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## Sociocultural Environment, Condition, and Students' Level of Knowledge on Sex Education

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### Abstract

In our society and many other cultures, talking about sex is frowned upon. The nation's sex education policies are not consistently followed, and they occasionally run into difficulties due to sociocultural factors. Providing teenagers with information about sex education is fraught with tension among many parents, schools, policymakers, and cultures due to the belief that it may result in early sexual behavior and the loss of childhood innocence. The researchers used a descriptive-correlational research design to discover if there is a relationship between sociocultural environment, condition, and students' level of knowledge on sex education. The respondents were 60 first year students of CTE LSPU-SPCC. The data were gathered using a survey questionnaire created by researchers. The findings demonstrated that the following elements of the sociocultural environment and condition have a favorable perspective on sex education and does not act as a barrier in achieving sexual knowledge. However, students' knowledge of sexual education is at a low level. In conclusion, the hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between sociocultural environment and condition, and students' level of knowledge on sex education is supported. It is recommended that CSE be implemented across the country, that sex education be taught in every home at early age, improve the test questionnaire, widen the scope of the study, and explore other variables.

**Keywords:** Condition, Culture, Environment, Sex Education.

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### 1. Introduction

Education is vital for honing the minds and future of the youth. One type of education that is necessary for the youth to learn is sex education. Glavin (2014) defines sex education is a structured program that teaches students about a variety of topics related to human sexuality, including sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexual activity, abstinence, contraception, reproductive health, reproductive rights, and other facets of human sexual behavior. The ability to communicate and make their own decisions about sexuality and sexual health, as well as to develop positive attitudes toward identity, relationships, and intimacy, are all skills that can be learned through a sexuality education (Rutgers, 2021).

The state of students' level of knowledge on sex education topics in international or local settings is at a low level (Gallao et al. 2018 & Nesan et al. 2021). A low level of knowledge on sex education topics has a detrimental effect on the lives of the students. The study by Visalli

et al. (2019) found that there are still some misconceptions about sexual issues and that knowledge of sexual health is quite low. Students who lack the necessary information may be at risk for sexually transmitted infections.

The effect of low level of knowledge on sex education topics had also an effect on society. The Philippines is dealing with several issues, including overpopulation, teen pregnancy, unplanned family formation, and HIV (POPCOM 2020, UNFPA 2020, Gita-Carlos 2021 & UNAIDS 2021). The lack of knowledge on sex education had caused significant damage to the lives of the youth as well as to the community and country. Despite the obvious reasons for the importance of sex education for teenagers, it is a contentious topic in most countries. The environment in which a child interacts is exposed to the beliefs, culture, and attitudes of its actors. This can help or prevent a child to acquire sexual knowledge thus affecting their level of knowledge on such topic (Roudsari et al. 2013 & Gunasekara 2017).

The term "socio-cultural environment" refers to both the social structure and the people's culture (Owuzo et al., 2018). The composition of the sociocultural environment can prohibit the dissemination of sexual knowledge. In the study of Effiom et al. (2022), parents, family members, teachers, and churches prohibit giving sexual knowledge to students which becomes a challenge for them to be the right information and decision about themselves and sexuality. Therefore, in this study, the sociocultural environment includes family, school, and religion. The family had a big role to play in educating their children about sex education. It is the first environment where children can learn or prohibit them from acquiring sex education information. According to Jankovic et al. (2013) and Wood et al. (2021), parents recognize and support the need for sex education. They also know the positive effect of teaching sex education to their children as it will help them in their well-being. But according to Nyarko (2014) and Ram et al. (2020), some parents are hesitant to discuss sex education in the family.

