

# Cultural Currents And Stakeholders Stances: A Study On Support and Opposition Toward Sex Education and Comprehensive Sexuality Education

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**Abstract:** *This study examined the perceptions, knowledge and awareness of stakeholders on Sex Education and Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). It aimed to determine the core factors behind support or opposition for implementing CSE in elementary education. Employing an embedded mixed-methods design, the study gathered quantitative data through surveys and qualitative insights through interviews among parents, teachers, administrators, and community members. Findings revealed an increased recognition of CSE's advantages, particularly in promoting informed decision-making and reducing stigma among youngsters. Most of the stakeholders recognize a thoughtfully designed curriculum that can address critical, developmental and well-being concerns, such as promoting child safety and fostering consent. Additionally, participants acknowledge that early exposure to age-appropriate information can support children in building confidence and emotional strengths. In spite of these benefits, the study emphasized ongoing opposition rooted in strong cultural sensitivity and religious beliefs. Resistance was commonly based on fears that CSE may conflict with moral teachings or bring up nuanced content ahead of age suitability, raising concerns about age appropriateness and the parental authority in teaching sexuality education. The study underscores the necessity for culturally responsive implementation strategies that balance respect for tradition against the need for accurate, inclusive and comprehensive sex education. It endorsed the active involvement of the stakeholders in shaping and implementing of the CSE curriculum, securing alignment of community values without compromising the educational integrity. Proper communication, continuous professional learning for educators, and parental involvement appeared as essential elements to break misconceptions and to boost stakeholders perspectives in support of CSE.*

**Keywords—comprehensive sexuality education; stakeholder perspectives; curriculum; cultural sensitivity; support and opposition**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Sexuality education has a long and intricate history in different regions such as the United States, Western European nations, and the Global South (Sedgh et al., 2014). Throughout the years, it has transformed based on social, cultural, and public health changes (Guttmacher, 2020). Even though ongoing efforts have been made to decrease the prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) like HIV, major challenges persist. For instance, adolescent females and vulnerable minority populations are still recording increasing infection rates (Achen et al., 2023). The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund or UNICEF (2023) reported an approximately 480,000 (255,000–760,000) aged 10 to 24 young individuals that were infected with human

immunodeficiency virus, whereby adolescents aged 10 to 19 were counted to comprise the 140,000 (35,000–250,000) in 2022. These figures highlight the imperativeness of high-impact, evidence-informed sexual education that provides young people with accurate information and critical decision-making ability.

All over the world, the use of sex education has been confronted by cultural opposition and controversy. In Zimbabwe and other nations, sex is still culturally forbidden, and young people tend not to have formal education on sexual health (Mahoso, 2022). In Zambia, a professed Christian country, Comprehensive Sexuality Education has come under attack, with teachers terming its material offensive, particularly when being translated into local language (Fredrick et al., 2019). The same issues are present in other

parts of the world, where CSE is misconstrued as encouraging early sex when in fact, it encourages informed and responsible action (Abrigo & Paqueo, 2016).

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) has attempted to incorporate Reproductive Health (RH) into the basic education curriculum. Even though standards are given and a few RH resources given in textbooks the existing implementation is lacking. Teachers tend to minimize and avoid RH subject in educating the students to avoid upsetting the community's conservative views (Bongco & David, 2020). Moreover, the school tends to expect the society at large and technical support to provide external funds because of the lack of funds for CSE; this is visible in the Ulep et al. (2021) study. On the authority of Vanwesenbeeck et al. (2016), both in educational and real-life settings, religious and cultural values have impeded the effective implementation of CSE. In addition to these reasons, educators' views, beliefs and experiences influence their instruction with regards to sexuality education, alongside other educators with low confidence, unpreparedness and inhibitory actions when educating the students with these matters (Ngabaza, 2016).

Currently in 2025, there is an increasing case of HIV infections. The Department of Health (DOH) has noticed that the Philippines has an average of fifty-seven (57) HIV medical cases every day from January to March 2025, a 500% increase as compared to the previous years. These HIV medical cases are visible among younger individuals aged 15 to 25 (Cahatol, 2025). In developing the understanding of the young people about sex and relationships, teachers, parents and the community they live in play a vital role in developing the perceptions of younger individuals. According to the United Nations Population Fund (2020), which states that while enhancing adolescents' access to reproductive health services is a priority, such as maternal health, counseling, and family planning, it must be supplemented by comprehensive sexuality education to stem teenage pregnancies and attendant health consequences. Supportive parental involvement is one of the reasons to improve student achievement in attitudes, behavior and intelligence (Shin et al., 2019). DepEd's current teaching policies prioritize establishing positive relationships, respect for each other, and safe and pleasurable sexuality (DepEd, 2018). To make CSE contextually relevant, participation of community advisory boards (CABs) in planning and implementing program activities is advised, particularly for culturally diverse or conservative settings (Kemigisha et al., 2019).

Sex education, which is also termed as family life education, plays a vital part in enabling young people to create informed decisions, break unhealthy taboos, and foster integral development. It seeks to develop responsible values, attitudes, and behaviors along with reliable knowledge regarding human development, sexual orientation, gender identity, and reproductive health (Ferguson et al., 2022; As'ari et al., 2016). Comprehensive programs do not promote premarital sex, but instead, they facilitate the acquisition of life skills, protection

strategies, and healthy relationships (UNFPA, 2016). Following the World Health Organization (2017), adolescents are most benefited when such education is provided in collaboration with families, schools, and communities.

Considering these international and national settings, there is still an urgent need to know better how principal stakeholders—like parents, educators, and citizens—see and react to sex education and CSE. Their perception levels, cultural beliefs, and individual convictions can significantly determine whether CSE is embraced or opposed in elementary education contexts. This research thus explored stakeholders' awareness, support, or opposition to sex education and CSE, and to determine the main factors fueling such attitudes within the educational and cultural context of the Philippines.

Mostly, the term comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) and sex education are used similarly, yet they reflect distinct frameworks in approaching human development, relationships, health, and sexuality. Sex education is typically limited to the biological and preventive aspects such as anatomy, reproduction, puberty, menstruation, contraception, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and preventing unintended pregnancies. Based on ABS-CBN News Channel 24/7 (2025), in the interview with former Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno, the term traditional sex education is perceived as significant and fundamental for understanding health and life, nevertheless, it remains a limited topic and scope.

In contrast, Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) highlights a more inclusive strategy and broader topic or content. It includes not only reproductive health but extends beyond topics such as childhood masturbation being normalized, sexual rights, respect in relationships, personal identity, diversity and gender equality. According to ABS-CBN News Channel 24/7, (2025) Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) encourages awareness of diverse aspects such as emotional, social, physical and ethical dimension. It emphasized diverse content on body positivity, respecting boundaries, consent and openness of sexual orientation and gender identity. This scope is planned to qualify and empower young people to ensure informed and responsible judgment while encouraging respect and inclusiveness in a multicultural community.

The countries of the Netherlands and Australia provide models of effective CSE execution or implementation. In the Netherlands, the Rutgers Spring Fever curriculum requires primary schools to provide sex education, beginning at age four. Lessons include appropriate touching, body awareness, relationships, and sexual health, progressing to more complex topics like consent and reproductive health by age eleven (Abraham, 2016; de Melker, 2015).

Australia's National Curriculum integrates sexuality education under the Health and Physical Education learning area across all levels. Younger students learn about body parts and protective behaviors, while older students discuss

puberty, gender diversity, identity, and relationships (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2018). In both countries, CSE begins early and is embedded across subjects, promoting a whole-child and age-appropriate developmental approach. Informal education sources, such as family and peers, also play significant roles (Young et al., 2024).

There is also an assimilation or integration of reproductive health education in multiple subjects from elementary to high school in the Philippines as mandated in the DepEd Order No. 31, s. 2018 or (Policy Guidelines on the Implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education).

Despite these policies, ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and resource allocation are needed to ensure effectiveness.

In the Philippines, traditions and spiritual values greatly shape insights and understanding of sexual awareness. With 80% of the population identifying as Roman Catholic, the Church has expressed opposition to school-based sex education, advocating instead for parental authority over this subject (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2015). Religious leaders argue that such education promotes promiscuity and undermines moral values. On the other hand, groups like the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) support CSE, even advocating for condom distribution in schools as part of HIV prevention and responsible sexual behavior education (Aurelio, 2017).

