



**2022 Analysis Report:
The Effectiveness of the
OVSA Life Skills Programme**

**Report Compiled by:
Next Level Outcomes**

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Introduction

The OneVoice South Africa (OVSA) Grade 8 Life Skills programme aims to improve young people's knowledge and understanding of sexual health issues, in order to empower them to develop positive responses to critical health and lifestyle issues. The programme is presented by OVSA facilitators and includes content on HIV/AIDS and TB prevention and transmission, sexual and reproductive health and rights, delaying sexual debut, gender roles, healthy relationships, human rights and Water Access, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH).

Learners involved in the programme are required to complete a pre- and post-test in order to assess the extent of knowledge gain and attitudinal shifts as a result of the programme. This report presents the findings of the analysis of the pre- and post-test data.

Research Methodology

The effectiveness of the Life Skills programme was assessed using a one-group quasi-experimental pre- and post-test design. Learners' knowledge, attitudes and practices were assessed before exposure to the Life Skills content, and the same assessment was administered on completion of the programme, and the results compared. The pre-post assessment consists of a number of knowledge-based questions followed by behavioural and attitudinal questions.

OVSA staff captured and cleaned the data, and applied a quality control protocol for accurate capturing. A missed or left out question was indicated with a 0, whilst a 1 was used to indicate cases where the learner had not written the post-test, due to absenteeism or the learner having left the school. The cleaned pre- and post-test data was made available for analysis in Excel spreadsheets, and learners' names were used to match the pre and post-test scores for comparison.

Learner Demographics

A total of 2 514 learners were assessed at pre-test and 2 299 learners completed the post-test. Learners who did not complete the post-assessment (i.e. 215 learners) were either absent on the day of testing or had left the school. Ultimately, 2 284 learners could be matched at post-test and were included in the analysis ($n=2\,284$). The sample consisted of 1 159 males (51%) and 1 125 females (49%) and learners' age ranged between 12 and 18 years old, with the majority of learners being between 13 and 15 years old (see Table 1).

Table 1: Age Range of Study Participants Across Schools.

School	Number of Learners by Age (Years)							Total
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
Bagibile High School		22	24	11	5	3	1	66
JG Zuma High School	29	176	95	16				316
King Zwelithini High School	7	94	111	11				223
KwaMgaga High School		84	85	43	15	6		233
Lockhat High School	4	46	46	12	4			112
Ndukwenhle High School	2	43	45	25	5			120
Nkosibomvu Secondary School	20	158	154	31	18	3	1	385
Nomavimbela High School		34	10	8	3	1		56
Ntabantuzuma High School	3	41	27	19	3	3		96
Our Lady of the Rosary Secondary School	17	89	30	8				144
Swelihle High School	9	76	65	23	3		1	177
Zakhe High School	15	83	86	24	2	2	2	214
Zwelibanzi High School	14	70	48	8	2			142
Total	120	1016	826	239	60	18	5	2 284

Findings

Knowledge Gain

The findings are presented in this section, using tables and figures where appropriate. Table 2 shows learners combined average (mean) overall scores at pre and post-test (actual score and percentage), the difference between these scores and whether the change was significant.

Table 2: Change in Learners' Pre and Post-test Mean Scores.

	Pre-test Mean (%)	Post-test Mean (%)	Mean Difference (%)	Significant
All learners (n=2 284)	18.5 (53%)	26.2 (75%)	+7.7 (+22%)	Yes

As shown in the Table, the mean total score was 53% at pre-test and 75% at post-test, thus there was a 22% improvement in scores. The difference was found to be statistically significant (using a one-tailed, paired sample t-test), indicating that the improvement in scores did not occur by chance and is as a result of the Life Skills programme.

The total scores were analysed by gender and the analysis revealed that although male learners started from a slightly lower knowledge base than females did, both male and female learners exhibited a similar rate of knowledge gain (approximately 7.5%, in line with the overall change in scores). This has been a consistent finding year-on-year.