Schools are the second environment where students can learn sex education where such is not sometimes provided by their families. Maqbool et al. (2019) mentioned that sexual health education is critical for students in school. It raises awareness, educates children on health issues, and helps them grow. According to Stolifer (2014), some schools are not prepared to teach sex education due to various concerns due to a plethora of moral and political issues between parents of children and school authorities. Religion can also play an important role in shaping the mind of the youth especially in acquiring or prohibiting sexual education. The Catholic Church argues that sex education in schools will encourage promiscuity, among other things (Bella, 2014). But not all religion is against sex education. Some churches, according to Moles (2016) and Web (2022), are willing to discuss sex education in their setting. Some religions are also open to the concept of providing sexuality instruction on subjects like contraception.

According to WileyPLUS (2022), the phrase "sociocultural conditions" refers to the social and cultural elements that influence people's attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, preferences, customs, and lifestyles. Social and cultural elements stem from the sociocultural environment. Attitudes can play a role in whether a student will engage in learning sex education and thus can affect their level of knowledge on sex education topics. Fentahun et al. (2012) and Nesan et al. (2021) found that the majority of respondents had a favorable attitude toward sex education. The

researchers implied that the possible reason for a positive attitude might be socio-culture and parenting style. In the study of Ajibade et al. (2013), and Altekar et.al. (2022). students have a permissive attitude toward sex education.

Beliefs also play a role in whether a student will engage in learning sex education. Strongly religious people are opposed to sex education, especially parents who are concerned that the curriculum will undermine their children's moral and religious convictions (Bouma, 2018). Contrary to the study of Wanyonyi (2018), according to their findings, students are open to learning sex education, and they believe that it is important and beneficial in their lives. Having sexual experiences or high sexual behavior contributes to knowing certain sex education topics like using contraceptives and also having open behavior can contribute to engaging sex in education. According to Li et al. (2017), sexually experienced persons, are those with higher knowledge of sexual education. In a study by Gallao et al. (2018), there is no significant relationship between those with sexual experience and those with sexual knowledge. It was also stated by Zhang et al. (2013) in their study that students had more open attitudes and behavior toward sex and other related topics. Students have different preferences regarding what topic will constitute sex education. In the study of Astle et al. (2020) and Coleman (2022), there is a great variation in the preferences on what topic will constitute sex education. The preferences range from puberty to relationships, personal skills, sexual behaviors, HIV/STDs, sexual orientation, and even abstinence-based topics.

Culture, customs, and traditions act as a resistance to achieving sex education and whether students will engage in learning. According to UNESCO (2019), underlying misconceptions about the purpose and scope of comprehensive sexuality education may foster resistance. It is also pointed out by Roudsari et al. (2013), that cultural opposition acts as a hindrance to sex education teaching. Cultural opposition focuses on the nature and content of sex education programs rather than the significance of sex education. Most participants, whether teenagers or adults, considered "sexual education" to be synonymous with "sexual behavior education."

Lifestyles of people had also had a significant effect on achieving sexual knowledge. Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds are less knowledgeable than their peers from more affluent backgrounds about sexual health education (anatomy, reproduction, development, and behavior), according to Atkins et al. (2012) and Bella (2014). In the study of Yadav (2013), there is no relationship between any level (high or low) of socioeconomic background and students' attitudes towards sex education. Several topics, including human development, relationships, interpersonal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, society and culture, are included in a comprehensive sexual education (SIECUS, 2018 & Planned Parenthood, 2022). According to Leung et al. (2019), the aim of comprehensive sexuality education is to give students the information, morals, and abilities they need to make moral decisions that support sexual health.

## **2. Objectives**

The study focuses on how the sociocultural environment and condition influence the level of knowledge on sex education in students. This study was based on two theories; the Ecological System Theory of Urie Bronfenbrenner and the Theory of Planned Behavior by Icek Ajzen.

Acquiring knowledge, culture, and beliefs of a child occurs in a variety of settings according to the Ecological System Theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979). The Ecological System theory, according to Guy Evans (2020), sees child development as a complex system of relationships influenced by a variety of environmental factors, from the individual's home and school to broader cultural values, laws, and traditions. Bronfenbrenner classified human environments into five categories: microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macrosystems, and chronosystems.