Parental involvement remains a key factor in successful CSE delivery. Nghipondoka-Lukolo and Charles (2016) argue that parents need proper knowledge and communication skills to support their children. Nevertheless, many parents are constrained by embarrassment or lack of awareness. Joshi et al. (2024), Ram et al. (2020), and Zhou and Cheung (2020) stressed that inadequate parental engagement and cultural taboos hinder young people's understanding of sexuality. As stated by UNFPA (2018), many individuals are now entering adulthood with misconceptions worsened by silence and misleading information.

In assumption, holistic sexual health education is a complicated program designed to provide knowledge with youth in terms of information, approaches and skills that can advocate their safety, well-being, and informed judgment making. In the international realm, it emphasized on the benefits and possibility that can be implemented in the Philippines to deal with religious, cultural, and traditional challenges. The perspectives of stakeholders in terms of religious leaders, educators and parents are significant in shaping the quality, acceptance and efficiency of sex education and CSE in the community.

This study examined deeper insights on different kinds of stakeholder perspectives to transform policy development especially in the context of legal efforts like Senate Bill 1979 or the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy Act of 2023. Stakeholder perspectives filled the gap between strategy and practices that resulted in more cultural awareness and

evidence-based, informed sexuality education programs. The programs are significant in handling issues such as teenage pregnancies, sexual abuse, and HIV/AIDS prevention, particularly in rural settings.

## 2. AIM OF THE STUDY

The general research objective is to explore stakeholders' views, their level of understanding, and familiarity with these subjects on sex education and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) also the factors that they hold against to support or oppose regarding the inclusion of CSE in the subjects in the basic education.

Specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of stakeholders' awareness and support for comprehensive sexuality education in terms of:
  - a. familiarity with the concept;
  - b. perception of its inclusion in the school curriculum;
  - c. perception of its holistic approach compared to traditional approach;
  - d. perceived impact on students' physical and mental health; and
  - e. awareness?
2. What factors influence stakeholders' stances on comprehensive sexuality education in terms of:
  - a. cultural acceptability;
  - b. influence of moral values;
  - c. influence of religious values; and
  - d. contextual factors?
3. What are the stakeholders' views on the purpose and effects of sex education and CSE on students?
4. How do Filipino norms, religion, and beliefs shape the acceptance of sex education and CSE?
5. How do stakeholders distinguish between traditional and CSE, and what are their experiences with its implementation?

## 3. METHOD

### 3.1 Research Design

This study employed an embedded quantitative mixed-methods design, wherein a supporting quantitative element underpins a primarily qualitative approach (Creswell, 2010; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Johnson et al., 2007). The researchers specifically used semi-structured interviews for the qualitative phase to probe stakeholders' stances on sex education and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). Quantitative data, collected through a validated questionnaire, was embedded to assess the stakeholders' level of understanding, familiarity, and the degree of support and opposition toward incorporating CSE in the basic education curriculum allowing the researchers to have a deep understanding of the qualitative key points including quantitative analysis, to enhance the overall interpretation of the study.

### 3.2 Participants

#### *Qualitative Phase Participants*

As stated by Creswell (2018) the qualitative part should include up to 3 to 10 participants to make the study useful and reliable. Creswell (2018) indicated that four (4) participants per level are enough to measure the important aspects and to identify the stakeholders perspectives about sex education and comprehensive sexuality education. A total of twenty-four (24) participants for qualitative findings were chosen using a stratified random sampling.

#### *Quantitative Phase Respondents*

Respondents were grouped according to their common traits. The quantitative part used the usual estimated sample size, where the researchers need at least thirty (30) respondents per strata for statistical analysis (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The sample size for quantitative analysis was determined as three-hundred-seventy-eight (378) with the use of the Sample Size Calculator provided by Raosoft.com. A total of  $n = 63$  respondents were selected using stratified random sampling per stratum. The researchers used stratified random sampling, a statistical technique in which the population is separated into strata or subgroups, depending on certain characteristics, from which a random sample is then selected (Makwana et al., 2023). This is regarded as the most efficient approach to reducing sampling bias and balanced representation (Creswell, 2010). Participants were chosen based on established criteria. Students were those enrolled in selected schools in Bacolor, Pampanga, at junior and senior high school levels. Teachers had to be teaching currently at the primary, secondary, or higher levels of education in the schools of selected locations. School administrators were those that held administrative positions like principals, head teachers, guidance counselors, school registrar, school supervisor, gender and development coordinator and Student Supreme Government (SSG) Coordinator and department deans. Parents were eligible if they had their children enrolled in target schools. Church members were individuals actively working within religious organizations or institutions like lectors, altar servers, choir members, youth ministry leaders, greeters, catechists, pastors and communion servers. Government officials encompassed elected representatives like barangay officials, municipal councilors, *Sangguniang Kabataan* (SK) chairpersons and members. All participants were required to voluntarily provide informed consent and express their willingness to share their opinions and views on sex education and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). Furthermore, all participants were residents or active members of chosen barangays.

The researchers chose three barangays located in Bacolor District 3 as study sites because these barangays are the most populous in the district (Philippine Statistics Authority [PSA], 2025). These sites were considered adequate for producing meaningful and representative data. The research utilized an embedded quantitative design, gathering qualitative and

quantitative results during the corresponding period. For qualitative purposes, six (6) strata were determined students, teachers, school administrators, parents, church members, and government officials. There were four (4) participants in every stratum, and thus, there were twenty-four (24) qualitative participants. This is above Creswell's (2018) recommendation of 3 to 10 participants for qualitative in-depth analysis so as to gain a deeper insight into the attitude of every stakeholder group. During the quantitative phase, a total of 378 respondents were picked, having sixty-three (63) respondents per stratum. The sampling number herein adheres to Creswell and Plano Clark's (2018) suggestion of a minimum of thirty (30) respondents in each category to enable accurate statistical analysis, with the actual tally derived from Raosoft.com sample size calculator.

### 3.3 Instrument

To gather thorough data for the study, the embedded-quantitative, mixed-method design was used, which utilized semi-structured interviews for the qualitative component and survey questionnaires for the quantitative component.

#### *Qualitative Phase*

In the qualitative phase, the researchers utilized a semi-structured interview guide to uncover the views of stakeholders on sex education and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). This method ensured flexibility to probe deeper into participants' backgrounds while keeping a focus on important themes (Creswell, 2013). To guarantee the validity of research instruments, the tools were reviewed by three (3) committee members or validators of experienced practitioners with an honorary title of Associate Professor II, Master of Arts in Education in the College of Education, Senior Education Program Specialist, and Doctor of Philosophy in Education, Research Center Manager, Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences, and Doctor of Philosophy in the Research Management Office to ascertain content validity, adhering to the rule of two to twenty expert reviewers (Armstrong et al., 2005).

Three (3) pilot interviews were also carried out to improve question clarity and flow. Iterative improvements led to the guide's enhanced relevance and concurrence with the study goals. An external qualitative auditor with qualifications assisted in the audit trail i.e., coding and thematic analysis, checking of data saturation and accurate portrayal of the narratives of the participants (Jain, 2024).

