

**SHAYAMA PRASAD MUKHERJI COLLEGE FOR WOMEN**

**UNIVERSITY OF DELHI**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY PROJECT**

**TOPIC :ECONOMIC COST OF LACK OF SEX EDUCATION**

**SUMMITTED TO :**

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# **ABSTRACT**

The lack of sex education has economic costs, including healthcare costs, reduced labour productivity, increased social welfare spending, and long-term economic impacts.

This research paper aims to explore the economic consequences of inadequate sex education, highlighting the ways in which it can impact society and the economy. By examining the research and data related to the economic costs of the lack of sex education, this paper will demonstrate the importance of comprehensive sex education programs in promoting healthy sexual behaviour, improving health outcomes, and reducing economic burdens. Ultimately, this paper will argue that investing in sex education is not only a matter of public health but also a critical economic issue that can have significant impacts on the well-being of individuals and society as a whole. The paper reviews existing literature on the topic and provides a critical analysis of the economic consequences of inadequate sex education. The paper also discusses the potential economic benefits of comprehensive sex education programs, including improved health outcomes, increased workforce participation, and reduced healthcare costs

# **INTRODUCTION**

Sex education is a process of providing knowledge and information about sexuality and related topics to individuals, typically in a school or educational setting. The aim of sex education is to promote healthy sexual behaviour, prevent unintended pregnancies, reduce the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and promote healthy relationships.

Sex education can cover a wide range of topics, including reproductive anatomy, contraception, sexual orientation, gender identity, healthy relationships, consent, and sexual violence. It is often taught in a comprehensive and age-appropriate manner, taking into consideration the developmental stage and needs of the individuals receiving the education.

Sex education is important for several reasons.

Firstly, it provides individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed decisions about their sexual health and relationships. This can reduce the rates of unintended pregnancies and STIs, leading to improved health outcomes and reduced healthcare costs.

Secondly, comprehensive sex education programs can improve educational and economic outcomes for women and girls. Access to sex education and reproductive health services can increase workforce participation, reduce poverty, and promote gender equality.

Thirdly, sex education can help promote healthy relationships and prevent sexual violence. It can provide individuals with the skills necessary to navigate complex sexual situations, establish boundaries, and communicate effectively with their partners.

In summary, sex education is important for promoting healthy sexual behaviour, preventing unintended pregnancies and STIs, reducing gender inequality, and promoting healthy relationships. It is a critical component of public health and education, and its importance should be recognized and supported by policymakers and society as a whole.

Sex education involves providing students with education about consent, communication, building relationships, and personal boundaries. It is essential to teach students about sex education because many children do not know about terms like consent, personal boundaries, and bad touch. When they grow up, they may have limited information about sex and may involve themselves in behaviours that disturb the other gender. This can lead to long-term economic impacts, including healthcare costs, mental depression, gender bias, and reduced productivity in the economy.

By providing comprehensive sex education to students, we can help them understand the importance of respecting personal boundaries, establishing healthy relationships, and preventing sexual violence. This can reduce the economic burden on society, including healthcare costs associated with treating STIs, unintended pregnancies, and mental health issues related to sexual trauma."

In addition, comprehensive sex education can promote gender equality, reduce gender-based violence, and improve educational and economic outcomes for women and girls. When women have access to sex education and reproductive health services, they can participate more fully in the workforce, reducing poverty and improving economic productivity.

In summary, sex education is essential for promoting healthy sexual behaviours, preventing unintended pregnancies and STIs, reducing gender inequality and gender-based violence, and improving educational and economic outcomes. Investing in comprehensive sex education is not only a matter of public health but also a critical economic issue that can have significant impacts on the well-being of individuals and society as a whole.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

My research consists of both primary and secondary data.

Primary data refers to information collected directly from the source through first-hand research, such as surveys, interviews, observations, experiments, or focus groups. For my research, primary data was collected through a Google Forms survey from a total of 55 individuals between the ages of 16 and 21. The Google form survey was not biased towards any gender and was open to respondents of all genders. The questions in the survey related to how the lack of sex education can affect our economy. Multiple-choice questions were asked, and respondents were given the option to provide additional answers beyond the available choices.

In addition to the primary data collected through a Google Forms survey, this research paper also includes secondary data sourced from various articles. Secondary data refers to information that has already been collected by someone else and is available for analysis from documents, databases, and other publicly available sources.

