

Original Article

Stakeholder Perspectives on Junior High School Integration of Comprehensive Sexuality Education: Implications for Educational Leadership and Management

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Abstract. Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) provides junior high school learners with appropriate knowledge related to sexuality. This reform enhances decision-making skills and understanding, and helps prevent sexually transmitted diseases, sexual abuse, and early pregnancy. Understanding stakeholders' perspectives—parents, teachers, and school heads—is crucial for effective integration of comprehensive sexuality education. In the Philippines, policies such as the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Law (RA 10354) mandate that the Department of Education (DepEd) integrate CSE into the basic education curriculum. However, limited studies have examined stakeholders' perspectives on CSE integration in a city in Region X, Philippines, particularly their awareness, attitudes, preparedness, and perceived barriers. This study assessed stakeholders' perspectives regarding CSE integration in the junior high school curriculum using a qualitative descriptive design. The study involved nineteen stakeholders from public junior high schools in a city in Region X, Philippines, who were purposively selected. Data were gathered via semi-structured interviews and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2013) thematic analysis. Five themes emerged: (1) comprehensive sexuality education as protection rather than promotion, (2) uneven knowledge and readiness among stakeholders, (3) cultural and religious sensitivity as a central tension, (4) shared responsibility between school and family, and (5) CSE as a foundation for lifelong decision-making. While stakeholders recognized CSE's protective and developmental value, gaps in awareness, limited training, and socio-cultural concerns influenced the integration of CSE. These findings underscore the importance of educational leadership in strengthening stakeholder collaboration, enhancing teacher preparedness, and promoting culturally responsive strategies to support CSE integration in junior high schools.

Keywords: *Comprehensive Sexuality Education; Educational leadership; Junior High School; Stakeholder perspectives; Thematic analysis*

Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) has been widely recognized as an essential component of adolescent education, as it promotes sexual health, gender equality, and responsible decision-making. Rather than being limited to biological concepts, CSE encompasses a holistic approach that integrates knowledge, values, attitudes, relationships, and life skills necessary for learners' overall well-being (Goldfarb & Lieberman, 2021). Previous studies collectively emphasize that CSE, when delivered in an age-appropriate and culturally responsive manner, enhances adolescents' capacity to make informed and responsible choices regarding their sexual health (Goldfarb et al., 2025). Moreover, evidence suggests that effective CSE implementation contributes to reducing risks such as teenage pregnancy, sexual harassment, and sexually transmitted diseases by fostering responsible behavior and critical decision-making among young people (Chanda et al., 2024). These findings highlight the multidimensional role of CSE in supporting both learners' personal development and health outcomes.

In the Philippine context, the integration of CSE is supported by national policies and ongoing educational reforms. Republic Act No. 10354 and Department of Education (DepEd) Order No. 31, s. In 2018, the institutionalization of CSE was mandated within the basic education curriculum. This integration is operationalized through various subject areas, including MAPEH, Science, Araling Panlipunan, Edukasyong Pagpapakatao, and Personality Development (Manito, 2024). Furthermore, the MATATAG Curriculum, as a recent reform initiative, emphasizes holistic learner development, including socio-emotional learning, character formation, and values education (Kilag, 2024). While these policies demonstrate strong institutional support, their implementation at the school level presents complexities. The sensitive nature of CSE topics, coupled with cultural and societal norms, often creates challenges for educators in delivering content effectively and appropriately. Thus, policy mandates alone are insufficient without considering the contextual realities that influence how CSE is interpreted and practiced within schools.

Despite these policy frameworks, the implementation of CSE in Philippine schools continues to encounter significant challenges. Existing literature points to issues such as inadequate teacher training, limited instructional resources, and insufficient institutional support, all of which hinder effective delivery (Feliza, 2025). More importantly, these challenges reveal deeper concerns related to school leadership and management. Effective curriculum integration, particularly for sensitive and value-laden topics like CSE, requires not only technical competence but also strong instructional leadership, continuous professional development, and systematic evaluation of teaching practices (Chavula et al., 2022). These interconnected factors suggest that successful CSE implementation depends heavily on school leaders' capacity to foster collaboration, provide guidance, and create a supportive environment for both teachers and learners.

Educational leadership, therefore, plays a critical role in bridging the gap between policy and practice. School heads, as instructional leaders, are responsible for guiding curriculum implementation, supporting teachers, and ensuring that learning environments are responsive to students' developmental needs. Their influence extends to shaping school culture, strengthening teacher motivation, and promoting stakeholder collaboration, all of which are essential in addressing the sensitivities associated with CSE (Culduz, 2023). Through effective leadership practices, school administrators can allocate resources strategically, facilitate professional development opportunities, and ensure that CSE is delivered in a culturally sensitive and pedagogically sound manner.

However, despite the growing body of research and policy support, a significant gap remains in the Philippine context, particularly in Region X. While international and regional studies have examined factors affecting CSE implementation, there is limited empirical evidence that captures the perspectives of key stakeholders, such as parents, teachers, and school heads, regarding its integration at the Junior High School level. More specifically, stakeholder perceptions related to awareness, attitudes, preparedness, and perceived barriers, as well as their implications for educational leadership and management, remain underexplored. Addressing this gap is crucial, as stakeholder engagement is a determining factor in the success or failure of curriculum reforms, especially those involving sensitive topics like sexuality education.

In this regard, the present study seeks to assess stakeholder perspectives on the integration of Comprehensive Sexuality Education in the Junior High School curriculum in Region X, Philippines. By examining the views and experiences of key stakeholders, this study aims to provide insights to inform leadership practices, enhance policy implementation, and support the development of more effective, context-responsive strategies for CSE integration.

This study is anchored on Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), Instructional Leadership Theory (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985), and Change Management Theory (Lewin, 1947) as an integrated conceptual framework to explain how stakeholder awareness, readiness, and institutional change occur in the integration of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). Rather than functioning independently, these theories describe a connected process in which individual perceptions shape leadership actions that lead to organizational transformation.

Social Cognitive Theory explains how stakeholders' awareness and attitudes toward CSE develop through the interaction among personal beliefs, social influences, and environmental contexts. According to this perspective, individuals interpret new educational initiatives through the lens of their prior experiences and confidence in their ability to implement or support them. Research shows that self-efficacy and attitudes play a central role in how educators perceive and adopt new practices (Fahrback et al., 2026). This theory, therefore, clarifies that stakeholder awareness is not merely informational but is socially constructed and influenced by internal and external factors.