#### *Quantitative Phase*

For the quantitative part, a researcher-made questionnaire was developed to determine stakeholders' knowledge, attitudes, and concerns on sex education and CSE. The tools were reviewed by three (3) validators who are experienced practitioners with the position of Associate Professor II in the College of Education, Master of Arts in Education, Senior Education Program Specialist in the Research Management Office, Doctor of Philosophy in Education, Research Center

Manager for the Humanities, Education and Social Sciences to check the content validity index as suggested by Gunawan, Marzilli, and Aunguroch (2021). A pilot testing of the survey questionnaire accompanied within a total of fifty-four (54) stakeholders which is nine (9) respondents or stakeholders per stratum who were not included in the study but were deemed qualified to answer the question to determine clarity and reliability, marginally more than Burns and Grove's (2005) recommendation of 15–30 respondents. Further, the instrument has undergone pilot testing to ensure the reliability of the instrument. It yielded a 0.929 Cronbach's alpha result indicating its excellent internal consistency. When the internal consistency reached 0.8 - 0.9, it suggests that the scale was reliable in measuring the same construct. Moreover, this reflects the results of very high internal consistency (Cho & Kim, 2015). This mixed-methods approach allowed for an extensive examination of the information, facilitating validation and triangulation of results (Fowler, 2014). The results confirmed the statistical reliability of the questionnaire in evaluating the targeted variables

**Table 1.** Reliability of the Items in the Questionnaire

Cronbach Alpha	No of items
0.929	36

### 3.4 Data Collection

During the data collection, the researchers requested formal consent from the Dean of the College of Education in a letter detailing the objectives, purpose, and pertinent information about the study. Upon approval, the researchers visited three (3) selected barangays in Bacolor, Pampanga, focusing on key stakeholder areas like barangay halls, schools, churches, offices, and residences. The stakeholders included students, teachers, school officials, parents, religious leaders, and local politicians. During the first visit, the researchers presented the study and asked for permission to conduct face-to-face interviews and administer survey questionnaires. While obtaining consent, follow-up visits were conducted to personally meet the stakeholders, describe the objectives of the study, and arrange data collection according to their availability.

The survey questionnaire and semi-structured interview were employed in a mixed-method design to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. The interview used open-ended questions guided by a systematic protocol while the survey questionnaire used GoogleForms. With the participants' consent, the interviewer used audio recording to carry out the transcription of data. Each interview length was approximately 15 to 20 minutes. According to Kroll & Neri (2009), the simultaneous collection of data for two methods is needed to ensure the findings and reliability.

### 3.5 Ethical Consideration

The study considered firm ethical guidelines to guarantee the rights, dignity, and welfare of all the participants. In adherence to Republic Act No. 10173, or the Data Privacy Act of 2012, all personal, exclusive, and confidential information gathered were treated with highest discretion and stored securely. Voluntary participation in the research was certain; both participants in the survey and interviewees were entitled to refuse or retreat from the research at any time without implications.

Prior to data collection, informed consent was sought, with participants being fully informed of the objectives of the study, processes, possible advantages and risks, and rights as participants. Contact information was also given for any inquiry or concerns. The researchers provided survey questionnaires and used a semi-structured interview guide, assuring that participants could use their chosen language to promote clarity, comfort, and inclusiveness.

All communication was completed in respectful, fair, and culturally sensitive language to verify that no bias or misdemeanor was caused. The researchers also considered participants' availability when making appointments for data collection, giving them utmost appreciation for their time and convenience. All participants were favored with utmost respect and consideration throughout the study, ensuring that ethical integrity was regarded at every stage.

### 3.6 Data Analysis

#### *Qualitative Phase*

In the qualitative phase, data collected from stakeholders on their opinions about sex education and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) were analyzed through thematic analysis and manual coding. It is a technique applied in identifying, analyzing, and reporting repeated patterns or themes in qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2016). It is most useful for structuring and interpreting abundant datasets in a meaningful and organized manner (King, 2004), particularly when finding out underlying themes and meaning from the points of view of the participants (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

#### *Quantitative Phase*

For the quantitative phase, the researchers used Microsoft Excel 2019 and IBM SPSS Statistics Version 26 to process and analyze data. Descriptive statistics, standard deviation and mean scores were utilized to aggregate and interpret answers. These approaches provided a strong picture of trends and patterns within the data (Oxford Brookes University, 2025). A Likert Scale was used to assess the degree of agreement between stakeholders so that participants could identify how much they agreed or disagreed with the given statements concerning sex education and CSE (Simply Psychology, 2023). Normal distribution was used in analyzing the scores by considering both responses for each statement and the distribution across different stakeholder groups—namely students, parents, school administrators, teachers, government officials, and church members, in which

data points mass in the middle of the range that makes two mirrors on both sides of the line (Chandna, 2021). Assuming the results of mean scores for each group and statement were distributed, the researchers concluded that accurately interpreted data showed statistical ranges around 3.51-4.00 (Strongly Agree), 2.51-3.50 (Agree), 1.51-2.50 (Disagree), and 1.00-1.50 (Strongly Disagree).

**Table 2.** The Four-Point Likert Scale on Level of Agreement

Point	Statistical Ranges	Level of Agreement
4	3.51 - 4.00	Strongly Agree (SA)
3	2.51 - 3.50	Agree (A)
2	1.51 - 2.50	Disagree (D)
1	1.00 - 1.50	Strongly Disagree (SA)

#### 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings and discussion that were analyzed through the gathered qualitative and quantitative data as aligned on the research questions of this study.

The tables presented below show the quantitative results obtained from a survey of three-hundred seventy-eight (378) respondents on the level of awareness and support as well as the factors that influence stakeholders stances on comprehensive sexuality education. Table 3 presents the level of agreement with the familiarity of the concept of comprehensive sexuality education. Table 4 highlights the perception of the inclusion of comprehensive sexuality education in the school curriculum while Table 5 illustrates the perception of comprehensive sexuality education in a holistic approach compared to traditional approach. Table 6 provides the perceived impact on students' physical and mental health. Table 7 represents the level of awareness on the concept of comprehensive sexuality education. Table 8 emphasizes the overall summary of problem statement 1. Table 9 displays the cultural acceptability of comprehensive sexuality education. Table 10 provides the results of the influence of moral values on a comprehensive sexuality education curriculum. Table 11 presents the influence of religious values on the content of sex education. Table 12 shows the contextual factors of comprehensive sexuality education. Table 13 summarizes problem statement 2 which are the factors that influence stakeholders stances on comprehensive sexuality education. These tables provide insights into how comprehensive sexuality education influences the stakeholders' stances regarding its implementation.

Table 3 represents the respondents' level of agreement with the familiarity of the concept of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE).

As shown in Table 3, the awareness in the CSE among the stakeholders was moderate which garnered a mean of 2.5708 and with a standard deviation of 0.8703 indicating 'Agree'. That is, half of them were aware of the existing concepts on CSE.

The largest concurrence occurred on the statement "I was first introduced to CSE by informal sources such as media, peers, or personal reading" (Item 4), followed by their agreement with their familiarity of the concept (Item 1). This indicates that CSE was learned informally.

According to UNESCO (2018), many young people often gained their first understanding of sexuality and related issues from media, peers, and personal exploration rather than formal instruction. Similarly, Chandra-Mouli et al. (2015) emphasized that while formal education remains a critical platform for sexuality education, informal sources often fill the knowledge gaps where structured programs are absent or limited.

Respondents concurred that they learned about CSE from formal education or training (Item 2 and Item 3), although less so. Only the statement with a "Disagree" response was "I have not heard about CSE before" (Item 5), attesting to the fact that most stakeholders at least know something about CSE. Overall, the results are indicative of a good level of awareness from both formal and informal learning settings.

Table 4 represents the respondents' level of perceptions on the inclusion of sex education in the school curriculum.

As presented in Table 4, the perception of the inclusion of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in the school curriculum among stakeholders was favorable, having a grand mean of 2.887 with a standard deviation of 0.9001, viewed as "Agree." It implies that stakeholders support the integration of CSE into the educational system.

The highest agreement was found in the statement "Schools have a responsibility to educate students about sexuality and relationships" (Item 5,  $M = 3.4907$ ,  $SD = 0.65683$ ), followed closely by "Without sex education, students might encounter gaps in understanding sexual health and relationships" (Item 4,  $M = 3.3289$ ,  $SD = 0.75656$ ). These responses emphasize the stakeholders' belief in the necessity and responsibility of schools to provide structured education on sexuality and relationships.

The findings align with UNESCO (2018), which emphasized that CSE empowers students to understand and manage their sexual health, relationships, and personal development. Furthermore, Goldfarb and Lieberman (2021) assert that when integrated into school curricula, CSE contributes to increased knowledge, healthier attitudes, and more responsible behaviors among adolescents.