The change in pre- and post-test mean scores per school are presented in Table 3. The highest mean differences in scores (>30%) are highlighted in blue, and the lowest mean differences are highlighted in orange (>20%).

Table 3: Change in Pre and Post-test Mean Scores per School.

School District	School Name	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Mean Difference (%)
eThekweni	Ndukwenhle High School	16.6	25.2	8.6 (25%)
	Zakhe High School	17.5	23.0	5.5 (16%)
Pinetown	JG Zuma High School	16.6	27.6	11.0 (31%)
	Nkosibomvu Secondary School	17.0	26.9	9.9 (28%)
Umlazi	King Zwelithini High School	17.2	28.1	10.9 (31%)
	KwaMgaga High School	17.2	22.4	5.2 (15%)
	Nomavimbela High School	17.4	26.0	8.6 (25%)
	Swelihle High School	17.1	23.9	6.8 (19%)
	Zwelibanzi High School	16.9	24.6	7.7 (22%)
Ilembe	Lockhat High School	17.1	26.5	9.4 (27%)
	Our Lady of the Rosary Secondary School	16.8	31.2	14.4 (41%)
King Cetshwayo	Bagibile High School	16.6	27.4	10.8 (31%)
	Ntabantuzuma High School	17.8	29.0	11.2 (32%)

Learners at Our Lady of the Rosary performed extremely well once again this year, with an overall 41% increase in scores (learners at this school were also the highest achievers in 2021). Zakhe, KwaMgaga and Swelihle schools obtained the lowest mean difference in scores (<20% increase), however there was still an upwards shift in scores of between 15% and 19%.

Schools in the King Cetshwayo district, which is located outside the main metropolitan area of Durban, both performed very well. There did not appear to be a correlation between district location and test performance as learner performance varied across districts.

Table 4 presents the number (and %) of correct responses per question at pre and post-test. The percentage difference between correct responses at pre and post-test is included in the table, as well as the learning gap i.e. the percentage of learners who had not gained the required knowledge at post-test. A learning gap of $\geq 30\%$ is indicated in red as this was considered too high at post-test, and a learning gap of $< 15\%$ is indicated in blue, as this was considered acceptable given the number of learners. The questions are organised by content area.

Table 4: Percentage of Learners that demonstrated Knowledge Gain and percentage of learners with a remaining Learning Gap Based on the Number of Correct Responses at Pre- and Post-Test.

	Content	Questions	Correct Responses		Difference (%)	Learning Gap (%)
			Pre-test	Post-test		
Life Skills	Introduction to WASH	Question 3: WASH stands for...?	1218 (53%)	1932 (85%)	32%	15%
		Question 4: In which of the following situations should we wash our hands?	1255 (55%)	2005 (88%)	33%	12%
	Personal Values	Question 2: Values are...?	1324 (58%)	1876 (82%)	24%	18%
	Sexual Orientation, Gender Roles and Stigma	Question 1: Gender Roles are...?	821 (36%)	1691 (74%)	38%	26%
		Question 16 (True/False): Homosexual is a person who is sexually attracted to people of the same sex as theirs.	1430 (62%)	1728 (76%)	14%	24%
		Question 20 (True/False): People living with HIV have the same rights as all other South Africans.	1707 (74%)	1963 (86%)	12%	14%
		Question 21 (True/False): Sexual stigma is a form of discrimination against people who are lesbians, gays etc.	1308 (57%)	1652 (72%)	15%	28%
		Question 23 (True/False): It is possible for someone to look heterosexual (straight) while his is gay or she is a lesbian.	1443 (63%)	1782 (78%)	15%	22%
	Identifying Your Strengths and Exploring Leadership	Question 13: Identifying your strengths and improving your weaknesses will help you in future to:	1355 (59%)	1800 (79%)	20%	21%
		Question 14: What does YOUTH LEADERSHIP means?	1306 (57%)	1765 (77%)	20%	23%
		Question 26 (True/False): Developing your career plan can help you to realise your dreams and reach your destination in a defined time.	1664 (73%)	1869 (82%)	9%	18%
Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights	Teenage Pregnancy	Question 27 (True/False): You can get pregnant before your first menstruation (periods).	1141 (50%)	1369 (60%)	10%	40%
		Question 28 (True/False): It is the responsibility of a boy only to provide condoms during sexual intercourse.	1079 (47%)	1534 (67%)	20%	33%
		Question 29 (True/False): Using a condom is good protection against getting HIV during sexual intercourse.	2000 (87%)	1996 (86%)	-1%	14%
		Question 31: Which of the following is a risky behaviour that can lead to teenage pregnancy?	1350 (59%)	1838 (80%)	21%	20%
		Question 33: Which of the following is/are effective method(s) of preventing pregnancy?	931 (41%)	1604 (70%)	29%	30%
		Question 34: Which of the following is NOT a consequence of teenage pregnancy?	437 (19%)	506 (22%)	3%	78%