Icek Ajzen's (1985) Theory of Planned Behavior states that behaviors are determined instantly by behavioral intentions and, in some cases, perceived behavioral control. It is used to predict and analyze human behavior. Behavioral intentions are influenced by attitudes toward the activity, subjective standards, and perceived behavioral control (Kan & Fabrigar, 2017).

The general aim of this study is to discover the relationship between the components of the sociocultural environment, condition, and the students' level of knowledge on sex education. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

- 2.1. What is the students' perceived level on sociocultural environment in terms of family, school and religion?
- 2.2. What is the students' perceived level on sociocultural condition in terms of attitudes, beliefs, behavior, preferences, customs and lifestyles?
- 2.3. What is the students' level of knowledge on sex education in terms of human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, and society and culture?
- 2.4. Is there a significant relationship between the sociocultural environment and students' level of knowledge on sex education?
- 2.5. Is there a significant relationship between the sociocultural conditions and students' level of knowledge on sex education?

### **3. Methodology**

The study used a Descriptive-Correlational research design to discover the relationship between the sociocultural environment, condition, and students' level of knowledge on sex education. The researchers chose and limit to sixty (60) First-year students of the College of Teacher Education in Laguna State Polytechnic University-San Pablo City Campus as its respondents. Simple random sampling was used in gathering data. It was suitable for the research due to the diversity of the topic, and it allows all units in the population to have an equal chance of being selected.

The research instrument that was utilized in this study is a researcher-made questionnaire. The first part is the profile of the respondents. It includes the name (optional), sex, age, and course. The second part determined the perception of the respondents on the components of a sociocultural environment. The researchers aim to discover whether the components of a sociocultural environment act as a source or barrier to achieving sexual knowledge. The researchers had used a Likert Scale with a four-point scale with verbal interpretations ranging

from Strongly Disagree/Not Observed at All (1) to Strongly Agree/Highly Observed (4). The questions were based on the review of related literature. The third part determined the perception of the respondents on the components of a sociocultural condition. The researchers aim to discover whether the components of a sociocultural condition help to engage or not in achieving sexual knowledge. The researchers had used a Likert Scale with a four-point scale with verbal interpretations ranging from Strongly Disagree/Not Practiced at All (1) to Strongly Agree/Practiced at All (4). The questions were based on the review of related literature. The fourth part determined the students' level of knowledge on sex education. It was a multiple-choice test with four options. It was composed of questions on the topic of Comprehensive Sexual Education that range from Human Development, Relationships, Personal Skills, Sexual Behavior, Sexual Health, and Society and Culture. The researchers used The Guidelines for Comprehensive Sexuality Education of The Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS), CSE Curriculum Learning Materials of Poudre School District of Northern Colorado, and Policy Guidelines on the DepEd Implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (DepEd Order #31, series of 2018) as a guide in crafting the test questionnaire.

Descriptive Statistics was utilized to describe, summarize, and characterize the perception of the respondents on the sociocultural factors and the knowledge of students on sex education. Mean and Standard Deviation was used to use to determine the response of the respondents in the second and third parts of the questionnaire. Frequency was used to determine the students' level of knowledge on sex education on the fourth part of the questionnaire. Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient was utilized to examine the relationship between the sociocultural environment, condition, and students' level of knowledge on sex education.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Sociocultural Environment

**Table 1. Perceptions of the Respondents on Family**

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. Sex education is an acceptable topic for discussion in my family.	2.85	0.95	Agree
2. My family provides adequate information about sex education.	2.58	0.96	Agree
3. My family is supportive in guiding me about any sex education topic	2.67	0.88	Agree
4. My family views sex education as an important subject for the youth.	2.88	0.92	Agree
5. My family supports teaching sex education in school.	2.70	0.87	Agree
6. My family is open-minded regarding the topics of sex education.	2.83	0.84	Agree
7. I can freely talk about any sex education topic in my family.	2.32	0.93	Disagree
8. My family views sex education as an important topic that should be integrated into the curriculum.	2.68	0.89	Agree