Meanwhile, the lowest mean was observed in the statement "Sex education should begin in college" (Item 3,  $M = 2.1698$ ,  $SD = 1.01208$ ), and "Sex education should begin in elementary school" (Item 1,  $M = 2.3501$ ,  $SD = 1.13196$ ), both of which were interpreted as "Disagree." It shows that stakeholders do not favor introducing sex education either too early or too late. Sex education "they agreed that, Instead =  $M = 2$  Item" (12-7 Grades) should begin in high school which implies that while stakeholders ( $0.94329 = SD = 3.0955$ ) they believe it should begin at the high school level to provide age-appropriate sexuality education.

Table 5 represents the respondents' perceptions of the holistic nature of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in comparison to traditional sex education approach.

As shown in Table 5, the perception in the holistic approach of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) compared to the traditional approach was favorable which had a mean of 3.3411 and having a standard deviation of 0.934, including a description of "Agree." This suggests that stakeholders recognize the strengths of the holistic nature of CSE over traditional sex education methods.

The largest concurrence transpired on the statement "CSE promotes gender equality and respect in relationships more effectively than traditional approaches" (Item 4,  $M = 3.4005$ ,  $SD = 0.5891$ ), followed closely by the agreement that "CSE addresses physical aspects of sexuality better than traditional sex education" (Item 2,  $M = 3.3634$ ,  $SD = 0.5816$ ). Respondents agreed that CSE also addresses emotional (Item 1,  $M = 3.2865$ ,  $SD = 0.6296$ ), social (Item 3,  $M = 3.3183$ ,  $SD = 0.5920$ ), and complex topics such as consent, diversity, and inclusion (Item 5,  $M = 3.3369$ ,  $SD = 0.57477$ ), further affirming its well-rounded and inclusive approach to sexuality education. This suggests that CSE is seen as a more complete and inclusive framework compared to traditional sex education, which may not always cover these areas in depth. All in all, stakeholders consider CSE as a more universal and usable model of students' well-being. Goldfarb and Lieberman (2021) underscores that effective CSE programs holistically engage learners by incorporating emotional intelligence and social skills alongside factual knowledge, supporting students' overall well-being.

Table 6 represents the perceived impact of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) on students' physical and mental well-being as considered by the respondents.

As presented in Table 6, the considered impact of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) on students' physical and mental health was interpreted as positive, having a grand mean of 3.37346 which had a standard deviation of 0.60012, corresponding to the description "Agree." It suggests that respondents generally recognize the beneficial influence of CSE on students' well-being.

The strongest agreement was on the statement, "I believe that CSE fosters self-esteem and emotional well-being among

students" (Item 5,  $M = 3.3820$ ,  $SD = 0.5857$ ), followed closely by the belief that "CSE can help students make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health" (Item 3,  $M = 3.4244$ ,  $SD = 0.5791$ ). These findings indicate that stakeholders particularly value the emotional and decision-making benefits of CSE in enhancing student health. Respondents also agreed that CSE helps reduce risky sexual behaviors (Item 4,  $M = 3.3607$ ,  $SD = 0.6251$ ) and positively influences both students' mental (Item 2,  $M = 3.3554$ ,  $SD = 0.6022$ ) and physical health (Item 1,  $M = 3.3448$ ,  $SD = 0.6083$ ), though these received slightly lower mean scores. Overall, the data reflects a consistent belief among stakeholders in the broad and beneficial impact of CSE on students' physical, emotional, and mental development. These findings align with those of Goldfarb and Lieberman (2021), who emphasize that comprehensive programs foster self-efficacy, emotional resilience, and responsible decision-making.

Overall, stakeholders view CSE as an important means to encourage students toward healthy lifestyles and informed decision-making.

Table 7 represents the respondents level of awareness regarding Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) programs in their school or community.

As presented in Table 7, stakeholders demonstrated a moderate degree of awareness regarding Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) programs, having a grand mean of 2.4668 along with a standard deviation of 0.7893, considered as "Disagree." It suggests that they are not fully aware of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) programs in their school or local community.

The highest level of agreement was found in the statement "I am aware of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) programs being implemented in my school or local community" (Item 1,  $M = 2.6366$ ,  $SD = 0.8009$ ) and interpreted as "Agree." However, the other two items concerning direct or indirect experience with them (Item 2,  $M = 2.3846$ ,  $SD = 0.7600$ ) and awareness of how long CSE has been operating locally (Item 3,  $M = 2.3793$ ,  $SD = 0.8068$ ) received lower means, both interpreted as "Disagree." These findings align with those of Goldfarb and Lieberman (2021), who emphasized that comprehensive programs foster self-efficacy, emotional resilience, and responsible decision-making.

This means that despite the existence of awareness, stakeholders are poorly aware of the information and duration of CSE courses.

Table 8 represents a summary of results for problem statement 1 regarding the five key indicators: familiarity with the concept, perception of CSE's inclusion in the school curriculum, perception of its holistic approach compared to traditional methods, perceived impact on students' physical and mental well-being, and overall awareness.

**Table 8.** Summary of Problem Statement 1

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Familiarity with the concept	2.5708	0.870	Agree
Perception of its inclusion in the school curriculum	2.887	0.900	Agree
Perception of its holistic approach compared to traditional approach	3.3411	0.593	Agree
Perceived impact on student physical and mental	3.3734	0.600	Agree
Awareness	2.4668	0.789	Disagree
<b>Grand Mean</b>			Agree
	2.9278	0.750	
	47	665	

As shown in Table 8, stakeholders are moderate to highly aware and supportive of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). They are fairly familiar with the idea (Item 1,  $M = 2.5708$ ) and are in agreement that it should be taught in school, particularly in secondary education (Item 2,  $M = 2.887$ ). This is consistent with studies such as Kirby (2007), who identified adolescence as a critical period for sexuality education due to its relevance to young people's developmental stages.

They consider CSE to be more effective and comprehensive compared to traditional sex education (Item 3,  $M = 3.3411$ ) and think that it is healthier and better for students' decision-making (Item 4,  $M = 3.3734$ ).

Knowledge of currently existing CSE programs in communities or schools is moderate (Item 5,  $M = 2.4668$ ), with some gaps in direct experience or knowledge. This mirrors concerns raised by Chandra-Mouli et al. (2015) regarding the uneven implementation and accessibility of sex education in various settings, highlighting the need to strengthen program visibility and community engagement. Overall, stakeholders prefer the integration of CSE and appreciate its value (Grand Mean  $\sim 2.9278$ ), although local awareness of programs could be enhanced.

Table 9 represents the respondents' perceptions on the cultural acceptability of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) within the communities.

Based on Table 9, cultural acceptability of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) indicated a moderate agreement toward stakeholders with a mean of 2.8196 and an SD of 0.7767.

They have slight agreement that parents in their area are favorable to CSE in the school (Item 1,  $M = 2.8912$ ,  $SD = 0.7193$ ) and that religious/cultural norms encourage its practice (Item 2,  $M = 2.8223$ ,  $SD = 0.7703$ ). But they also recognized that discussion about sexual and reproductive

health is a taboo in a lot of communities (Item 3,  $M = 2.7454$ ,  $SD = 0.8404$ ) indicating some cultural lingering resistance. These regressive beliefs and taboos are common challenges identified in diverse contexts, as noted by Chandra-Mouli et al. (2015), emphasizing the need for culturally sensitive approaches and community engagement strategies to address resistance.

On the whole, CSE is of moderate social acceptability, but regressive beliefs and taboos remain obstacles to total acceptability.

Table 10 represents the respondents' perceptions regarding the influence of moral values on the development of the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE).

Based on Table 10, stakeholders strongly agreed that moral values shape CSE, having a grand mean of 3.27585 with a standard deviation of 0.6324. They agreed that moral values should be emphasized in the revision of the CSE curriculum (Item 1,  $M = 3.2281$ ,  $SD = 0.6449$ ), and CSE should maintain cultural and moral sensitivity (Item 2,  $M = 3.3236$ ,  $SD = 0.61997$ ).

The findings of Ketting and Ivanova (2018), who pointed out that including moral and cultural considerations in CSE boosts acceptance and relevance among diverse communities, are consistent with this viewpoint. Similarly, culturally-sensitive CSE programs that honor local moral frameworks have a higher chance of being successfully implemented and supported, according to UNESCO (2018). Echoing the findings on the significance of context-specific adaptations of sexuality education (Miller et al., 2020), it implies that stakeholders are more likely to support CSE when it supports rather than contradicts dominant moral and cultural values.