Building on this, Instructional Leadership Theory explains how school leaders translate stakeholder awareness into readiness through deliberate leadership practices and decision-making. Instructional leaders influence teacher competence and instructional quality by providing professional development, supervision, and resources. Empirical studies indicate that instructional leadership significantly impacts teachers' professional growth and instructional practices, thereby enhancing readiness for educational reforms (Gaston, 2024). In the context of CSE, when stakeholders exhibit uncertainty or resistance, school heads make strategic decisions to organize training, allocate resources, and foster collaborative environments that strengthen teachers' confidence and preparedness. Thus, instructional leadership practices serve as the mechanism that converts awareness into actionable readiness.

Change Management Theory provides the institutional perspective by explaining how these leadership-driven efforts lead to sustained organizational change. Lewin's stages of unfreezing, change, and refreezing illustrate how schools move from existing practices to the integration of new initiatives. In the unfreezing stage, leaders address resistance and cultural sensitivities through awareness campaigns and stakeholder engagement (Ecloss & Joseph, 2024). During the change stage, leadership actions focus on implementing new practices such as curriculum integration and capacity-building programs. Finally, in the refreezing stage, these practices are embedded into school routines, policies, and support systems. Research on educational change highlights that effective change processes require leadership that manages resistance, builds stakeholder readiness, and aligns reforms with school culture (Amo-Adjei, 2024). This underscores that institutional change is achieved not only through structural adjustments but also through strategic leadership decision-making.

Together, these theories present a coherent and dynamic process: Social Cognitive Theory explains how awareness and attitudes are formed, Instructional Leadership Theory explains how leaders respond through practices and decisions to build readiness, and Change Management Theory explains how these combined efforts result in institutional change. This integrated framework also supports the interpretation of the study's findings. Themes related to stakeholder attitudes and misconceptions are interpreted through the lens of Social Cognitive Theory and addressed through leadership strategies such as awareness campaigns and inclusive communication. Themes on limited preparedness and resource constraints are linked to instructional leadership decisions involving professional development and resource allocation. Meanwhile, challenges related to resistance and implementation barriers are analyzed through Change Management Theory, highlighting leadership roles in facilitating transition and sustaining reform efforts. While three theories are presented, the study primarily anchors its analysis on Instructional Leadership Theory as the central lens, with Social Cognitive Theory and Change Management Theory serving as supporting perspectives for interpreting stakeholder perceptions and institutional processes.

Thus, the study emphasizes that the successful integration of CSE depends not only on stakeholder perceptions but also on how educational leaders strategically respond to these perceptions through informed leadership practices and decision-making processes that drive institutional change. This study is limited to public junior high schools in one city in Region X; thus, the findings should be interpreted as context-specific rather than representative of the entire region.

Research Objectives

This study aims to examine stakeholders' perceptions of the integration of Comprehensive Sexuality Education

(CSE) into the junior high school curriculum and to determine their implications for educational leadership and management.

1. To describe stakeholders' level of awareness and attitudes toward CSE integration.
2. To evaluate stakeholders' level of preparedness in CSE integration
3. To identify the barriers influencing CSE integration.
4. To analyze how these stakeholder perceptions inform instructional leadership practices and leadership decision-making in facilitating effective and culturally responsive CSE integration.

Methodology

Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative descriptive design as it allows for a clear and straightforward description of stakeholders' perspectives on the integration of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in the Junior High School curriculum. This approach focuses on presenting participants' views in their own words while remaining close to the data and minimizing extensive theoretical interpretation, making it appropriate for examining practical educational concerns such as awareness, attitudes, preparedness, and perceived barriers (Doyle et al., 2020). Qualitative descriptive design is particularly useful in generating context-based findings that can inform practice and policy (Neergaard et al., 2009). Compared to other qualitative approaches, phenomenology emphasizes the in-depth exploration of lived experiences, while grounded theory aims to develop new theoretical models. In contrast, this study seeks to describe and organize stakeholder perceptions rather than to generate theory or uncover deep philosophical meanings, making qualitative descriptive design the most appropriate method for producing practical, actionable insights for educational leadership.

Research Environment

The study was conducted in a city in Region X, where many of the residents' primary sources of income are agriculture and fishing. The city has 50 barangays, with 59.27% of its population living in urban areas and 40.73% residing in rural areas. This study is focused on public junior high schools under the DepEd Division, which became a full-fledged division in Region X in 2008. At the time of the study, CSE was mandated at the policy level through DepEd guidelines; however, its implementation at the school level was not fully standardized. As such, participants' responses reflect a combination of actual classroom practices, institutional expectations, and personal interpretations of CSE integration.

Participants and Sampling Technique

A total of 19 stakeholders participated in the study, consisting of ten (10) parents, six (6) teachers, and three (3) school heads who were purposively selected from junior high schools within the study scope. Their insights were considered valuable in understanding the integration of CSE. Participant recruitment continued until data saturation was achieved, defined as the point at which successive interviews yielded no new codes, themes, or relevant insights and responses became repetitive across participants (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). Data saturation was assessed across the dataset and within stakeholder groups. For parents and teachers, saturation was reached when responses became repetitive, and no new themes emerged. For school heads, although only three participants were included, saturation was deemed sufficient given the homogeneity of their roles and the consistency of their leadership perspectives. This indicates that the data collected were sufficient to capture stakeholders' perspectives on CSE integration. The number of school head participants reflects their limited availability within the selected schools; however, their inclusion provided relevant leadership perspectives aligned with the study objectives.

Research Instrument

A semi-structured interview questionnaire was used in this study. The questionnaire had two sets: one for parents, composed of 6 open-ended questions with two (2) probing questions for each item, and another for teachers and school heads, also composed of 6 open-ended questions with two (2) probing questions for each item. The participants were interviewed using this researcher-made interview guide, which aligned with the research objectives. The instrument was subjected to expert validation by five (5) specialists to ensure credibility and trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The experts evaluated the interview guide against specific criteria, including clarity of questions, grammatical accuracy, relevance to the research objectives, content comprehensiveness, and appropriateness of language for the target participants. Each expert provided written feedback and suggested revisions to improve the quality of the questions. Based on their recommendations,

ambiguous and leading questions were revised, unnecessary items were removed, and additional probes were incorporated to ensure depth and alignment with the study objectives. The revised interview guide was further refined to ensure that all questions were clear, concise, and capable of eliciting meaningful, relevant responses from participants.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before data collection, the researcher secured permission from the Schools Division Superintendent via a formal letter outlining the research objectives, methodology, and potential benefits of the study for the educational community. A purposive sampling method was then employed to select parents, teachers, and school heads who could provide relevant insights on CSE integration. The semi-structured interviews were conducted individually in a quiet and comfortable setting within the school to ensure confidentiality and minimize distractions. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes and was conducted using a combination of English and the local language (Cebuano) to allow participants to express their views more clearly. With the participants' consent, all interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy of data collection. The recorded interviews were then transcribed verbatim, and responses in the local language were translated into English while preserving their original meaning. The transcripts were carefully reviewed and validated against the recordings to ensure accuracy and completeness before proceeding to data analysis.