	Healthy Relationships and Human Rights	Question 15 (True/False): Having sex with an older person can put you at higher risk of contracting HIV.	1949 (85%)	2102 (92%)	7%	8%
		Question 32: From the following statement, identify what can be considered as a human right.	1142 (50%)	1658 (73%)	23%	27%
	HIV/AIDS Prevention and Management	Question 11: Who qualifies to undergo the process of Medical Male Circumcision?	820 (36%)	1268 (56%)	20%	44%
		Question 12: By how much percentage does Medical Male Circumcision reduce the risk of HIV?	563 (25%)	1546 (68%)	43%	32%
		Question 17 (True/False): Supportive Faith Community demonstrates a warm loving community where God is seen as all loving and accepting.	1616 (71%)	1778 (78%)	7%	22%
		Question 18 (True/False): You can tell if a person is infected with HIV by looking at him/her.	1529 (67%)	1880 (82%)	15%	18%
		Question 19 (True/False): There is a cure for AIDS.	1131 (49%)	1576 (69%)	20%	31%
		Question 22 (True/False): A person can be infected with HIV for 5 years or more without getting AIDS.	1190 (52%)	1533 (67%)	15%	33%
		Question 24 (True/False): Having unsafe sex with one or more than one partner can increase a person's chance of being infected with HIV.	1799 (78%)	1948 (85%)	7%	15%
		Question 30 (True/False): A lack of finance (particularly in young females) has a potential of increasing Gender Based Violence and HIV stats.	1339 (58%)	1824 (80%)	22%	20%
		Question 35: How can you make sure you are financially independent?	1104 (48%)	1568 (69%)	21%	31%
	Exploring STI's	Question 8: How does STIs spread from one person to another?	599 (26%)	1037 (45%)	19%	55%
		Question 9: Which of the following is a symptom of an STI?	990 (43%)	1706 (75%)	32%	25%
		Question 10: How can you protect yourself from beings infected with STIs?	1579 (69%)	1867 (82%)	13%	18%
TB	TB and TB-HIV Co-infection	Question 5: Who is at <i>high risk</i> of contracting TB?	666 (29%)	1633 (71%)	42%	29%
		Question 7: What are the main symptoms for infectious active TB disease?	978 (43%)	1813 (79%)	36%	21%
		Question 25 (True/False): It is not allowed to take TB treatment at the same time with ARVs (HIV treatment).	1103 (48%)	1394 (61%)	13%	39%
	TB Treatment Adherence and Support	Question 6: What are the risks of defaulting on TB medication?	891 (39%)	1850 (81%)	42%	19%

According to the data analysis presented in Table 4, learners performed well (there was an increase in the % of correct responses) on 70% of the test questions. This is a significantly positive finding and indicates the effectiveness of the OVSA programme.

Learners exhibited good knowledge gain in the Life Skills content area. Some questions were well answered at the pre-test, which indicates that learners already had a good understanding of this content. Two questions in particular were answered correctly by almost 75% of learners at pre-test; these were Question 20 (True/False): *People living with HIV have the same rights as all other South Africans*; and Question 26 (True/False): *Developing your career plan can help you to realise your dreams and reach your destination in a defined time*. These questions could be revised to make them more difficult in future, to better gauge the extent of knowledge gain from pre- to post-test. For example, Question 20 (True/False): *People living in different countries have different human rights*, and Question 26 (True/False): *Career development is an unconscious decision*.

