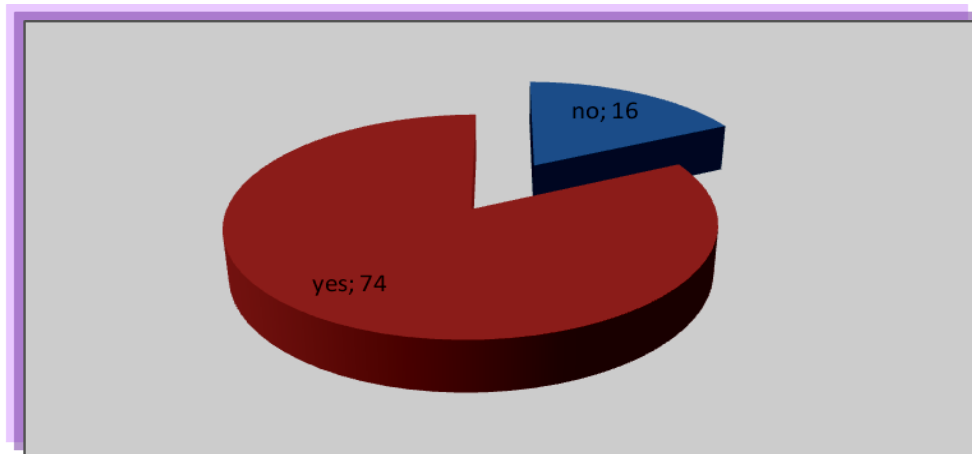
### 5.2.4: Forums

From Figure 5.11 it is evident that a majority 74% of the respondents see that need to have forums where they can openly discuss issues on sexuality while only 26% of the respondents disagreed with the statement.

This therefore shows that most of the youths would be more comfortable discussing their problems and the challenges they face with regards to their sexuality within the school set up. This also brings to light the fact that most of these youths are seemingly more comfortable with their counsellor/PSHE/form tutors rather than their parents, guardians or religious leaders.



**Figure 5. 11: Forums for discussions**



### 5.2.5: Discussion about sexuality

When asked about the preferred topics of discussion in the event that their schools would provide discussion forums a majority of the youth (52%) said that they discuss about HIV and Aids, 8% would like the forums to address issues arising from about sexual relations and sex. 18% of the respondent said that they would discuss on the use of contraceptives, 10% would discuss issues related to having boy/girl relationships, while 12% of the respondent said that their main concerns would be on the right time to have a partner.

Thus the youths herein are very concern about HIV and Aids related issues rather than issues bordering towards their sexuality. This gives probable hints on the effect that HIV and Aids has had on the youths in question to the extent that this remains edged at the back of their minds as they grapple with their sexuality.

**Table 5.4: Topic of discussion suggested by the youths**

TOPIC OF DISCUSSION	FREQUENCY	PER CENT
About sex	7	7.8
About use of contraceptives	16	17.8
About HIV and AIDS	47	52.2
About relationships	9	10.0
The right time to have a partner	11	12.2

<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.0</b>
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## 6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

### 6.1 Recommendation for further Research

Societies and societal norms have changed greatly in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and it is evident that most norms as well as values have been twisted or altered to suit the current stereotypes as well as changing contemporary societal needs.

- Based on this and the study's research findings, below are the recommendations for further researches resulting from the study are as follows,
- Sexuality is a sensitive subject and a lot must be done to ensure that the youth in Lang'ata Ward get the correct information.
- The media as a source of information as cited by many of the youth only provides information that is lacking in proper content and is more subversive than educative for them as young and growing adults.
- Many studies on adolescent sexuality have been carried out in rural Kenya while urban Kenya has been neglected. It is therefore important for various stakeholders, Non-governmental organizations, religious institutions as well as the Kenyan Government to carry out further studies on sexuality in Lang'ata ward and Nairobi County in general.
- Religious institutions and leaders should be trained on how to address sexuality within their circles and provide forums for young people to discuss the issues they are faced with. This is because many youth today are drifting away from the various religious institutions and neglecting the guiding teachings and doctrines.
- Scholars in this field of sexuality should do more research studies on sexuality and related issues so that upcoming scholars like me can have a database of literature for reference so that sexuality can be understood and interpreted in African terms.
- Lang'ata ward needs a youth recreational facility and counselling centre with trained professionals, where they can access the correct information education, & training as well as counselling services without feeling embarrassed, intimidated, or victimized.

### 6.2 Limitations of the study

This particular study was carried out at a time when Kenya as a country was very volatile after the conclusion of the general elections. Therefore, many institutions that were slated to take part in the study were unavailable due to closures, go-slows and striking workers.

Sexuality in itself is a very sensitive topic and many people often shy away from discussing it as many cultures consider it to be a 'taboo' subject. It was therefore not an easy task convincing some of the youth to participate in the study.