Data Analysis

To analyze the data gathered from the participants, a qualitative descriptive approach was used, guided by the six-step thematic analysis framework of Braun and Clarke (2013), which includes familiarization, coding, theme generation, theme review, theme definition and naming, and reporting. In the familiarization phase, the researcher repeatedly read the transcribed interviews to gain a deep understanding of the data. During the coding phase, initial codes were generated by identifying meaningful statements and segments related to stakeholders' awareness, attitudes, preparedness, and perceived barriers. These codes were assigned labels that captured the essence of participants' responses.

Subsequently, the codes were examined and grouped by similarity and pattern, resulting in the development of subthemes. Redundant or overlapping codes were merged, while unclear codes were refined to ensure consistency and accuracy. In the theme development stage, related subthemes were further organized into broader themes that represented the central ideas emerging from the data. These themes were reviewed and validated by revisiting the original transcripts to ensure that they accurately reflected participants' responses. Finally, each theme was clearly defined and named, and supporting excerpts were selected to strengthen the interpretation of findings. This systematic process ensured that the analysis was rigorous, transparent, and grounded in the participants' actual perspectives.

Ethical Consideration

The study adhered to ethical principles of respect, beneficence, and justice. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, including parents, teachers, and school heads, ensuring that participation was voluntary and that participants had the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Confidentiality was strictly maintained through the use of pseudonyms and by protecting participants' identities, ensuring that no personally identifiable information was disclosed in the reporting of findings. In addition, all collected data were securely stored in password-protected digital files accessible only to the researcher, while hard copies of documents were kept in a locked, secure location to prevent unauthorized access, in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (R.A. 10173). To further minimize potential risks, such as discomfort and time constraints, participants were informed in advance of the nature and duration of the interviews, and interviews were conducted at their convenience. Fairness and transparency were evident in the selection of participants through purposive sampling. Moreover, qualitative research principles were followed to ensure credibility and trustworthiness of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Prolonged engagement with participants and the data was also observed to deepen understanding of their perspectives and experiences (Creswell, 2014).

Trustworthiness of the Study

To ensure rigor, the study followed Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria. Credibility was established through audio-recorded interviews and verbatim transcription, ensuring accurate capture of participants' responses. The transcripts were reviewed multiple times and compared with the original recordings to ensure consistency and accuracy of interpretation. Prolonged engagement with the data further supported a deep and reliable

understanding of participants' perspectives. Member checking was conducted by sharing selected findings with participants to verify the accuracy of interpretations and ensure that the themes reflected their intended perspectives. Dependability was ensured through a systematic coding process guided by Braun and Clarke's framework, with consistent documentation of coding decisions. Codes and emerging themes were continuously reviewed and refined to maintain consistency and alignment with the data. Confirmability was addressed by maintaining an audit trail of transcripts, codes, and theme development, ensuring that findings were grounded in participants' responses rather than researcher bias. Reflexive awareness was also observed throughout the analysis to minimize subjective interpretation. Transferability was supported by providing detailed descriptions of the research context, participants, and procedures, allowing readers to determine the applicability of the findings to similar settings.

Results and Discussion

Using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis, 52 initial codes were obtained from the interviews, capturing stakeholders' perceived awareness, attitudes, preparedness, and barriers. These codes were refined and clustered into 10 subthemes, which were synthesized into 5 overarching themes.

Table 1. *Themes from Stakeholders' Perspectives on CSE Integration*

Themes	Sub-themes
1. CSE as Protection, Not Promotion	● Knowledge as a Protective Shield ● Prevention Through Awareness, Not Permission
2. Uneven Knowledge and Readiness Across Stakeholders	● Information Gaps and Inconsistent Understanding ● Readiness Shaped by Training and Institutional Support
3. Cultural and Religious Sensitivity as a Central Tension	● Navigating Moral and Religious Boundaries ● Contextualization as a Strategy of Acceptance
4. Shared Responsibility Between School and Family	● Parents as Co-Educators in CSE ● Collaboration as a Condition for Effectiveness
5. CSE as a Foundation for Lifelong Decision-Making	● Formation of Decision-Making and Self-Regulation Skills ● Holistic Preparation for Adulthood

CSE as Protection, Not Promotion

Stakeholders consistently conceptualize CSE as a preventive and protective intervention rather than a program that encourages sexual activity. This reflects a shared interpretive lens where stakeholders associate CSE with safeguarding learners through knowledge and awareness. Rather than focusing on behavioral encouragement, stakeholders emphasize its role in risk reduction and informed decision-making. One teacher stated:

"We emphasize the consequences, not practice. That is the purpose of CSE." (T2)

This indicates that teachers position instruction toward guiding learners' understanding of outcomes, reinforcing the preventive intent of CSE rather than experiential learning. This perspective is also evident among parents. One parent shared:

"At least they have knowledge, they can think about the effects." (P1)

Similarly, another parent emphasized:

"This helps them avoid harmful things and make the right decisions." (P5)

This finding shows that stakeholders often frame CSE as protective, reflecting both their awareness and their attitudes toward its purpose (Objective 1). At the same time, it highlights the need for consistent communication so ensure this understanding is shared across all groups, which directly shapes their readiness to support implementation (Objective 2). From a leadership perspective, it underscores the responsibility of school heads to guide stakeholder perceptions through clear communication, structured orientation programs, and policies that align with broader directives (Objective 4).

From a theoretical perspective, this finding aligns with Social Cognitive Theory, in which stakeholders' perceptions of CSE as protective are shaped by their beliefs about its consequences and social influences. Instructional Leadership Theory is evident in the way school heads frame CSE as a child protection initiative, shaping how it is understood and accepted within the school context. Meanwhile, Change Management Theory highlights the importance of addressing misconceptions during the early stages of implementation to support stakeholder acceptance and reduce resistance.