Thus, it seems to be as long as it is in line with and does not conflict with moral and cultural values, those concerned support CSE.

Table 11 represents the respondents' perceptions on the role of religious values in shaping sex education in schools.

Based on Table 11, stakeholders have a moderate level of agreement on the influence of religious values in CSE, with a grand mean of 3.0318 and a standard deviation of 0.7776.

They agreed that sexuality education should be based on religious values (Item 1,  $M = 3.0875$ ,  $SD = 0.6998$ ) and that the program's content should align with the religious beliefs of the community and parents (Item 2,  $M = 3.0186$ ,  $SD = 0.7733$ ). Regarding the participation of religious leaders in the creation of the program's content, they showed a somewhat lower degree of agreement (Item 3,  $M = 2.9894$ ,  $SD = 0.8598$ ). Nonetheless, Chandra-Mouli et al. (2015) points out that religious leaders' participation in curriculum development can vary, occasionally as a result of worries about contradictory teachings or different ways that faith traditions view sexuality. Additionally, in order to promote acceptance while preserving evidence-based content,

UNESCO (2018) advises that sexuality education programs be sensitive to cultural and religious differences.

Overall, stakeholders appreciate religious perspectives being incorporated into CSE, albeit with varying degrees of focus on specific roles.

Table 12 represents the perceptions of respondents on various contextual factors influencing the implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE).

Based on Table 12, stakeholders' opinions regarding contextual factors influencing CSE were largely positive with a grand mean of 2.9713 and a standard deviation of 0.8745. Strong support was found for implementing CSE that covers key topics (Item 3,  $M = 3.2944$ ,  $SD = 0.9373$ ) and for training teachers to deliver CSE (Item 2,  $M = 3.5729$ ,  $SD = 0.5975$ ). Additionally, many respondents supported early age-appropriate CSE (Item 1,  $M = 2.9549$ ,  $SD = 0.9113$ ) and agreed that students should have the opportunity to participate (Item 4,  $M = 3.1379$ ,  $SD = 0.9437$ ).

The statement that opposed CSE because of personal, cultural, or religious beliefs received the least agreement (Item 5,  $M = 1.8966$ ,  $SD = 0.9825$ ), suggesting that most stakeholders do not oppose CSE for these reasons.

Studies like UNESCO (2018), which stress the significance of placing CSE within local cultural and social realities while guaranteeing thorough coverage of crucial topics, lend support to these conclusions. It is also commonly known that teacher preparation plays a crucial part in increasing program efficacy (e.g., Ketting & Ivanova, 2018). Moreover, studies by Kirby (2007) shows that active student participation combined with early, age-appropriate sexuality education enhances knowledge retention and encourages healthier behaviors. The lack of resistance based on cultural or personal beliefs is consistent with Chandra-Mouli et al., (2015), who noted that when programs are carefully tailored to community contexts, CSE is becoming more and more accepted.

Table 13 presents the summary of results for problem statement 2 regarding four key indicators: cultural acceptability, influence of moral values, influence of religious values and contextual factors.

**Table 13.** Summary of Problem Statement 2

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Cultural Acceptability	2.8196 33	0.7766 57	Agree
Influence of moral values	3.2758 5	0.6324 4	Agree
Influence of religious values	3.0318 33	0.7776 33	Agree
Contextual factors	2.9713 4	0.8744 5	Agree

<b>Grand Mean</b>	3.0246 64	0.7652 95	Agree
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Based on Table 13, a grand mean of 3.024664 and a standard deviation of 0.765295 indicate that stakeholders generally support Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) interpreted as "Agree." The highest level of support is for aligning CSE with religious values ( $M = 3.031833$ ), underscoring the significance of faith-based considerations. Positive opinions are also influenced by contextual factors ( $M = 2.97134$ ) and moral values ( $M = 3.27585$ ), which highlight the importance of culturally-sensitive content and teacher preparation. A slightly lower score for cultural acceptability ( $M = 2.819633$ ) indicated some hesitancy. Stakeholders generally support CSE as long as it is applied with observance of moral, religious, and cultural standards.

These results are consistent with other studies that highlight how crucial it is to modify sexuality education curricula to accommodate regional cultural and religious contexts. Sommer, Mmari, and Likindikoki (2015), for example, contend that in order to increase acceptance, effective sexuality education needs to honor and take into account local moral frameworks. In a similar layer, Chandra-Mouli et al. (2015) emphasize that incorporating religious and cultural values into CSE fosters community support and lessens opposition. Ketting and Ivanova (2018) also emphasize the importance of contextualization and teacher training, finding that programs that are adapted to local norms and carried out by qualified teachers are typically more successful and long-lasting. Moreover, UNESCO's (2018) guidelines support rights-based, culturally appropriate sexuality education that promotes evidence-based content while acknowledging local values.

Since this study used an embedded quantitative research design, the quantitative results were reported first, followed by the qualitative findings. The quantitative part was used to enhance and confirm the qualitative findings. A survey questionnaire with four choices per question was used to find out the familiarity among all the participants, views on, awareness about, attitudes toward, and concerns on sex education and comprehensive sexuality education. This merging of data enabled the quantitative findings to support the qualitative themes, so that the findings would be robust, reliable, and valid. The use of both data types in the research provided a deep awareness of the participants' views and the emergent patterns from the interviews.

The participants in this study were coded as students (S), teachers (T), school administrators (SA), parents (P), church members (R), and government officials (P).

**Stakeholders' Views on the Purpose and Effects of Sex Education and Comprehensive Sexuality Education on Students**

Stakeholders have diverse perspectives on the importance of sex education and CSE, where some believed that it is vital

in educating the young individuals about health, responsibility and relationships, others were concerned that it would create conflict with the cultural and religious views. These various views influenced how sex education and CSE was perceived and implemented in schools.

Based on problem statement 3: four (4) themes were generated. The first theme is (a) empowerment through knowledge, followed by (b) behavioral and emotional development, (c) cultural taboos and parental fears, and lastly, (d) readiness and implementation challenges.

### Theme 1: Empowerment Through Knowledge

Upon learning the participants' views on the purpose and effects of sex education or CSE on students, the participants stressed that CSE empowers students through providing them with accurate information on their body, relationships, and sexual health, preventing sexually transmitted infections and unintended pregnancies. They considered CSE as a crucial intervention for building awareness, averting sexually transmitted diseases, and curbing unplanned pregnancies among young people.

This is consistent with Lafontan, Jones, and Lama (2024) who found that CSE promotes critical thinking, self-confidence, and empathy while tackling important issues such as reproductive health, sexual rights, gender equality and violence prevention. In the same vein, Becker (2019) established that students tend to be more likely to postpone sex, use contraception regularly, and make informed choices—leading to a reduction in teen pregnancy rates.

To intensify the claim of this theme, here are some of the participants' responses:

*“CSE can give young people the facts they need about puberty, reproduction, contraception, and also the sexual health.” - T1*

*“...there are informed choices about sexual activity, use of contraceptive pills, and relationships. There's a decreased likelihood of engaging in unprotected sex, multiple partners, or early sexual habits.” – SA2*

Generally, the participants emphasized that exposure to good sex education helps students make informed, responsible decisions, thereby advancing their health and empowerment.

### Theme 2: Behavioral and Emotional Development

Aside from young people's empowerment, participants noted that CSE supports the behavioral and emotional development of students. They observed that CSE fosters self-knowledge, resulting in vigilance toward their actions, emotional stability, and increased confidence in students' personal decisions.

Chansa et al. (2024) confirm that comprehensive sexuality education programs provide adolescents in acquiring decision-making skills, diminish participation in risk

behaviors, and foster emotional resilience. Furthermore, Chavula et al. (2022) stress the importance of having a comprehensive approach to sexuality education—the one that integrates emotional and social aspects, including managing peer pressure, respecting personal boundaries, and increasing self-confidence.