There are very few scholars and experts in the field of sexuality and as a result it was very difficult getting the required mentorships, literary assistance and guidance for the study.

I had very limited time to carry out my study because sexuality as a topic is very sensitive and it took quite some time getting the respondents to trust in me and comfortably open up as well take part in the discussions.

Many of my respondents were not able to comfortably discuss the topic due to its sensitivity especially when they sat together in groups with members from opposite sexes.

Lang'ata ward is very expansive and it was therefore very difficult for me to constantly transverse the ward to meet my respondents due to limited finances and constant traffic jams.

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

Social change refers to either an alteration in the social order within a society, socio- cultural evolution, or social progression. More generally, social change may include alterations in behaviors, institutions, or social relations. Cultural, religious, economic, scientific, or technological forces often are the driving forces behind change.

In a world that is characterized by technological advanced and increased connectivity, people are confronted with sexuality issues on a daily basis through television, radio, music, newspapers, magazines, adverts, dressing, etc..., making it impossible to escape the invasion. Contradictory norms, some inhibiting sexual activity, and others encouraging it characterize young people's sexual culture (Wright et al., 2006). Young people now have developed values from what is widely available and largely uncontrolled by religious, societal, or parental structures.

Cultural practices which formed the framework of sexual behaviour among adolescents in these societies have also been eroded. Thus the breakdown of traditional communication networks and changes in the role of parents in the provision of appropriate sexuality related information to their adolescent children. For example, the disappearance of traditional sex education during rites of passage in African societies has left many youth uncertain of where to look for information and many now use sex as a commodity/service or a gateway to obtaining jobs, promotions, educational certificates among other favours.

Migrations to towns have also led to the adoption of sexually permissive lifestyles laced with all manner of sexual activities and loose clusters of 'family units' have substituted the once closely-knit communities and the extended family's opinions and roles are minimal.

Similarly due to peer pressure, many adolescents today desire to have some level of sexual prowess because of a miasma of confused myths, tales and stereotypical approaches. For example, a study by Wamoyi (2010) shows that boys who had not had sex by age 15 were ridiculed, creating an important motive to start sex. For example, a 19 year old explained he first had sex at 11,

*"...Due to the pressure, he was getting from youth who already had begun having sex. ...his friends laughed at him, saying that he was afraid to seduce girls, or that he was impotent..."* He decided to rid himself of the shame that confronted him every time he met his friends.

Likewise, parents also seem to tolerate their son's sexual activities, as compared to that of the girls a fact that is partly because of the traditional social norms surrounding male power and sexual behavior. This is also because parents believed that sons would not inflict the economic burden of an unplanned pregnancy.

According to a study by Wamonyi (2010) young women reported to have far fewer economic opportunities compared to their male counterparts, so for most sex became a critical economic resource, encapsulated by an 18 year old woman: “...*what use is pleasure when there is no money?*’.

Thus, transactional sex underlay the great majority of non-marital relationships because in their teens, the girls are to provide for personal needs, such as soap, underwear, or food at school, but had very little access to cash. In relation to this is the ‘chips or sausage funga’ phenomena in Kenya where young people visit entertainment joints to selectively choose a partner(s) for a one nightstand which are seen as cheaper and less stressful as compared to monogamous relationships.

Further, disco funerals mainly in the Western part of Kenya namely Luo Nyanza are seen as an important place for young people to hang out, meet and engage in (risky) sexual activities. Many adolescents usually have casual unprotected sex on these occasions, sometimes with multiple partners. Sometimes girls are forced into sex and there are high chances of gang rape. At these disco funerals, many boys do not take precaution during sex.

*“..A few, yes, do use protection, though there are many who are normally in a hurry and have no time to put on condoms, once the girl has accepted, then he follows her quickly ...”*( Njue et al, 2009).

Desensitization of sexuality has also been disregarded by the media going by all the sexual things shown on TV, at movies and the internet. All these have made sex look like any other activity thus contributing greatly to the erosion of social sensitivities towards moral practices. Consequently, television, magazines, and peers remain the only other option for learning about sex an option that has contributed immensely to the decay of youth morality. Despite the social changes that have occurred in the lives of Kenyans, religious institutions continue to celebrate an era of sexual chastity.

Additionally, religious institutions still hamper dispensation of sex education that can guide and assist its members towards surviving in the global sex culture yet the youth are constantly bombarded with conflicting views, cultures, and perceptions. Thus, in an era of sexual freedom where many young people are growing up in an unguided manner and receive their sexual orientations from their peers, any young person with a lack of sexual experience is shunned or subjected to constant mockery.

Justifiably, the effects of the unwillingness to accept changes or new ideas on sexuality are devastating, especially considering that the church constitutes one of the most powerful agents of socialization.

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