Knowledge as a Protective Shield

Stakeholders perceive CSE as a protective mechanism that equips learners with accurate and age-appropriate information to help them make informed decisions and avoid risky situations. Parents emphasized that insufficient knowledge may increase learners' vulnerability to misinformation, exploitation, or abuse. This view reflects a preventive orientation, in which education is seen as a safeguard rather than as a means of promoting early engagement in sensitive behaviors. As one parent explained:

"It is better that they have knowledge because without it, they can easily be deceived." (P4)

This statement underscores the belief that participants perceive awareness as strengthening learners' ability to discern truthful from misleading information. The emphasis on *"mas sayon sila mailad"* (easily deceived) suggests a perceived link between lack of knowledge and susceptibility to harm, reinforcing the view that CSE functions as a form of protection. Rather than promoting permissiveness, the participant frames knowledge as empowering learners to recognize risks and protect themselves.

This perspective is further reflected in other participants' responses:

"At least they have knowledge, they can think about the effects." (P1)

"They can learn what is right and wrong." (P3)

These responses indicate convergence among stakeholders in viewing knowledge as a protective resource that supports informed decision-making and risk avoidance.

This finding suggests that stakeholders' understanding of CSE aligns with a protective and preventive framework, which can inform instructional leadership practices. School leaders may respond by ensuring that CSE implementation is framed within child protection policies, supported by teacher training, and clearly communicated to parents through orientations and community dialogues. Such leadership actions can reinforce shared understanding, reduce misconceptions, and build trust among stakeholders, ultimately supporting more effective curriculum integration.

Prevention Through Awareness, Not Permission

Stakeholders frame CSE as anticipatory guidance that prioritizes awareness of consequences, safety, and informed decision-making rather than encouraging early engagement in sexual behavior. School leaders align CSE with institutional responsibilities related to child protection, emphasizing its role in addressing issues such as early pregnancy, abuse, and exploitation. This perspective positions CSE as a preventive and developmental program embedded within the school's safeguarding mandate rather than a moral or ideological concern. As expressed by one of the school heads:

"This is for protection against early pregnancy and abuse." (SH1)

This response reflects a leadership perspective that views CSE primarily through a child-protection lens. The emphasis on "protection" suggests that CSE is perceived as a proactive strategy to mitigate risks rather than to promote permissive behavior. It suggests that awareness is intended to strengthen learners' capacity to recognize unsafe situations, make responsible choices, and seek help when needed.

This perspective is further reinforced by parents, who emphasized prevention through awareness:

"Prevention is better than cure, they should think first." (P2)

"They can think about what is right before making decisions." (P1)

These responses indicate convergence among stakeholders in framing CSE as a preventive mechanism grounded in awareness and consequence-based understanding rather than behavioral encouragement. This interpretation is consistent with recent literature, which conceptualizes CSE as a rights-based and preventive intervention that enhances learners' knowledge of consent, body safety, and personal boundaries, ultimately contributing to reduced risks of unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and abuse (Singh et al., 2025). The convergence of stakeholder perspectives and empirical evidence reinforces the idea that CSE functions as a protective educational approach grounded in learner welfare, inclusivity, and age-appropriate instruction.

From an instructional leadership perspective, these findings highlight the need for school heads to actively communicate the protective intent of CSE to stakeholders through structured orientations, policy briefings, and community engagement activities. Leadership practices may include organizing teacher capacity-building programs on age-appropriate CSE delivery, establishing clear guidelines for curriculum implementation, and fostering collaborative dialogues with parents to address concerns and clarify misconceptions. By doing so, leaders can promote shared understanding, strengthen stakeholder trust, and support coherent decision-making processes that facilitate the effective and context-sensitive integration of CSE in schools.

Uneven Knowledge and Readiness Across Stakeholders

Stakeholders demonstrate varying levels of awareness and preparedness regarding the integration of CSE, indicating a disparity in understanding across parents, teachers, and school leaders. While some participants exhibit familiarity with the objectives and content of CSE, others express limited knowledge, uncertainty, or hesitation. This unevenness suggests that readiness for implementation is not uniform and may depend on access to information, prior exposure, training opportunities, and institutional support. Such variation may pose challenges for achieving a consistent understanding and coordinated implementation of CSE within the school community.

This disparity indicates a lack of shared understanding of CSE among stakeholders or baseline knowledge of CSE, which may affect their confidence, acceptance, and engagement in the program. The presence of both informed and uninformed perspectives highlights the need for targeted capacity-building and information dissemination to bridge knowledge gaps. Without addressing these inconsistencies, implementation may be fragmented, leading to misunderstandings, resistance, or uneven application of CSE across classrooms and stakeholder groups.

From an instructional leadership perspective, this finding demonstrates the importance of strategic leadership actions that promote collective readiness. School leaders play a critical role in organizing teacher training programs, conducting stakeholder orientations, and facilitating continuous professional development sessions focused on CSE content and pedagogy. Additionally, establishing clear communication channels, such as parent-teacher forums, community consultations, and informational campaigns, can help align stakeholders' understanding. Through data-informed decision-making and inclusive leadership practices, school heads can address disparities in readiness and foster a shared commitment to effective and coherent CSE integration.

The uneven knowledge and readiness observed among stakeholders directly reflect variations in awareness and attitudes (Objective 1) and significantly influence their level of preparedness for CSE integration (Objective 2). These disparities suggest that without structured intervention, implementation may remain inconsistent. This underscores the need for instructional leadership practices that address knowledge gaps through systematic training, stakeholder orientation, and capacity-building initiatives (Objective 4).

From a theoretical standpoint, this finding aligns with Social Cognitive Theory, as differences in stakeholders' knowledge and readiness reflect varying levels of exposure, experience, and perceived self-efficacy. Instructional Leadership Theory is reflected in school leaders' roles in addressing these gaps through training, orientation, and support systems that build teachers' and stakeholders' capacity. In addition, Change Management Theory explains that uneven readiness is a natural part of the transition process and requires structured interventions to move stakeholders toward a more consistent level of implementation.

Information Gaps and Inconsistent Understanding

Parents and some teachers report fragmented or incomplete knowledge of what Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) entails, resulting in uncertainty and varied interpretations of its purpose and content. This inconsistency reflects communication gaps and limited opportunities for stakeholder orientation, which may

affect preparedness and collaborative engagement during implementation. The absence of a shared understanding can hinder alignment among stakeholders, thereby affecting the smooth integration of CSE within the school context. As one parent shared:

"We have not been informed about CSE by the school." (P2)

Other parents expressed a similar concern:

"We were not informed about CSE by the school." (P1)

"We really do not know what CSE is because we were not oriented." (P3)

These responses highlight the lack of a formal orientation or briefing for parents on CSE content. It suggests that without clear and accessible information, parents may rely on assumptions or partial knowledge, which can contribute to uncertainty and potential resistance. The statement reflects a communication gap between the school and families, indicating the need for structured information dissemination to build awareness and trust.