9. My family is supportive of sex education programs in the community.	2.77	0.87	Agree
10. Sex education topic was introduced in our family during our early or late childhood.	2.32	0.93	Disagree
<b>Overall</b>	<b>2.72</b>	<b>0.78</b>	<b>Agree</b>

*Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree/Not Observed at All; 1.76-2.50 Disagree/Less Observed; 2.51-3.25 Agree/Observed; 3.26- 4.00 Strongly Agree/Highly Observed*

Table 1 shows the result of the findings that the family of the respondents is open-minded regarding the topic of sex education whether in their homes, on schools or in the community. It also shows that families are supportive in terms of guiding their children toward sex education and they introduce sex education to their children after late childhood. However, the result had shown a lowest mean of 2.32 with an interpretation of Disagree/Less Observed in the introduction of sex education in the family and the freedom to talk the topic within the household. It had shown that sex education is restricted topic in some family. Nyarko (2014) and Ram et al. (2020), stated that parents are hesitant to discuss sex education in the family at home since it is considered taboo in their household, and they find it embarrassing to talk about such a sensitive subject in the family. Nevertheless, the result implies that family in general which is the first environment where students can learn sex education is accepted in their homes and does not act as a barrier to achieving sex education knowledge which is reflected in the overall mean with a remark as *Agree/Moderately Observed*. The result validates the findings of Jankovic et al. (2013), and Wood et al. (2021), that families acknowledge the importance of sex education to the well-being of their children.

**Table 2. Perceptions of the Respondents on School**

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. Sex education is an acceptable topic in my previous school.	3.15	0.71	Agree
2. My previous school provides adequate information about sex education topics.	2.97	0.82	Agree
3. My previous school is supportive in guiding me about any sex education topic.	2.98	0.81	Agree
4. Teacher/s in my previous school teach sex education topics free from bias, personal beliefs, or religious inclination.	3.05	0.77	Agree
5. My previous school viewed sex education as an important subject that should be taught in the classroom.	3.08	0.79	Agree
6. Me and my classmates can talk freely about sex education topics in my previous school.	3.00	0.80	Agree
7. My previous school was a safe space where I learned sex education.	2.82	0.89	Agree
8. Teacher/s in my previous school teach sex education topics clearly and objectively.	2.92	0.91	Agree
9. My previous school is open-minded about sex education topics.	3.05	0.75	Agree
10. Teacher/s in my previous school guides students who talk about sex education on campus grounds.	2.85	0.86	Agree
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.05</b>	<b>0.72</b>	<b>Agree</b>



*Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree/Not Observed at All; 1.76-2.50 Disagree/Less Observed; 2.51-3.25 Agree/Observed; 3.26- 4.00 Strongly Agree/Highly Observed*

Table 2 shows the results of the findings that the previous school of the respondents provides sex education to them. It also shows that their previous school was a safe space to talk about sex education and their teachers are open on the topic of sex education. Moreover, the results implies that schools in general, which is the second environment where students can learn about sex education is accepted in the institution and does not act as a barrier in achieving sexual knowledge which is reflected in the overall mean with a remark as *Agree/Moderately Observed*. The results validate the report of DepEd according to an interview with Ms. Lerma M. Maldonado, Education Program Supervisor of DepEd Division Office – San Pablo City, that schools provide sex education and teachers teach the topic without bias and discrimination. It must be also noted that students perform well in some topics on sex education as they achieve the learning competency required.