Within the Sexual and Reproductive Health section, there were several learning gaps (indicated in red in Table 4) in the Teenage Pregnancy and HIV/AIDS Management and Prevention content areas at post-test. This is of concern as it means that more than one-third of learners (>30%) still did not know what the correct answer was after completing the programme.

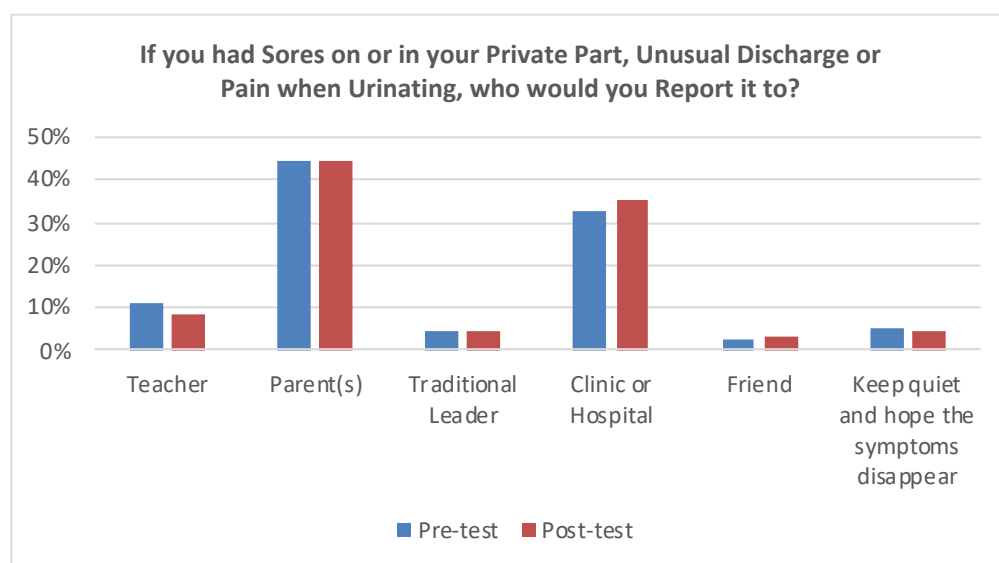
Where learning gaps were apparent, some of the relevant assessment questions dealt with medical male circumcision, the mechanisms by which STIs are contracted, and the treatment of TB. These are some of the same questions that were poorly answered in previous years; thus, it is recommended that the relevant content is delivered and the mechanisms through which understanding is assessed during programme implementation are reviewed by the facilitators and any necessary changes made accordingly.

A question of particular concern was Question 34: *Which of the following is NOT a consequence of teenage pregnancy?* This question was so poorly answered (78% of learners got it wrong at post-test) that this appears to be indicative of confusion in terms of how to respond. The multiple-choice answers are all consequences that could result from teenage pregnancy, but the purpose of the question is to highlight that a learner cannot be expelled from school if they fall pregnant. The question should be rephrased in order that it is straight forward for learners to understand. For example, *which of the following examples of negative consequences of teenage pregnancy are not possible?*