Teachers similarly expressed hesitation in addressing sensitive topics, with one noting:

"Some teachers are hesitant because they are not fully trained." (T6)

A school head also acknowledged the need for clearer communication and stakeholder orientation:

"It is important that stakeholders are properly informed about what CSE includes." (SH2)

These responses indicate that limited training contributes to teachers' lack of confidence in delivering CSE-related topics. The hesitation suggests that perceived readiness is closely linked to professional development and access to appropriate instructional support. Without adequate training, teachers may feel unprepared to handle sensitive discussions, which can affect the consistency and effectiveness of CSE delivery.

These responses demonstrate both convergence and divergence among stakeholders. All groups recognize gaps in knowledge and preparedness; however, parents emphasize the lack of formal orientation and information dissemination, teachers highlight insufficient training and instructional support, while school heads underscore the need for clearer communication and structured stakeholder orientation.

Overall, these findings emphasize the need for instructional leadership strategies that address information gaps through systematic orientation programs, teacher training workshops, and continuous professional development. School leaders should ensure that accurate, age-appropriate, and context-sensitive information about CSE is communicated to all stakeholders. Establishing collaborative platforms, such as parent orientations, faculty learning sessions, and stakeholder consultations, can help build a shared understanding, strengthen readiness, and support the coordinated implementation of CSE within the school.

Readiness Shaped by Training and Institutional Support

Teacher and school head readiness is perceived to be closely linked to access to training, instructional materials, and administrative guidance. Stakeholders emphasized that the successful integration of CSE depends not only on willingness but also on the institution's preparedness. School leaders, in particular, recognize that teacher capacity plays a central role in implementation, as they are the primary facilitators of classroom instruction. Without adequate preparation, even supportive policies may not translate into effective practice. As one school leader stated:

"Implementation depends on how prepared our teachers are." (SH3)

This response underscores the importance of teacher competence as a key determinant of successful implementation. It implies that readiness is strengthened through structured training, professional development, and institutional guidance. The statement reflects an instructional leadership perspective that prioritizes teacher development as a foundation for effective curriculum integration.

A teacher similarly emphasized the importance of training and preparedness, stating:

"We need proper training so we can confidently teach the topics." (T6)

A teacher also highlighted the need for institutional support:

"It is difficult to teach if we do not have proper training and materials." (T5)

This response reflects teachers' perceived need for professional development to build confidence in handling sensitive topics. It indicates that preparedness is closely linked to access to training and instructional support.

A parent also highlighted the need for guidance, noting:

"It would be better if we had a seminar so we could understand how to help our child." (P1)

This response highlights the need for stakeholder support through structured orientation and guidance. It suggests that readiness is not only required among teachers but also among parents, who play a crucial role in reinforcing CSE concepts at home. From an instructional leadership perspective, this reflects the importance of engaging both school personnel and families in capacity-building efforts to ensure a more coordinated and effective implementation of CSE.

Taken together, these responses indicate convergence among stakeholders, as teachers, school heads, and parents all recognize that readiness is shaped by access to training, guidance, and institutional support. However, divergence is observed in their emphasis: teachers emphasize the need for professional training to build confidence, school heads highlight teacher preparedness as central to implementation, while parents stress the need for orientation to support their children effectively.

The findings are consistent with previous qualitative exploratory research that examined stakeholder knowledge and readiness for CSE across different school contexts using interviews and focus group discussions. The study revealed uneven levels of readiness among stakeholders, attributed to limited parental orientation, teachers' hesitation to address sensitive topics due to cultural constraints, and insufficient training, and school leaders' reliance on teachers' preparedness as a key factor in implementation (Lafontan et al., 2024). These results highlight that disparities in awareness, confidence, and institutional support significantly influence stakeholders' readiness, reinforcing the need for coordinated capacity-building efforts.

These findings can be further interpreted through Social Cognitive Theory, which posits that individuals' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors are shaped through interactions with their social environment, experiences, and available support systems. In this context, stakeholders' varying levels of readiness reflect differences in exposure to information, access to training, and institutional reinforcement. This suggests that strengthening CSE integration requires not only curriculum alignment but also the development of a supportive learning environment that includes structured orientation programs, continuous professional development for teachers, and engagement initiatives for parents. Through these measures, instructional leaders can foster shared understanding, strengthen stakeholder competence, and support more consistent and effective implementation of CSE.

Cultural and Religious Sensitivity as a Central Tension

This theme highlights how cultural norms, religious beliefs, and perceptions of age appropriateness appear to shape stakeholders' views on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). Participants emphasized that these factors serve as both potential barriers and guiding considerations in determining how to introduce and implement CSE. While some stakeholders express concerns about potential conflicts with moral and religious values, others view these sensitivities as important frameworks for contextualizing and delivering CSE appropriately within the school setting.

Cultural and religious sensitivity emerges as a key barrier influencing stakeholder acceptance of CSE (Objective 3). These findings demonstrate that stakeholders' perceptions are shaped by deeply embedded social and moral frameworks, which can either support or hinder implementation. This highlights the importance of leadership

strategies that promote culturally responsive practices, stakeholder dialogue, and the delivery of contextualized curricula to manage resistance and support effective integration (Objective 4).

From a theoretical perspective, this theme is explained by Social Cognitive Theory, which posits that cultural norms, religious beliefs, and social expectations influence stakeholders' attitudes toward CSE. Instructional Leadership Theory is evident in the need for leaders to implement culturally responsive strategies and facilitate dialogue among stakeholders. Change Management Theory further explains that resistance rooted in values and beliefs must be carefully managed through inclusive communication and contextualization to support acceptance and sustainable implementation.

Navigating Moral and Religious Boundaries

Stakeholders experience tension between supporting Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) and maintaining alignment with religious teachings and moral expectations. Parents express a cautious stance that balances openness to CSE with concerns about its timing and extent. Their responses reflect an effort to reconcile the perceived educational benefits of CSE with deeply held cultural and religious values, especially regarding what is considered appropriate for learners at a given age. As parents explained:

"We are not against it, as long as it is not too early or excessive." (P5)

"I am worried that my child might become curious and get pregnant." (P3)

This statement indicates conditional acceptance rather than opposition to CSE. The phrase *"dili lang sayo ug sobra"* suggests concerns about introducing CSE too early or presenting it in excessive detail, reflecting sensitivity to developmental appropriateness and moral boundaries. It implies that acceptance of CSE appears to depend on how the content is delivered, particularly on timing, depth, and alignment with family values.