## **ARTICLE 1 *The Economic Costs of the Lack of Sex Education***

The article by Arnold Mascarenhas discusses the economic costs of the lack of comprehensive sex education in many countries around the world. It highlights the impact of unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and HIV on public health, productivity, and the economy as a whole. The article emphasizes that investing in sex education can have significant benefits for individuals, communities, and countries. It argues that comprehensive sex education can reduce healthcare costs, improve reproductive health outcomes, and promote gender equality. The article concludes by calling for increased investments in sex education programs and policies, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, as a key strategy to improve public health and boost economic growth.

## **RESEARCH PAPER 1 *lack of sex education in India and its growing importance in the digital era***

The research paper explores the lack of sex education in India and the growing importance of addressing this issue in the digital era. The authors highlight the negative impact of the lack of sex education on the health and well-being of young people, including unintended pregnancies and STIs. They argue that in the current digital era, where young people have access to vast amounts of information online, it is crucial to provide accurate and comprehensive sex education to guide them in making responsible decisions. The authors also discuss the challenges of implementing sex education in India, such as societal taboos and a lack of political will. They suggest that the involvement of various stakeholders, such as parents, educators, and healthcare providers, is essential to address this issue effectively. Finally, the authors propose a framework for delivering sex education in India, which includes a multi-sectoral approach, utilizing digital platforms, and promoting youth leadership and advocacy.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

The research objective of studying the economic cost of the lack of sex education is to understand the impact of inadequate sexual education on the economy and public health. The research aims to quantify the economic costs associated with unintended pregnancies, STIs, and HIV/AIDS resulting from the lack of comprehensive sex education. The research also aims to identify the ways in which investing in sex education programs can improve public health outcomes, reduce healthcare costs, and promote economic growth. By achieving these research objectives, the study can contribute to the development of evidence-based policies and programs to address the economic costs of inadequate sex education, particularly in low- and middle-income countries.

The aim of the research is to collect both secondary data from organizations such as the United Nations and the World Bank, as well as primary data through a Google Forms survey. The data will be analysed to investigate the impact of the lack of sex education on the economy and to identify government policies that have been or could be implemented to improve the situation. By analysing

both primary and secondary data, the study aims to provide insights into the economic costs associated with inadequate sexual education and the potential benefits of investing in sex education programs and policies for public health and economic growth.

*The aim of this research paper will be to identify the problems associated with the lack of sex education, explore how sex education affects our economy, and ultimately find solutions to overcome this problem.*

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

For this research paper, the following articles have been thoroughly studied:

- Economic cost of lack of sex education by (Arnold Mascarenhas )
- The life saving power of sex education ( World Economic Forum )
- The lack of sex education in India and its growing importance in digital era ( IJPSL )
- Why comprehensive sex education is important (UNESCO)
- Lack of sex-ed (Siddhesh Patil “ Times of India “)

## **ECONOMIC COSTS**

The primary data collected from 55 respondents between the ages of 16 to 21 indicates **that 85%** of the sample population reported not having received any comprehensive sex education while they were in school. It is worth noting that most of the respondents were either currently enrolled in school or had completed their education. **Only 14%** of the sample population reported having received comprehensive sex education during their time in school.

The economic cost of a lack of sex education can be significant, both in the short-term and long-term. Here are a few potential costs associated with the primary data that have been collected :

1. **Healthcare costs:** Individuals who do not receive adequate sex education may be more likely to engage in risky sexual behaviour, such as unprotected sex or having sex at a young age, which can increase their risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unintended pregnancies. These outcomes can lead to increased healthcare costs, both for the individuals affected and for the healthcare system as a whole.
2. **Lost productivity:** STIs and unintended pregnancies can lead to missed days of work or school, which can result in lost productivity and economic output.
3. **Increased social welfare spending:** Unintended pregnancies can also increase the demand for social welfare programs, such as food assistance or Medicaid, which can be costly to taxpayers.
4. **Long-term economic impact:** Young people who do not receive sex education may be more likely to drop out of school, experience mental health issues, or struggle with substance abuse, all of which can have long-term economic impacts, both for the individual and for society as a whole.

Overall, investing in comprehensive sex education programs can help to mitigate these economic costs and promote better health outcomes and economic stability for individuals and society as a whole.