To intensify the claim of this theme, here are some of the participants' responses:

*“CSE helps students feel more confident and more emotionally secure because they will understand themselves better.” - S4*

Presuming the responses, this theme acknowledges CSE offers deeper than providing information. It is significant in shaping students' emotional quotient, responsible behavior, developing their maturity and overall well-being.

### Theme 3: Cultural Taboos and Parental Fears

Although most participants recognized the advantages of CSE, a few participants had concerns based on cultural beliefs and parental fears. Parents and teachers, especially of conservative inclinations, were worried that exposing children to CSE at an early age could stimulate curiosity or make them overly sexually aware too soon. These concerns were usually bound to traditional norms that hold sex as a sensitive subject, particular among younger students.

Goldfarb and Lieberman (2021) accentuated that religious and cultural factors can greatly impede the delivery of CSE, highlighting that societal awkwardness around sexuality tends to influence both teacher confidence and parental acceptance. Likewise, Louw (2021) underscored that in certain cultures, the subject of sex is skirted with apprehension that such conversations would encourage deleterious behavior instead of responsible decision-making.

To intensify the claim of this theme, here are some of the participants' responses:

*“Our pupils have malice today. In elementary, you have to be careful. The names of body parts, sometimes when you say that, the kids will laugh.” - SA1*

This finding indicates that parent resistance and cultural taboos are the most important obstacles to integrating CSE, calling for culturally informed methods and parent-teacher collaboration in order to build understanding and acceptance of sexuality education.

### Theme 4: Readiness and Implementation Challenges

The participants emphasized that the success of CSE largely depends on teachers' preparation. Readiness does not only influence how confidently educators deliver lessons but also determines their ability to communicate with parents and the community at large. Teachers are major agents in promoting CSE and must be adequately supported through training and appropriate materials.

This concurs with the World Health Organization (2017), which emphasizes the importance of equipping teachers to provide life skills and sexual health education in collaboration with families and communities.

Correspondingly, UNESCO (2015) reported that despite the growing need for CSE, teacher training is limited and typically does not extend beyond short in-service programs. Consequently, teachers perceive that they lack preparedness for discussing sensitive issues and so adopt discomfort or avoidance.

To intensify the claim of this theme, here are some of the participants' responses:

*"We have to be well-versed of it so that we can also explain well to our ahh.. parents, to our community of this sexual education thing." - SA3*

This theme stresses that without comprehensive training, culturally-appropriate materials, and transparent and open communication with stakeholders, the effective roll-out of CSE will remain challenged on a large scale.

Based on problem statement 4: four (4) themes were generated. The first theme is (a) religious and moral foundations, (b) respect and tolerance for religious diversity, (c) cultural conservatism and social taboos, and lastly, (d) a gradual shift in norms and acceptance.

#### **Theme 5: Religious and Moral Foundations**

The participants emphasized that religious and moral principles, particularly those from Catholic teachings, tend to dominate attitudes toward sex education. Many stakeholders articulated that sexual intercourse should be reserved for marriage, upholding the stance of the Catholic Church that sex is sacramental and intended for a man and woman bound in a sacramental union (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2018). Such strong convictions tend to lead to apprehension or opposition to the use of CSE in schools.

Religious beliefs not only influence family expectations but also affect educators' responses to teaching sexuality education. Teachers in some instances might avoid or water down CSE materials to fit into dominant moral standards. As Marson (2019) stated, there is a need to improve the training of teachers—particularly in environments where religious and cultural beliefs highly impact educational curriculum. Appropriate training prepares teachers to handle sensitive subjects with cultural and religious sensitivity but still provide correct and inclusive information.

To intensify the claim of this theme, here are some of the participants' responses:

*"Catholic churches think sex is beautiful but reserved for marriage....premarital sex can be avoided if the facilitator delivered it properly." - P1*

This theme affirms the demand for sensitivity to principles, cultural and religious consciousness in CSE

implementation to intensify the acceptance of CSE across religious groups.

#### **Theme 6: Respect and Tolerance for Religious Diversity**

The participants emphasized that the classroom contains students with different religions, comfort level and backgrounds. It influenced their values and beliefs regarding to sex education. Educators played a significant role in promoting an inclusive and supportive environment wherein students felt valued and safe.

According to UNESCO (2020), CSE included values like relationship, equality, love and respect to promote willingness to accept the intercultural setting. However, UNESCO (2024) claims that CSE highlights the principles of different topics such as respect, inclusivity, equality, nondiscrimination, empathy, accountability, and reciprocity to recognize wholesome relationships and family life.

To intensify the claim of this theme, here are some of the participants' responses:

*"If the students have different religions, we need to understand and expect their beliefs and when teaching sex education." - T3*

This theme exposes that by promoting an inclusive environment regarding CSE in a classroom, teachers need to balance the learning goals with respect to everyone's religious and moral values especially when discussing about sex education. Nonetheless, it does not imply to avoid a topic regarding CSE but to engage in it with openness and mutual understanding equipped with culturally appropriate techniques and strategies.

#### **Theme 7: Cultural Conservatism and Social Taboos**

Cultural conservatism played a significant role influencing societal norms and values. It led to the results of discussions on sex education and CSE considered as private, sensitive topics or social taboo that restricts open conversations on sex education due to religious, cultural factors, traditional customs and moral values in the Philippines (Yamat et al., 2023; Hungo & Casinillo, 2023).

Ballal et al. (2020) underlined that parents in a community acknowledge that sex education is important but often avoided to discuss it due to the perception that their children are too young, thinking that they might instill inappropriate curiosity. Besides, cultural norms stigmatize sexuality as a topic that must be averted.

To intensify the claim of this theme, here are some of the participants' responses:

*"In our culture, as Filipino topics about sex are mostly considered private or even taboo... - SA4*

*"... I mentioned a while ago, they are not used to using words, taboo sa atin, when we are talking about sexuality or sex education". -SA3*

This theme recognizes that cultural conservatism aids in conserving the moral values of the past, thereby it does not tolerate discussions on CSE which is considered as taboo in the communities. Such taboos place serious obstacles in educating the youth on CSE, as both parents and teachers are hesitant to discuss such issues in an open manner due to perceived cultural and religious pressures (Yamat et al., 2023; Hungo & Casinillo, 2023; Ballal et al., 2020).

### Theme 8: Gradual Shift in Norms and Acceptance

Teen pregnancy has been considered a delicate and stigmatized problem in the Philippines because of deep-rooted cultural, religious, and moral values. In the past, young parents were traditionally shamed, judged, and ostracized. Communities now gradually start showing a more liberal and accepting orientation toward teen pregnancy, which is accepted as a reality confronted by many youths.

Salvador et al. (2016) noted that Filipino society is increasingly becoming tolerant toward adolescent pregnancy, recognizing the social shame yet also learning to embrace having young parents. This change indicates a greater societal transformation—one from judgment to empathy and compassion.

So, too, did Galabo and Gempes (2017) underscore that in spite of ongoing stigma, there remains greater eagerness to respond to adolescent pregnancy more openly. This new attitude makes it possible to discuss issues more constructively, supportively, and inclusively, especially about CSE.

To intensify the claim of this theme, here are some of the participants' responses:

*"...as Christian we're actually pretty open to talking about those things because it really has a lot of good effects on young people today." – P4*

As a whole, the Philippines is starting to see a cultural shift on how teen pregnancy is viewed. Although there are still challenges and stigma, communities are increasingly demonstrating greater tolerance and acceptance, indicating a slow but significant change toward more accepting and empathetic attitudes.

### Stakeholders' Distinction between Tradition and CSE and their Implementation Experiences

Stakeholders distinguished between traditional sex education and CSE and frequently faced challenges when implementing CSE due to differences in content and approach. Their experiences reflected the difficulties of integrating modern, comprehensive programs within traditional cultural frameworks.

Based on problem statement 5: five (5) themes and 1 subtheme were generated. The first theme is the (a) holistic approach of CSE vs. the biological focus of traditional, (b) delivery and methodology, with a subtheme of comprehensive

and inclusive teaching vs. limited instruction, (c) improved students' awareness and openness, (d) teacher readiness and cultural resistance, and lastly, (e) perceived benefits and concerns.