Similarly, a teacher emphasized the importance of sensitivity to values, stating:

"We have to consider students' beliefs and cultural background when discussing these topics." (T3)

This response underscores the need for culturally responsive teaching approaches. It demonstrates teachers' awareness that CSE must be delivered in ways that respect students' beliefs and cultural contexts, indicating that effective implementation requires careful consideration of diverse values. These responses indicate convergence among stakeholders, as both parents and teachers acknowledge the importance of aligning CSE with cultural and moral values. However, their emphases diverge: parents express caution about the timing and extent of content, while teachers focus on adapting instruction to students' beliefs and cultural backgrounds.

Overall, this finding highlights that stakeholders' support for CSE is shaped by cultural and religious considerations, which influence their comfort levels and perceptions of appropriateness. For instructional leaders, this underscores the need for culturally responsive implementation strategies, including open communication with parents, contextualizing CSE content, and engaging with community and religious stakeholders. These approaches can help bridge differing perspectives, reduce misconceptions, and foster a more collaborative environment for curriculum integration.

Contextualization as a Strategy of Acceptance

Stakeholders perceive that acceptance of CSE increases when its content is framed in an age-appropriate, culturally sensitive, and values-respecting manner. Teachers and school leaders emphasized the importance of contextualizing CSE through careful language use, stakeholder consultation, and the avoidance of explicit or developmentally inappropriate terms. This approach reflects an adaptive strategy that seeks to balance curriculum requirements with the community's sociocultural expectations, thereby making CSE more acceptable to stakeholders. As one teacher explained:

"We adjust our words because of cultural sensitivity." (T3)

This statement highlights the deliberate modification of instructional language to align with cultural norms and community expectations. It suggests that teachers exercise professional judgment when delivering CSE content to minimize discomfort while maintaining instructional intent. The emphasis on *"adjusting words"* reflects an

awareness that communication style plays a crucial role in how content is received, particularly when addressing topics that may be considered sensitive within the community.

Similarly, a school head stressed that effective implementation requires alignment with community values, viewing cultural sensitivity not as exclusion but as a responsible adaptation of CSE content. As one school head stated:

"CSE must be aligned with community values." (SH2)

This response highlights the role of school leadership in ensuring that CSE implementation aligns with community expectations. It reflects an understanding that contextualization is necessary to promote acceptance and reduce potential resistance among stakeholders.

A parent similarly emphasized the importance of alignment with values, noting:

"It is important that teaching is aligned with our culture and values." (P6)

This response reinforces the importance of cultural alignment from the parents' perspective. It suggests that acceptance of CSE is influenced by how well the content reflects local values and cultural norms.

These findings are further supported by prior qualitative research examining CSE integration in Zambia, which identified cultural and religious sensitivity as a central factor influencing implementation. The study analyzed curriculum documents, policies, and participant perspectives from teachers, school leaders, parents, and religious institutions. It found that while stakeholders recognized the importance of CSE, acceptance was shaped by concerns over moral alignment and appropriateness. At the same time, educators emphasized the need for culturally sensitive and age-appropriate delivery that reflects community values (Bwalya & Matandiko, 2022). This alignment between stakeholder perspectives and prior research reinforces the idea that contextual sensitivity is critical to the acceptance and sustainability of CSE programs.

These responses indicate convergence among stakeholders in recognizing the importance of cultural and religious sensitivity in CSE implementation. However, divergence is evident in their emphases: teachers focus on adjusting instructional language to ensure culturally sensitive delivery; school leaders highlight alignment with community expectations as a leadership responsibility; while parents emphasize the importance of preserving cultural values in the content delivered.

From an instructional leadership perspective, these findings highlight the need for school leaders to adopt culturally responsive leadership practices. This includes facilitating stakeholder consultations, engaging parents and community representatives in dialogue, and ensuring that teachers are supported in adapting instructional strategies appropriately. School heads can also align CSE implementation with both national curriculum standards and local cultural expectations by providing clear guidelines, organizing orientation sessions, and encouraging collaborative decision-making processes. Through these strategies, leaders can promote acceptance, reduce resistance, and ensure CSE is implemented in ways that are both contextually appropriate and educationally effective.

Shared Responsibility Between School and Family

Shared responsibility among stakeholders highlights the importance of collaboration between schools and families in the effective integration of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). Schools are primarily responsible for delivering structured and developmentally appropriate instruction, while parents reinforce and contextualize these lessons at home. This complementary relationship helps ensure consistency, continuity, and reinforcement of learning beyond the classroom, thereby strengthening the overall effectiveness of CSE implementation.

The data suggest that stakeholders generally perceive CSE to be most effective when supported by a coordinated partnership between educators and families, rather than as the school's sole responsibility. Alignment between institutional efforts and parental guidance is perceived as fostering a more supportive learning environment, in which learners receive consistent messages about values, decision-making, and personal responsibility. Such collaboration also helps bridge potential gaps in understanding and reduces the likelihood of conflicting

perspectives between home and school.

From an instructional leadership standpoint, this finding underscores the need for school leaders to actively promote family engagement in curriculum implementation. Leaders may facilitate parent orientations, establish regular communication channels, and organize collaborative activities such as seminars or consultations to involve parents in CSE-related discussions. By strengthening school-family partnerships, instructional leaders can enhance stakeholder participation, build trust, and support a more holistic and sustainable approach to CSE integration. These responses indicate strong convergence among stakeholders regarding the importance of collaboration between schools and families in supporting effective CSE implementation.

The emphasis on shared responsibility reflects stakeholders' preparedness to engage in CSE implementation (Objective 2), particularly through collaboration between schools and families. This finding suggests that effective implementation depends not only on institutional readiness but also on active stakeholder participation. It highlights the role of instructional leadership in fostering partnerships, strengthening communication, and promoting shared ownership of the program (Objective 4).

From a theoretical standpoint, this finding aligns with Social Cognitive Theory, in which shared expectations, social roles, and mutual influence between school and family shape stakeholder collaboration. Instructional Leadership Theory is demonstrated in school leaders' roles in fostering partnerships, communication, and stakeholder engagement. Furthermore, Change Management Theory emphasizes that successful implementation requires collective participation and shared ownership to sustain change within both school and community contexts.

