Using Drama for School-Based Adolescent Sexuality Education in Zaria, Nigeria

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Description:
This paper describes the use of drama and participatory methods in a girls-only secondary school in Zaria, Nigeria, as a means of sexuality education, carried out by the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance and the Second Chance Organization of Nigeria. The issues addressed had to come from the students, to allow them to develop critical thinking and learn useful lessons. The topics that concerned the group of 15 girls who participated from the school included abortion, premarital sex and pregnancy, teacher–student relationships and lesbianism. Participants developed a play about teacher–student relationships and presented it to the whole school. The presentation was stopped several times in order to involve the audience in discussing the choices available to the protagonist and what they would do in her place. This allowed all the students to explore the problem, generate and assess alternative solutions and communicate their learning to others. It also started a process of change in how the school dealt with girls who were forced to drop out due to sexuality-related problems, including pregnancy. Our long-term aim is advocacy to support the introduction of sexuality education as a permanent element in the curriculum throughout the school system.

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