Attitudes towards Sex and Sexual Practices

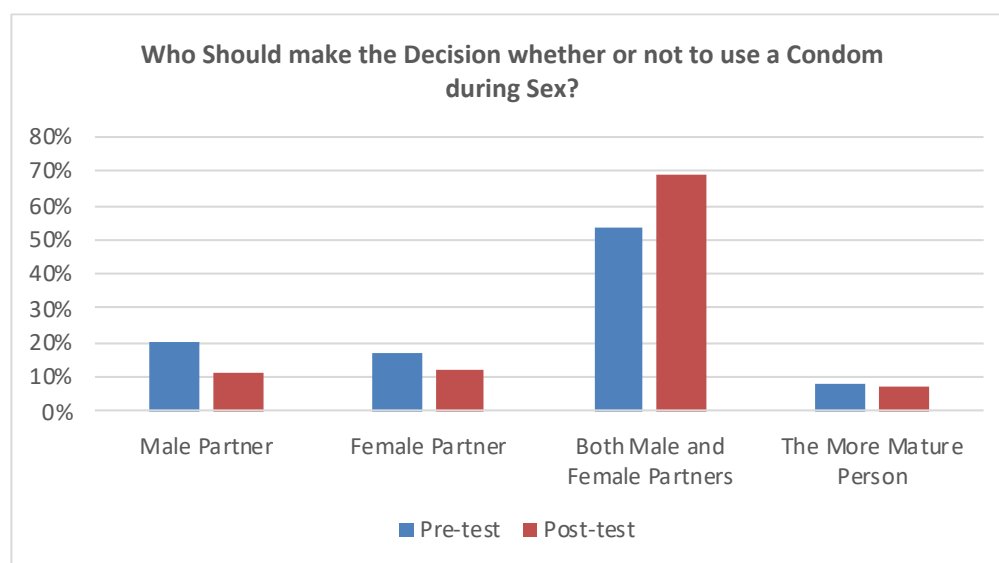
The questions on sexual attitudes and practices aimed to gauge learners' personal feelings about sex and sexual behaviour. The pre- and post-test responses (%) were compared to examine any change in attitudes from pre to post-test.

Figure 1: Pre and Post-test Responses to the Indicated Question.



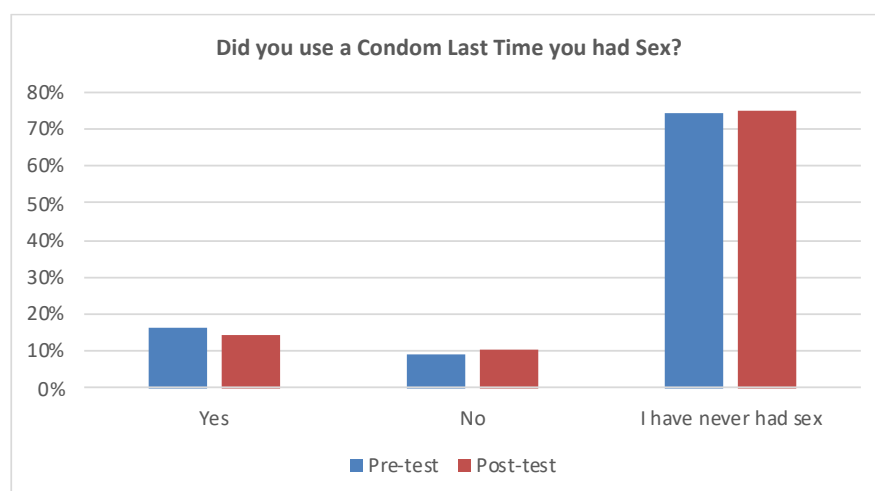
There was little change from pre- to post-test, although more learners indicated that they would seek help from a clinic or hospital *than from a teacher* if they suspected that they had an STI or other health issue.

Figure 2: Pre and Post-test Responses to the Indicated Question.