Parents as Co-Educators in CSE

Parents perceive themselves as active partners in implementing Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), rather than passive recipients of school-based instruction. A strong consensus among participants indicates that CSE should not be solely the responsibility of schools, but should involve shared participation between educators and families. Parents expressed willingness to support CSE at home; however, they emphasized the need for proper orientation, clear communication, and guidance on how to appropriately discuss sensitive topics with their children. This reflects their recognition of the home as a critical environment for reinforcing values, understanding, and behaviors related to sexuality education. As one parent emphasized:

"It should not be the school alone that teaches this." (P1)

Similarly, a teacher emphasized the importance of parental involvement, stating:

"Parents play a big role in reinforcing what we teach in school." (T4)

These responses reflect both parents' and teachers' recognition of shared responsibility in CSE implementation. They highlight the complementary roles of schools and families in reinforcing learning and ensuring consistency in values and guidance. The emphasis on "dili pwede" conveys a strong expectation that CSE requires collaboration rather than delegation, reinforcing the idea that parental involvement is essential for consistent guidance and value formation.

These responses indicate convergence among stakeholders, as both parents and teachers recognize the importance of shared responsibility in implementing CSE. However, their emphases diverge: parents stress the need for guidance and support in fulfilling their roles, while teachers highlight the reinforcing role of parents in extending school-based instruction.

Overall, this finding underscores the importance of viewing parents as co-educators who contribute to the effectiveness of CSE through home-based reinforcement and value integration. For instructional leaders, this means establishing meaningful parent engagement strategies, such as orientation programs, informational workshops, and open communication channels. By equipping parents with the necessary knowledge and guidance, school leaders can strengthen collaboration, promote alignment between home and school messaging, and support a more cohesive and effective implementation of CSE.

Collaboration as a Condition for Effectiveness

Effective integration of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) is perceived to depend on open communication and alignment between schools and families. Stakeholders emphasized that collaboration ensures consistency in messaging and reinforces learning beyond the classroom. Teachers highlighted the importance of keeping parents informed so that lessons introduced in school can be supported and sustained at home, while school leaders affirmed that parental involvement strengthens the overall implementation of CSE. These perspectives suggest that CSE is most effective when it operates within a partnership model that engages both institutional and familial roles. As one teacher noted:

"Parents should be informed so lessons are reinforced at home." (T4)

This statement highlights the necessity of communication between schools and families to reinforce learning. It suggests that informing parents is not merely informational but functional, as it enables them to actively participate in continuing CSE discussions at home. The emphasis on reinforcement indicates that learning outcomes are enhanced when school-based instruction is supported by consistent guidance at home.

School heads echoed this sentiment, affirming that:

"CSE is stronger when parents are involved." (SH4)

This response reflects a leadership perspective that recognizes parental involvement as a key factor in strengthening implementation. It indicates that stakeholder engagement contributes to greater acceptance, consistency, and effectiveness of CSE, as collaborative efforts help align expectations and reduce misunderstandings between school and home.

"There should be a bridge or collaboration between the school and parents." (P2)

This statement reinforces the shared view among stakeholders that collaboration must be intentional and structured, highlighting the need for stronger coordination and continuous engagement between schools and families.

These responses indicate convergence among stakeholders, as teachers, school heads, and parents all recognize that collaboration and communication between schools and families are essential to effective CSE implementation. However, divergence is evident in their emphases: teachers emphasize the need to inform parents to reinforce learning at home, while school leaders highlight parental involvement, and parents emphasize the need for structured collaboration as a broader factor in strengthening overall implementation.

These findings are supported by prior studies emphasizing the importance of structured parental engagement in CSE implementation. A community-based participatory study in Canada highlighted the need for parent orientations and workshops, framing CSE as a shared responsibility where learning is reinforced both in school and at home (Punjani et al., 2025). Similarly, a phenomenological study conducted in a Philippine secondary school found that collaboration among teachers, parents, and community leaders enhances acceptance of CSE and supports students' personal development and informed decision-making (Cantila & Galibo, 2025). These studies reinforce the present findings by demonstrating that stakeholder collaboration is essential for effective and sustainable implementation across contexts.

From an instructional leadership perspective, these findings underscore the critical role of school heads in fostering strong school-home partnerships. Leadership practices include organizing parent orientations, facilitating regular consultations, establishing communication platforms, and encouraging stakeholder participation in CSE-related decision-making processes. By promoting transparent communication and inclusive engagement, instructional leaders can build trust, align stakeholder perspectives, and create a collaborative environment that supports the successful integration of CSE in junior high schools.

CSE as a Foundation for Lifelong Decision-Making

Beyond its focus on sexuality, stakeholders view Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) as a platform for developing essential life skills that support learners' overall personal and social growth. Stakeholders view CSE

not only as a source of knowledge about reproductive health but also as a means of strengthening learners' ability to make informed, responsible, and value-based decisions in various aspects of their lives. This perspective positions CSE as a holistic educational approach that supports character formation, self-awareness, and critical thinking, which are essential for navigating real-life situations.

Stakeholders also perceive that CSE contributes to the development of decision-making and self-regulation skills that extend beyond the classroom. By equipping learners with accurate information, problem-solving skills, and an understanding of consequences, CSE is viewed as helping prepare them for adulthood and promoting responsible behavior in social contexts. Overall, this view underscores the role of CSE as a foundational component in fostering well-rounded individuals capable of making informed choices and effectively managing personal and social challenges.

Stakeholders' perception of CSE as a foundation for lifelong decision-making reflects positive attitudes toward its broader developmental value (Objective 1). This indicates that CSE is not only understood as a health-related subject but also as a tool for holistic learner development. From a leadership standpoint, this supports integrating CSE into broader educational goals and requires strategic alignment with values education, life skills development, and long-term learner outcomes (Objective 4).

From a theoretical perspective, this finding aligns with Social Cognitive Theory, as CSE supports the development of self-regulation, decision-making, and behavior shaped by knowledge and social learning. Instructional Leadership Theory is reflected in the way school leaders integrate CSE into broader educational goals focused on holistic development and life skills. Change Management Theory highlights that embedding these competencies into the curriculum represents the institutionalization of CSE as part of long-term educational practice.

Formation of Decision-Making and Self-Regulation Skills

Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) is perceived as contributing to the development of reflective thinking and personal responsibility beyond sexual health topics. Parents emphasized that CSE supports learners in improving their judgment, foresight, and ability to evaluate the consequences of their decisions. This viewpoint highlights CSE as a tool for strengthening cognitive and behavioral competencies that are essential for responsible living and self-regulation in various life situations, as reflected in the following statement:

"They learn not to be impulsive in making decisions." (P6)

Similarly, a teacher emphasized the development of decision-making skills, stating:

"Students become more responsible in their choices when they understand the consequences." (T1)

These responses indicate that learners are expected to become more deliberate and thoughtful in their decision-making processes. The phrase *"dili padalos-dalos"* suggests developing caution and critical evaluation before acting, while the teacher's emphasis on understanding consequences highlights the role of knowledge in shaping responsible choices. Together, these perspectives suggest that stakeholders perceive CSE as supporting not only knowledge acquisition but also the ability to apply reasoning skills in real-life situations.