### Theme 9: Holistic Approach of CSE vs. Biological Focus of Traditional

The participants made a sharp distinction between traditional sex education and CSE. Traditional sex education tended to focus on the biological realities of human sexuality—like anatomy, reproduction, and preventing sexually transmitted diseases (Mandigo, 2020). It generally steered clear of more expansive discussions on emotions, relationships, or social responsibility.

Conversely, CSE has a whole-school and inclusive approach. It addresses a comprehensive range of subject matters such as consent, emotional wellbeing, communication, healthy relationships, and gender. It has a wider scope that aims to empower students with correct, age-appropriate, and socially appropriate information to make sound choices (Sekhar et al., 2024).

CSE's developmental and inclusive character addresses the varied needs of students, such as those belonging to the LGBTQ community, by acknowledging the psychological, emotional, and social aspects of sexuality (Fernandes & Junnarkar, 2019). Ketting et al. (2020) also note that CSE encourages a more profound understanding of relationships, gender roles, and sexual rights—domains not covered in traditional sex education.

To intensify the claim of this theme, here are some of the participants' responses:

*"Traditional sex education is more limited. It usually focuses only on the biological aspects of reproduction. CSE is broader; it includes physical, emotional, mental and social aspects of sexuality." - SA4*

To give clarity to this theme, sex education has a narrow focus on the biological aspects of sexuality, CSE provides a wider, more inclusive, and comprehensive approach. Not only does this improve the students' understanding but also promotes sensible behavior, empathy, and healthier interhuman relationships.

### Theme 10: Delivery and Methodology

The mode of delivery is the key to the success of sex education. The participants highlighted that CSE is more formal, systematic, and well-planned, whereas traditional sex education is ambiguous, restricted, and, at times, delivered with awkwardness or embarrassment. Proper delivery, particularly in sensitive areas such as sexuality, calls for proper language use, content relevant to age, and culturally sensitive methods.

To intensify the claim of this theme, here are some of the participants' responses:

*“We need to use a word correctly and appropriately in every topic. Because some words are not suitable so we need to be careful to choosing the correct and appropriate word in terms of teaching sex education.” – T2*

Based on the World Health Organization (2017), the usefulness of sexuality education is greatly improved when content and information is ensured to provide in a respectful manner and relevant. The delivery modes of the topic should be age appropriate and culturally aligned to make sure students absorb information and apply it in everyday life. Aside from this, the language, mode, tone and attitudes of educators have a huge impact on whether or not students feel comfortable to open themselves for discussion. According to UNESCO (2018), a non-discriminate, judgmental and respectful attitude promotes acceptance and openness and lessens the stigma.

### **Subtheme 10.1: Comprehensive and Inclusive Teaching vs. Limited Instruction**

Participants emphasized that the CSE advocates students to be more respectful and provide different kinds of needs in terms of social, emotional and cultural aspects of sexual orientations. It may hold mutual respect, empathy, boundaries, and healthy relationships. It is opposite to traditional sex education, which has a limited and narrow study of biology in terms of topics such as reproduction and can lead to having issues related to emotions, prevention of disease, gender identity, and relationships with others.

According to this can hold evidence to ,(2018) UNESCO distinction by emphasizing CSE enables students to explore diverse values and attitudes while conveying life skills such as communication and critical thinking. In comparison, having a limited education has a possibility of leaving students misinformed about CSE. Based on Hall et al. (2016), this can result to students receiving inadequate information on sex education who will less likely understand serious aspects, in terms of reproductive health and safe sex practices or execution.

To intensify the claim of this theme, here are some of the participants' responses:

*“I want CSE to be inclusive because it addresses different needs and also its consider our siblings LGBTQ. It highlights the boundaries, mutual respect and healthy relationship and promotes empathy, strong communication and respect.” – SA2*

This theme depicts that inclusive and holistic delivery fosters a whole and realistic appreciation of sexuality, whereas curtailed instruction encumbers students in their capacity to make well-informed choices regarding their relationships and health.

### **Theme 11: Improved Students' Awareness and Openness**

Traditional Sex Education and CSE have both played a role in broadening students' awareness and acceptability

toward their bodies, relationships, and safety. Participants indicated that these lessons enabled learners to grasp key issues like consent, self-esteem, emotional health, and healthy boundaries. This information equips students to make responsible and informed choices about their health and interactions with others.

Correct anatomical vocabulary, consent, and healthy relationships were also viewed as key components of a successful sexuality education. Such openness develops clarity, eliminates confusion, and enhances self-protection, especially for younger students. Incorporating these subjects indicates a wider, more sophisticated understanding of human development, as well as of interpersonal relationships.

As evaluated by the World Health Organization (2015), enhanced awareness by means of sexuality education results in more knowledge of body autonomy, personal boundaries, and reproductive health. Analogously, Goldfarb and Lieberman (2021) emphasize that frank and stigma-free discussion regarding CSE in school supports more active student participation and more substantive dialogue. These strategies eventually enhance students' capacity to make reflective, informed decisions throughout their lifespan.

To intensify the claim of this theme, here are some of the participants' responses:

*“I agree with CSE content that promotes values like respect, responsibility, and self-awareness. Teaching about consent, personal safety, and healthy relationships is very important.” - SA4*

This finding indicates that all in all, both CSE and traditional sex education—when presented well—contribute significantly toward making students more conscious, responsible, and self-assured human beings.

### **Theme 12: Teacher Readiness and Cultural Resistance**

Teachers' faith and dominant cultural beliefs have a bearing on their ease of delivering sex education and CSE. Most teachers showed resistance to addressing these subjects on the account of conservative values, fear of parental opposition, or unease with raising sensitive issues with students. Such reluctance reveals the importance of culturally-responsive training and dialogue between stakeholders.

A few participants mentioned that although early resistance was widespread, good training, simple communication, and institutional teamwork assisted in building CSE support will surely help. In the absence of proper preparation and direction, teachers might feel ill-equipped or apprehensive on delivering sexuality-related material, particularly within culturally conservative environments.

As Hand (2022) presented, teacher hesitance usually results from inexperience, training, and institutional backing. Cross-sectoral collaboration and professional development programs are important to guarantee that teachers feel

qualified to teach CSE comfortably and sensitively. School, community, and government institutions supporting culturally informed strategies can minimize resistance and create readiness among teachers.

To intensify the claim of this theme, here are some of the participants' responses:

*"Some were hesitant, but with communication and training, many now support it. My concern, especially from parents, is early exposure." – SA4*

This theme illustrates that teacher readiness and resistance to change are not merely issues to be resolved through skill development, but also systems of support congruent with local values and educational objectives.

### **Theme 13: Perceived Benefits and Concerns**

The participants expressed a mix of opinions on CSE, showing an equal balance between perceived advantages and disadvantages. Most felt that CSE is important in enabling students to make wise choices, prevent teen pregnancies, and safeguard themselves from sexually transmitted infections (STIs) through the dissemination of proper, age-related information. These perceptions emphasize CSE's role in enriching health outcomes and advocating responsible action.

However, a small number of participants signified that CSE could be at odds with religious or traditional expectations. There were also worries of displaying children to more information than they were prepared for at an early age or misconceive lessons as intriguing early sexual activity. These disturbances stressed the need for culturally sensitive implementation and teaching.

Comprehensive sex education, although more in line with traditional ideologies in its abstinence-based approach, tends to leave out important issues like preventative permission, and psychological state, thus lessening its efficacy in addressing contemporary sexual health issues (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2020; Goldfarb & Lieberman, 2021). However, CSE prioritizes inclusivity, consent, and respect for gender, which, as argued by UNESCO (2023), results in better-informed decisions and improved overall sexual and reproductive health.

To intensify the claim of this theme, here are some of the participants' responses:

*"...it also avoids teenage pregnancy... It avoids the spread like HIV and STIs... many young people got pregnant because they had no idea there is a program for those aged 18." – T3*

This theme suggests that although there is an increasing support for CSE because of its preventative and educational advantages, cultural resistance and age-appropriateness concerns persist. These issues should be addressed by respectful dialogue and adequate teacher training to ensure that it is implemented effectively.