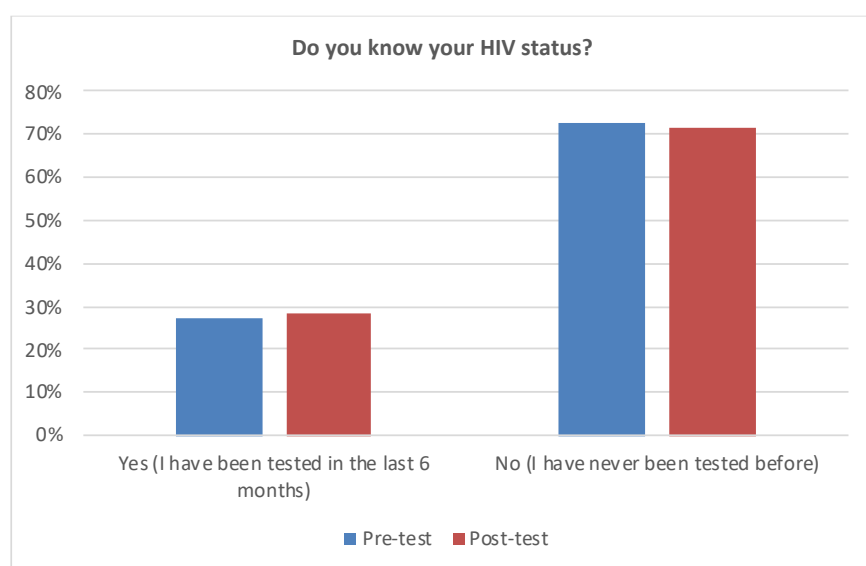
There was a significant increase (17%) in the percentage of learners that felt that both male and female partners should decide whether or not to use a condom during sex, as indicated in Figure 2. This was a positive finding and is indicative of the programme's effectiveness in encouraging healthy sexual practices.

Figure 3: Pre and Post-test Responses to the Indicated Question.



There was little change in the responses at pre- to post-test, with the majority of learners noting that they had never had sex.

Figure 4: Pre and Post-test Responses to the Indicated Question.



There was a slight increase in the desired response to the question presented in Figure 4, which was *Do you know your HIV status?* The number of learners who responded *Yes (I have been tested in the last 6 months)* increased by 1.5% from pre- to post-test. It therefore appears that 34 learners were prompted to get tested after the programme, according to the data.

The scenario presented in this final section of the test is intended to elicit information about the practices within learners' communities, and more specifically in relation to 'blessers'.

Figure 5: Pre and Post-test Responses to the Indicated Question.

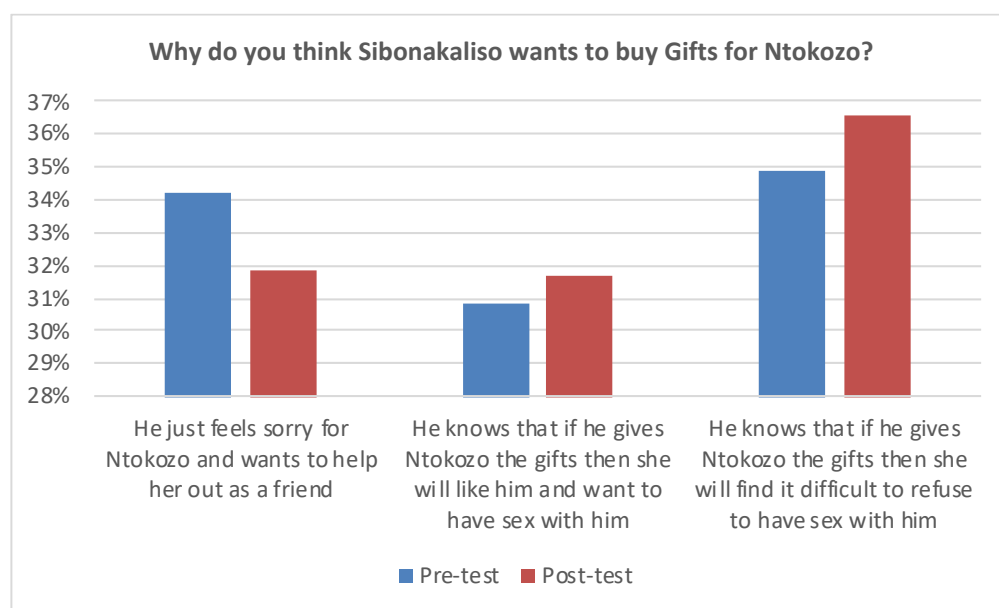
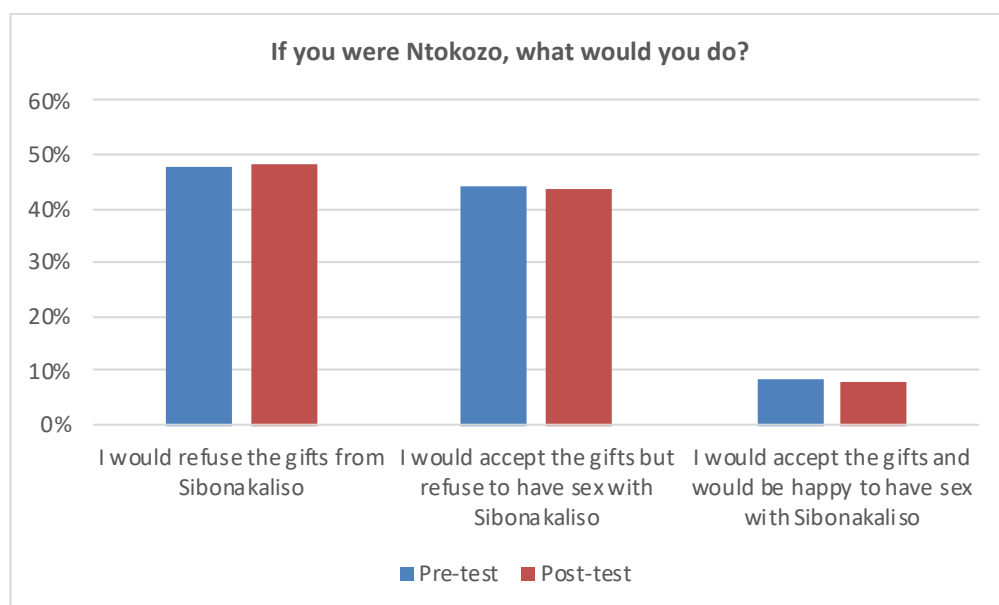