Taken together, these responses indicate convergence among stakeholders, as both parents and teachers recognize that CSE is associated with the development of responsible decision-making and self-regulation skills. However, their emphases diverge: parents emphasize developing caution and careful judgment in decision-making, while teachers highlight the role of understanding consequences in shaping responsible choices.

Overall, this finding suggests that stakeholders associate CSE with broader developmental outcomes, particularly in shaping learners' capacity for self-regulation and informed decision-making. For instructional leaders, this underscores the importance of framing CSE as part of holistic education that supports life skills development. School leaders may reinforce this by integrating CSE within values education initiatives, supporting teachers with appropriate pedagogical strategies, and ensuring that lessons emphasize critical thinking, responsibility, and practical application of knowledge in everyday contexts.

Holistic Preparation for Adulthood

Stakeholders associate Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) with the development of broader life competencies that extend beyond knowledge of sexuality, including respect, confidence, self-awareness, and the ability to make informed choices. Stakeholders perceive that CSE contributes to learners' personal growth by fostering self-respect and confidence, as well as the capacity to establish and maintain personal boundaries. This lens frames CSE as a holistic educational approach that supports both cognitive and socio-emotional development, preparing learners to navigate complex social environments responsibly, with one teacher noting:

"CSE builds confidence and respect for oneself." (T1)

This statement reflects stakeholders' perception that CSE contributes to the development of self-esteem and personal identity. The emphasis on confidence and respect suggests that learners gain not only factual knowledge but also a stronger sense of self-worth and awareness of personal limits. Participants suggest that CSE supports the internalization of values that guide behavior, particularly in situations requiring boundary-setting and responsible decision-making.

School heads likewise emphasized their broader role in preparing learners for real-life challenges and responsible citizenship:

"This prepares learners for real-life challenges." (SH5)

This response reflects a leadership perspective that positions CSE as a means of equipping learners with the skills needed to navigate real-life situations. It highlights the role of schools in preparing students not only academically but also socially and emotionally for responsible citizenship.

Similarly, a parent emphasized its importance in preparing learners for the future, noting:

"This helps them in their future and in making life decisions." (P2)

"It has a positive impact by giving them accurate information and helping them learn what is right and wrong." (P7)

This response further highlights the perceived relevance of CSE in equipping learners with practical life skills necessary for adulthood. It suggests that stakeholders perceive CSE as not limited to academic learning but as intended to develop competencies that enable learners to respond effectively to real-world situations, including social interactions, decision-making, and problem-solving. The statement reflects a parental perspective that views CSE as essential in preparing learners for future responsibilities and decision-making.

These responses indicate convergence among stakeholders, as teachers, school heads, and parents all recognize that CSE is associated with holistic learner development and preparation for adulthood. However, their emphasis diverges: teachers focus on developing self-confidence and personal values, school leaders highlight preparation for real-life challenges and responsible citizenship, and parents emphasize the long-term benefits of CSE in shaping future decisions and life outcomes.

Together, these perspectives position CSE as both a health-related subject and a platform for character and values formation, aligned with the wider mission of education. This interpretation is consistent with existing literature, in which a scoping review of international studies and policy documents identified CSE as a life-skills-oriented intervention that promotes critical thinking, self-respect, boundary-setting, emotional regulation, and resistance to peer pressure. These competencies are associated with learners' ability to make informed decisions and navigate social challenges across different life stages, ultimately supporting autonomy, resilience, and responsible citizenship (Singh et al., 2025).

From an instructional leadership perspective, these findings underscore school leaders' responsibility for integrating CSE within a broader educational framework that emphasizes holistic development. School heads play a key role in aligning CSE with institutional goals related to self-development, socio-emotional learning, and responsible citizenship. Leadership practices may include supporting teacher training, ensuring curriculum coherence, and embedding CSE within related subjects and school programs. Additionally, fostering collaboration

with parents and community stakeholders, addressing cultural sensitivities, and maintaining open communication are essential strategies for creating a supportive environment. Through these actions, instructional leaders can facilitate the effective, responsive, and sustainable implementation of CSE while promoting learners' overall development and readiness for adulthood.

Limitation of the Study

This study is subject to several limitations. First, it was conducted in a single city in Region X, limiting its generalizability. Second, the sample size was relatively small and purposively selected. Third, the study relied on self-reported perceptions, which may be influenced by personal biases or social desirability. Lastly, variation in stakeholder representation, particularly the small number of school heads, may limit the breadth of leadership perspectives captured.

Conclusion

This study explored stakeholders' perspectives on integrating Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) into the Junior High School curriculum and found that CSE is generally perceived as a protective educational approach that supports learners' informed decision-making, personal awareness, and responsible behavior. However, variations in stakeholder awareness and preparedness, along with cultural and religious considerations, influence understanding and implementation, highlighting the need for stronger collaboration between schools and families.

These findings imply that effective CSE integration requires enhanced stakeholder orientation, continuous teacher professional development, and proactive instructional leadership to ensure culturally responsive and educationally appropriate implementation. In terms of policy, education authorities may strengthen implementation guidelines, institutionalize parent and stakeholder orientation programs, and support localized strategies aligned with community values, particularly in Region X. In practice, school heads should begin with a structured parent orientation program prior to CSE implementation to establish shared understanding and reduce misconceptions. This should be followed by targeted teacher training focused on handling sensitive topics and applying culturally responsive strategies. In cases where resistance emerges from cultural or religious concerns, school leaders should facilitate dialogue through community consultations and stakeholder meetings to promote acceptance and alignment.

Future research may examine the long-term effects of CSE on learners' behavior and decision-making, conduct comparative studies across different contexts, and employ mixed-method approaches to further validate and expand these findings. Overall, these findings contribute to the limited body of literature on CSE integration in the Philippine context and highlight the importance of educational leadership in managing culturally sensitive curriculum reforms, while reflecting the specific context of public junior high schools in one city in Region X, and are therefore not intended for broad generalization.

Contributions of Authors

Author 1: conceptualization, data gathering, data analysis, manuscript writing

Author 2: data analysis, supervision, validation, manuscript review and editing

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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