### **4.1 SYNTHESIS OF INTERPRETATION**

The research study achieved data saturation after conducting interviews with twenty-four (24) participants. The researchers ensured a careful identification and analysis of the multiple themes, guaranteeing a thorough and holistic understanding of the topic. Data sufficiency was discovered when the researchers found that no current information appeared. It was when the responses of the stakeholders showed the similar understanding about their perspective on how essential sex education is and its impact on a students' overall state.

The gathered data showed that the stakeholders (eg., students, parents, school administrators, religious leaders, teachers, and politicians) shared their dissimilar standpoints, and thoughtful experiences regarding their perspectives of the significance of sex education.

The outcome of this research study reveals that the implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in the Philippines shows a complex relationship between educational advantages and socio-cultural challenges. Fundamentally, Lev Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) indicates a strong significance on the social construction of knowledge through historical and cultural contexts. This standpoint supports how stakeholder views of CSE from teachers, parents, or lawmakers are significantly influenced by social norms, religious beliefs, and cultural values. In the Philippines, cultural taboos and moral frameworks are so rooted that these standards notably impact the discussion around sex education, constantly leading to opposition.

Along with Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986) lays the foundation for understanding how people develop their attitude by way of observational learning and social pressure. The way the media figures CSE, beyond the educational system and public conversation, have a huge impact on how people view it and how their actions are adapted. Depending on the dominant messages that stakeholders observe in their environment, their exposure to these influences guides them to either accept or reject CSE.

As a final point, in accord with Icek Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (1991), behavior is a result of intention, which is itself shaped by attitudes, subjective standards, and viewed behavioral control. This theory is essential for assessing stakeholders' willingness to accept or reject CSE.

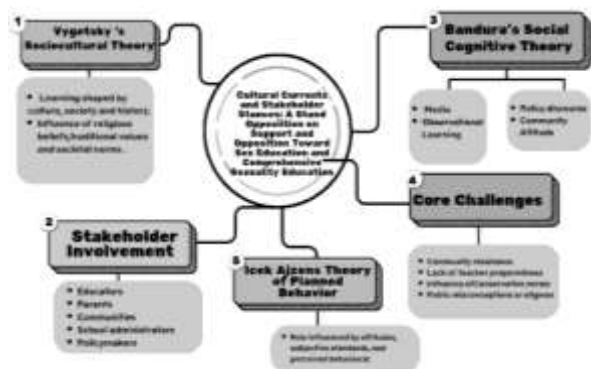
These theories bring a multi-dimensional outlook on the opposition and support encompassing CSE. They collectively emphasize how the acceptance and implementation of sex education is influenced by institutional readiness, social impact, cultural norms, and deeply held personal convictions.

To conclude, the research results highlight the necessity of using evidence-based, culturally sensitive, and inclusive strategies to advance CSE. Overcoming the problems necessitates more than curriculum changes. It also requires

community-wide participation that respects the cultural fabric of Philippine society, complete teacher training, and stakeholder collaboration, all while providing young people with the information and skills they need to grow in a healthy manner.

The figure below depicts the emergent framework of this study, showcasing the themes classified from the interview questions: two (2) themes under Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory are learning shaped by culture, society, and history, influence of religious beliefs, traditional values, and societal norms, five (5) themes under stakeholder involvement of educators, parents, communities, school administrator and policymaker, four (4) themes under Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory are media, observational learning, policy discourse, community attitude, four (4) themes under core challenges are community resistance, lack of teacher preparedness, influence of conservative norms, public misconception or stigma, one (1) theme under Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior is role influenced by attitudes, subjective standards, and perceived behavior.

**Figure 1.** Emerging Framework for Synthesis of Interpretation (Researcher-Made)



## 5. CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusions

Based on the research questions, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Although the majority of stakeholders are at least familiar with CSE—having heard about the concept in schools or social media—there remains a notable gap in comprehensive awareness and first-hand experience of CSE implementation. Stakeholders perceive CSE to be more comprehensive than traditional sex education because it covers emotional, intellectual, and behavioral development.
2. Cultural taboos, moral, and religious values continue to affect stakeholder perceptions. While there are some oppositions, especially among conservative or religious groups—increasing openness exists as a result of rising incidence of teenage pregnancy and

related social issues. Stakeholders underscore that CSE must align with community values and advocate for curriculum revisions that are contextually appropriate and culturally-sensitive.

3. Stakeholders verify that CSE empowers students with life skills and critical knowledge to make well-informed, responsible decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive health. CSE is praised for increasing students' self-confidence, emotional maturity, and ability to participate in respectful relationships.
4. Filipino religious and cultural norms pose challenges as well as opportunities. Conservative views typically inhibit open discussions, but an evolution in attitude among stakeholders, who now recognize the necessity for early intervention, age-appropriate, to address pressing issues like teenage pregnancy, is apparent.
5. Stakeholders distinguish between CSE and traditional approaches to sex education and perceive the former as more holistic, organized, and developmentally appropriate. Traditional sex education is perceived as narrow and biology-oriented, whereas CSE encompasses discussions on consent, relationships, and rights. Nonetheless, hesitancy remains due to teacher readiness and potential misinterpretation by students.

### 5.2 Limitations

This study has several notable limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings.

1. This study focused solely on stakeholders' views, awareness, and understanding of sex education and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) as a whole. It did not differentiate the perspectives of each stakeholder group.
2. The researchers did not investigate the actual implementation or effectiveness of the CSE curriculum in classroom settings at the basic education level.
3. The study was conducted in three (3) selected barangays in Bacolor, Pampanga based on population size. Although this method permitted the collection of a considerable number of responses, it could potentially restrict the generalizability of the findings to diverse or larger populations. The study is confined to selected schools and barangays in Bacolor, Pampanga. Accordingly, the results might not be applied to other locales or provinces that are potentially different with respect to socio-cultural norms, economic status, or school facilities.
4. The participants are limited to specific groups such as students, teachers, administrators, parents, church members, government officials within selected locations. It may not entirely capture the range of views among the wider Filipino population,

especially those from under represented or marginalized sectors.

### 5.3 Recommendations

As aligned according to the conclusions, the following recommendations were drawn:

1. Awareness campaigns about the CSE goals and schools and community forums that benefits at tackle myths and misconceptions regarding CSE. Additionally, government agencies like the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the Department of Education should provide teacher training and community workshops with culturally appropriate materials that can enhance understanding and acceptance among stakeholders. Furthermore, this training should focus on CSE content, classroom management, and creating an inclusive environment, along with evaluation tools for ongoing improvement.
2. Religious and cultural leaders should be engaged in CSE program planning to ensure contextual acceptance alongside psychosocial support and counseling services to improve students' mental and emotional well-being. In addition, future studies should include healthcare workers and childcare workers' views.
3. Since stakeholders' verify that CSE successfully provides students with significant life skills for making well-informed decisions on their sexual and reproductive health, it may be recommended that schools continue to strengthen and integrate CSE into the curriculum. CSE programs must remain age-appropriate, inclusive and culturally-sensitive while providing regular training to teachers to help them deliver their lessons effectively and efficiently.
4. Given that Filipino religious and cultural norms present both challenges and opportunities for implementing CSE, it may be recommended that stakeholders adopt a culturally-sensitive and context-specific strategy to CSE delivery. Further, open communication with parents, religious groups and local communities can help build trust and support for CSE.
5. As schools recognize CSE as more holistic, organized and developmentally appropriate compared to traditional sex education, it may be recommended that schools should prioritize CSE's full implementation. While in addressing the hesitancy of teachers and the problem of student misinterpretation, teachers must be given targeted training, comprehensible lesson guides, and ongoing professional development.
6. Future researchers should explore mixed-method studies on the implementation of comprehensive sexuality education in classrooms, focusing on instructional strategies, curriculum, teacher

preparedness, student learning outcomes and CSE's effects on student behavior and health. In addition, future research should replicate this study across diverse regions and cultural settings in the Philippines, including rural, urban, and indigenous groups, to uncover varying attitudes and acceptance levels.

7. Lastly, future researchers may investigate the alignment of education policies with stakeholder needs and global standards in sexuality education to enhance advocacy and policy integration and its possible adaptation in the Philippine context.

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