Figure 5 shows that more learners chose the second and third responses to the question, rather than the first, indicating that learners now understood that ‘blessers’ do not give gifts simply to help young people out, but expect something in return. This awareness is crucial in communities where blessers are commonplace. The total positive shift was small, however, with one-third (32%) of learners still not understanding the implication of receiving a gift from an older man. More work to impart a better understanding in this area is therefore required – possibly, Facilitators could spend a bit more time conducting a focused discussion on this in the 2023 curriculum.

Figure 6: Pre and Post-test Responses to the Indicated Question.



There was little change in the responses to this question at pre- and post-test. This question is around the acceptance of gifts and it is thus possible that whilst learners understand their right not to engage in sexual activities in return for gifts, the temptation of gifts remains problematic given learners’ socio-

economic circumstances. As recommended above, further discussion in a focus group setting is recommended to better understand learners' views.

Recommendations

The first recommendation is to ensure that there is continued focus on the content areas where learning gaps were identified. The delivery of the content should be reviewed to ensure that it is enabling understanding, and changes should be made to the format of delivery by facilitators or to the explanations provided, if needed. *Although this is implemented annually and consistently, given the many challenges faced by learners as well as staff following the COVID-19 pandemic, the floods and the riots over the past year and a half, more time could be allocated to this.*

It is further recommended that the test questions continue to be reviewed annually, to ensure that they adequately test learner knowledge and understanding i.e. The questions should be structured so that there is a low rate of correct responses at pre-test (learners are not expected to know the answers before the programme is implemented) and a corresponding increase in correct answers at post-test. There were of questions that are now considered too easy following consistent partnership programmes with the schools, and others that may require revision to limit confusion around what the question is asking (some of the multiple-choice answers may need to be reviewed in some cases).

Conclusion

The fact that the improvement in overall pre-and post-test results was found to be statistically significant is an important finding, and indicates the effectiveness of the OVSA programme. In addition, learners demonstrated knowledge gain in the case of 70% of the test questions, and exhibited positive shifts in sexual attitudes and practices in some cases. There is an opportunity to further refine the programme by reviewing the content delivery mechanisms employed and the test questions, as well as by engaging with some of the learners in a focus group setting, to further explore the impact of the programme on their attitudes and sexual practices.