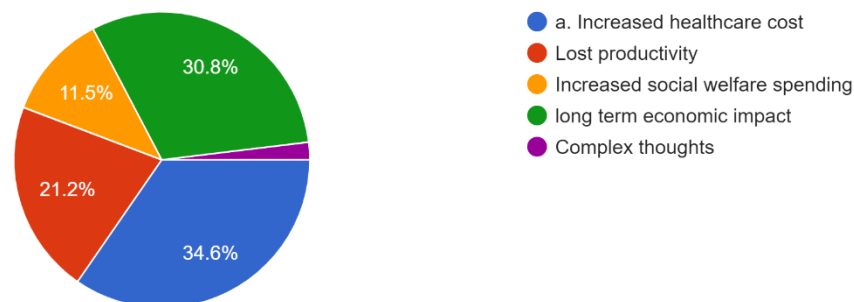
#### Primary data showed

- increased healthcare cost 34.6%
- lost productivity is 21.2%
- increased social welfare spending 11.5%
- long term economic impact 30.8%
- complex thoughts 1.9%

The primary data shows that increased healthcare costs contribute to 34.6% of the total sample population, while lost productivity accounts for 21.2%. Increased social welfare spending contributes to 11.5% of the sample population, and the long-term economic impact is 30.8%. **Finally, 1.9% of the sample population reported experiencing complex thoughts, although it is unclear how this is related to the economic costs of the lack of sex education.**

3 In your opinion, what are the economic costs associated with a lack of sex education?

52 responses



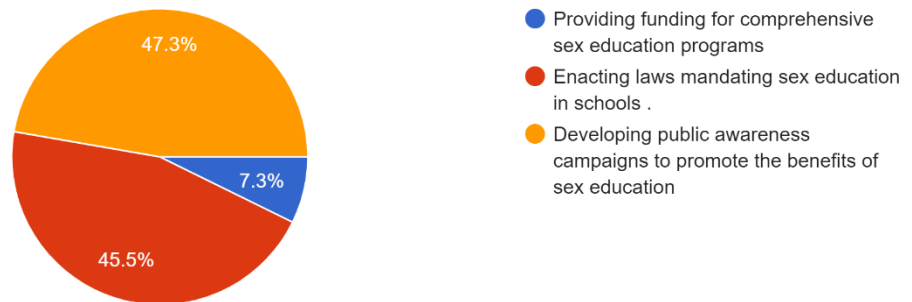
#### GOVT role in promoting sex education

Respondents were asked within the Google Forms to provide answers on how governments should react to the economic problems caused by the lack of sex education.

- Provide funding for comprehensive sex education 7.3%
- Enacting laws mandating sex education in schools 45.5%
- Developing public awareness to promote benefits of sex education 47.3%

6 In your opinion, what role should the government play in promoting sex education?

55 responses



The responses provided by the sample population show that 45.5% suggest enacting laws mandating sex education in schools, while 47.3% suggest developing public awareness to promote the benefits of sex education. This suggests conflicting views among the sample population."

### **Secondary data collected from "economic cost of lack of sex education " article 1 shows**

In the article, the author argues that the lack of comprehensive sex education has significant economic costs. They cite data from the Guttmacher Institute, which found that **unintended pregnancies cost the United States government approximately \$21 billion annually**. The author also notes that teenage pregnancy can lead to decreased educational attainment and limited job opportunities, which can ultimately result in lower lifetime earnings.

The above-highlighted line shows that unintended pregnancies in the United States cost approximately \$21 billion, which contributes to higher healthcare costs.

This article also discusses the negative impacts of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) on the economy. The author cites a report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which estimated that STIs cost the U.S. **healthcare system nearly \$16 billion per year**.

**Another health care cost United states have to bear**

### **Secondary data collected from "lack of sex education and its growing importance in the digital era " (IJPSL)**

In the article, the authors discuss the lack of comprehensive sex education in India and its growing importance in the digital era. They note that only 22% of schools in India offer formal sex education, which leaves many young people without the knowledge and skills they need to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health.

**Secondary data by ...**



According to various sources, including the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), sex education is not widely taught in schools across India, and many young people lack access to accurate and comprehensive information about sexual and reproductive health. This lack of information can contribute to a range of negative health outcomes, including unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortions, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and HIV/AIDS.

Indian Journal of Medical Ethics in 2012 found that only 22% of schools in India provided formal sex education, and that many young people received inaccurate or incomplete information about sexual and reproductive health from peers, family members, or the media.

Another study published in the Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care in 2018 found that a lack of sex education was a major barrier to preventing unintended pregnancies among adolescents in India.

## **GOVT POLICIES TO IMPROVE SEX EDUCATION IN INDIA**

The primary data collected shows that the question was asked, 'In your opinion, what role should the government play in promoting sex education?' and 47 percent of the sample population showed that the government should develop public awareness campaigns to promote the benefits of sex education, while 45 percent showed support for enacting laws mandating sex education in India.

