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### **Examining the Practice of School-Based Sexuality Education Programme in Primary Schools in Bugiri District.**

Sexuality education has been highly controversial in Uganda in the past several decades. This comes as a result of perceived resistances from parents, teachers, religious leaders and law makers which are due to misunderstandings about the nature, purpose, and effects of sexuality education on young people (Boonstra, 2011; UNESCO, 2009). This study intended to examine the practice of school-based sexuality education in primary schools in Bugiri district. It specifically examined the type of sexuality education programme available to pupils, determined the factors influencing the type of sexuality education delivered, and critically assessed the usefulness of existing sexuality education programmes in Bugiri district.

The study was a cross sectional study design which was descriptive in nature. Both quantitative and qualitative techniques of data collection which include questionnaires, focus group discussion, interviews and documentary review were used to collect data. Purposive sampling was utilised to select teachers and key informants according to their knowledge about the topic being researched while pupils were selected randomly. The data collected was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 16.0 for quantitative data while thematic analysis was used for qualitative data. The study found that the most commonly employed type of sexuality education was comprehensive education. Also, most of the teachers (72.2%) had integrated sexuality education lessons in other subjects and some teachers (26.5%) taught the lessons during co-curricular activities. Other teachers were not decided on a systematic way of teaching the subject. This means that there is no clear guidance at school level on how this type of education should be delivered, thus, teachers did what was easier to practice. From the study findings time allocated to teach sexuality education was not adequate. The teachers indicated that most parents had positive attitude towards sexuality education. This is contributed to by the whole school approach used. The findings further indicated that the current practice of sexuality education in primary schools is poor (77.5%). This is due to the fact that sexuality education is not examinable hence teachers gave the subject less attention. Sexuality education was not part of teacher training curriculum, and there were no adequate facilities to facilitate teaching. Comprehensive education formed the most common type of sexuality education delivered to pupils in primary schools. Although it was also found that not all the teachers were teaching all topics in the curriculum, some skipped other topics. This means that some pupils did not receive holistic information to influence behaviour positive change. Lack of adequate knowledge on sexuality education among teachers, limited resources and minimal time allocated for teaching sexuality education and beliefs influenced implementation of sexuality education curriculum in primary schools. Despite the critical importance and evidence justifying the need for sexuality education, the actual delivery of sexuality education in primary schools is still insufficient to help young people develop personal skills and influence behaviour change. Government should harmonise sexuality education curriculum for primary schools. All primary schools should be involved in sexuality education to facilitate reach of adolescents at risk due to limited and sometimes inaccurate information regarding sexuality issues. The training of teachers on sexuality education should be integrated as part of the teacher training curriculum and government should introduce

an in-service course for teachers on sexuality education. The districts should develop clear tools for monitoring implementation of school-based sexuality education to ensure quality age appropriate information are provided to all pupils. The issue of misconception around sexuality education topics should be taken up as serious advocacy issues that require attention of all stakeholders.

**Key Words: School-Based Sexuality, Education Programme, Primary Schools, Bugiri District.**