

**SEXUAL ABUSE AMONG TEENAGERS
AND THE RESPONSE OF THE CHURCH IN
J.T AYORINDE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,
LAGOS STATE.**

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ABSTRACT

This study dealt with the sexual abuse among teenagers and the response of the churches in J. T. Ayorinde Baptist Association in Lagos. The project was motivated by the desire to create an awareness to the church on the increase of the menace in the church and society at large. Furthermore, the researcher's experience with the teenagers' struggle with sex and sexuality is also a motivation.

The work was of five chapters, chapter one gave the introduction, motivation, problem statement, significance, organization, limitation and definition of terms. Chapter two gave the view of other authors on : God's purpose for sex, christian view of sexual abuse, the society's attitude towards sex, kinds of sex abuse, causes of sexual abuse among teenagers, effects of sexual abuses, basic developmental characteristics of teenagers and response of church sexual abuse and the response of church. Chapter three explains the methodology. The sample used for study was J.T Ayorinde Baptist Association. A total of 125 respondents were examined. The instrument used to gather the needed information was questionnaire.

Chapter four analyses the results of the fieldwork carried out using percentages, tables and bar chart. The work showed that 75.2% of the respondents agreed that sex could be misused. This gave an indication of the level of awareness of the respondents. A lower percentage of 34.4 claimed that their churches have been teaching on the issue of sexual abuse. 19.2% have been involved in incest and 17.6% have been involved in rape. 87.3% were abused sexually by their friends while 36% were abused by close family members. The work also revealed that 90.4% of those that were involved in sexual abuse kept it away from their parents while 2.4% were

courageous to share with their pastor. 59.2% felt guilty for their involvement, 26.4% contacted sexually transmitted diseases, 13.6% attempted abortion and 1.6% claimed to have become an addict to sexual immorality.

Chapter five gave the recommendations and conclusion, that could to a great extent reduce the spread of sexual abuse and put sexual expression in the proper perspective as God commands. It was recommended to the church pastor to use the pulpit to teach on dangers of sexual immorality. Also sex education is to be included both in the school curriculum and in the church growth programmes. Parents are also advised to introduce their children to the basic idea on sex and sexuality. To the entire Association, regular workshop on sex matters are to be organized quarterly.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter gives the conclusions and recommendations that will be useful for the church, parents and the teenagers.

From the findings the following conclusions are reached:

1. That the involvement of the church in the teaching and giving of guidance of the members on matters that relate to sexual abuse is grossly inadequate and insignificant to rate at which the menace has spread. It is concluded therefore that more of the sexual abuse has been in the church for lack of a qualitative education on sex and sexuality.
2. That even though the respondents seemed to appreciate that they are not ripe to get involved in sexual intercourse yet some of them have chosen to be sex abusers and some were victim of the abuse. This signifies that the knowledge they claim to have is without zeal to live a life of purity and calls for attention of the church especially the pastor who needs to use his pulpit as a channel to teach.
3. That sexual abuse is right within the church. This brings to bear the need of a new orientation of the teenagers on a responsible sexual living.
4. That boy or girl friends are the major sex abusers and the cause of the same.
5. It could be concluded that close family members could become threats to a responsible sexual life and therefore close relations should be dealt with in caution in order to rule out any sexual harassment
6. Lastly that most teenagers are in need of help of the church and their parents to the extent that they can freely share whatever they might have passed through in the hands of the abusers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research findings recommendations are made for the church, the parents and the association.

To The Church

1. The church pastor through the pulpit must teach on sex and dangers of sexual immorality. The pastor is the best person to share issues on sex. What is learnt or heard from him is taken more seriously.
2. The gap between the church pastor and the teenagers should be closed such that the teenagers can easily approach him for counsels in the area of sex rather than them turning to their already rotten friends.
3. The church should identify the social, emotional, mental and physical needs of the teenagers and draw up interactive forum through which their views could be heard and thus solution fashioned out.
4. Church should organize special classes for parents who have teenagers at home. Such meetings should involve those professionals in psychology and other relevant behavioral sciences to give a qualitative education to the parents.
5. A good library should be kept by the church within which the teenagers can avail themselves to gain knowledge on sexuality.
6. The church should encourage sex education in all mission schools.

To The Parents

1. Parents should teach their children the essential facts about sex and sexuality. Some parents see it as a taboo to mention penis or vagina before teenagers trying to shield what is opened already.
2. It is recommended that parents should clearly introduce to their children a responsible sexual life in their daily relationship at home. The home should be

made conducive through love for the teenagers to emulate what is a right attitudes to sex.

3. Parents must always be concerned about the changes occurring to their teenage boys and girls and must educate them on the implications of the changes especially at puberty.
4. Parents must stand to win the confidence of the teenagers in order to make them freely share their mistake with them.
5. Parents should monitor what kind of films and night movies watched by their children.
6. They should above all live by example.

To The Association

1. A quarterly seminar and conference could be organized that will involve all the churches in the association. Experts should be invited to handle the discussion and questions should be qualitatively answered.
2. On a broad level a special attention should be given to the kind of changes which the teenagers pass through and thus organize an awareness programme to the ills and the challenges attached to developmental changes.