### **Secondary data**

The Government of India has taken various steps to improve sex education and promote sexual and reproductive health among the population. Some of the key policies and programs in this regard are:

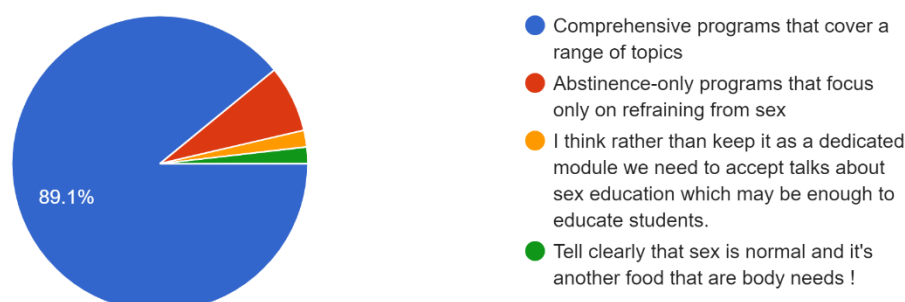
- National Education Policy 2020: The new education policy emphasizes the need for age-appropriate sex education in schools to promote healthy attitudes towards sexuality and gender.
- Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health (ARSH) program: This program was launched in 2006 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to provide young people with information and services related to sexual and reproductive health, including contraceptives, STI testing and treatment, and counseling.
- National AIDS Control Program: The program aims to prevent and control the spread of HIV/AIDS in the country through awareness-raising, education, and the promotion of safe sex practices.
- Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA): The program provides pregnant women with free antenatal care, including counseling on sexual and reproductive health.
- Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao: The campaign aims to promote the education and empowerment of girls, which is linked to improved sexual and reproductive health outcomes.
- National Health Mission: The program aims to improve access to healthcare services, including sexual and reproductive health services, particularly in rural areas.

These policies and programs aim to promote the importance of sexual and reproductive health and rights in India, particularly among young people, women, and marginalized communities. However, there is still a need for more comprehensive and age-appropriate sex education in schools and better access to healthcare services to address the challenges related to sexual and reproductive health in India.

According to the primary data collected sample population came to the conclusion that these programs can improve the lack of sex education in india

5 What types of sex education programs do you believe are most effective in reducing economic costs?

55 responses



- Comprehensive programs that cover a range of topics 89.1%
- Abstinence only programs that focus only on refraining from sex 7.3%
- Others

The data shows that most respondents believe that comprehensive sex education programs covering a range of topics should be implemented to increase student awareness and knowledge about sex.

## **RECENT NEWS RELATED TO GOVT** **POLICIES**

School children will be taught safe use of internet and social media, reproductive health, prevention of HIV and gender stereotypes under the new 'Health and Wellness Curriculum' developed by the Narendra Modi-led NDA government.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development and Health and Family Welfare collaborated to develop a curriculum which was launched on 12 February , 2023 by the respective ministers, 'Ramesh

Pokhriyal ' Nishank ' and Harsh Vardhan. Interestingly, the curriculum includes sex education, although the term itself is not used anywhere in the document. Instead, the curriculum refers to "adolescence education," which was a separate curriculum earlier but has now been incorporated into this one. This information has been accessed by The Print.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The lack of sex education can have significant economic costs, and addressing this issue can have numerous economic benefits. Here are some potential recommendations to mitigate the economic cost of the lack of sex education:

- **Implementation of Comprehensive Sex Education (CSE):** Governments should introduce and implement CSE programs in schools and colleges, which cover all aspects of sex education, including reproductive health, relationships, and gender issues. This can help reduce the incidence of unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortions, and sexually transmitted infections, which can have significant economic costs.
- **Improving access to sexual health services:** Governments and health organizations should focus on improving access to sexual and reproductive health services. This can include providing affordable or free contraception, ensuring easy access to HIV testing and treatment, and improving access to safe and legal abortions.
- **Addressing Gender Inequalities:** Gender inequality can contribute to the lack of sex education and has significant economic costs. Addressing gender inequalities through education, legal and policy reforms, and affirmative action can help create a more equitable society and reduce the economic costs of gender discrimination.
- **Engaging parents and communities:** Engaging parents and communities in sex education programs can help reduce social taboos around sex education and increase the demand for comprehensive sex education in schools and colleges.
- **Increasing Research and Awareness:** Governments and non-governmental organizations should fund research to better understand the economic and social costs of the lack of sex education. This can help raise awareness about the economic benefits of comprehensive sex education and encourage policymakers to invest in it.

## **CONCLUSION**