**Table 3. Perceptions of the Respondents on Religion**

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. Sex education is an acceptable topic in my religion	2.63	1.00	Agree
2. My religion supports teaching sex education in school.	2.62	0.96	Agree
3. My religion is open-minded about sex education in the community.	2.75	0.99	Agree
4. My religion views sex education as an important subject that will help the youth and the nation.	2.83	0.98	Agree
5. My religion supports any implementation of programs or activities in school and community that are related to sex education.	2.73	0.97	Agree
6. I can freely talk about sex education in my religion and along with its members.	2.53	0.91	Agree
7. My religion support members who talk and advocate for sex education.	2.58	0.91	Agree
8. My religion is supportive in guiding me and teaching me about sexual education.	2.53	0.85	Agree
9. My religion is a safe space to talk about sex education.	2.52	0.95	Agree
10. My religion has a positive view of sex education and its topics.	2.62	0.92	Agree
<b>Overall</b>	<b>2.65</b>	<b>0.88</b>	<b>Agree</b>

*Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree/Not Observed at All; 1.76-2.50 Disagree/Less Observed; 2.51-3.25 Agree/Observed; 3.26- 4.00 Strongly Agree/Highly Observed*

Table 3 shows the result of the findings that the religion of the respondents accepts sex education topics in their institution. However, there are numerous indicators which suggest that the respondents nearly disagree or show less observation about sex education in their religion. Specifically, freely talking about sex education in their religion, considering their religion a safe space to talk about sex education, and seeing their religion as supportive institution in guiding and teaching them about sex education, falls under this condition. But then, it must be noted that no mean had exceed the 3.00 value, an indication that are religious group restricts or in hostile with sex education topic. Yet, the results implies that religion in general, which is the third environment where students can learn or prohibit sex education is accepted in the institution and does not act as a barrier in achieving sexual knowledge which is reflected in the

overall mean with a remark as Agree/Moderately Observed. The results validate the findings of Moles (2016) and Web (2022) that some churches or religious institutions are open on the topic of sex education in their institution and implementation of CSE.

#### 4.2. Sociocultural Condition

**Table 4. Perceptions of the Respondents on Attitudes towards Sex Education**

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. Sex education is important as it will guide me in making decisions about my wellbeing.	3.60	0.53	Strongly Agree
2. Sex education should be taught in schools.	3.48	0.60	Strongly Agree
3. Sex education will help me to gain more about sex education knowledge.	3.53	0.54	Strongly Agree
4. I'm open-minded to the different topics in sex education.	3.47	0.60	Strongly Agree
5. I'm curious and excited about learning about sex education.	3.13	0.70	Agree
6. Sex education should be treated as an important topic in schools.	3.37	0.69	Strongly Agree
7. Sex education must be taught in the community.	3.37	0.66	Strongly Agree
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>3.42</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>

*Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree/Not Practiced at All; 1.76- 2.50 Disagree/Less Practiced; 2.51-3.25 Agree/Moderately Practiced; 3.26- 4.00 Strongly Agree/Highly Practiced*

Table 4 shows the results of the findings show that students accept sex education as an important topic to be taught in the schools and community. The result shows us that respondents agree that sex education is important for their well-being and will help them widen their knowledge on such topic Also, the findings tell students have a liberal attitude toward sex education and are curious about learning it. Moreover, students' attitude towards sex education does not act as a barrier in achieving sexual knowledge which is reflected in the overall mean with a remark as *Strongly Agree/Highly Practiced*. The result validates the findings of Fentahun et al. (2012) and Nesan et al. (2021), that students have positive attitudes toward sex education. The positive attitudes might be due to the sociocultural and parenting style of the students.

**Table 5. Perceptions of the Respondents on Beliefs towards Sex Education**

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. Sex education is aligned with my personal or religious beliefs.	2.90	0.82	Agree
2. Sex education is good for all people.	3.37	0.80	Strongly Agree
3. Sex education will promote good actions and results for the people and the community.	3.37	0.71	Strongly Agree
4. Sex education is a topic that must be taught to youth in family and school settings.	3.40	0.70	Strongly Agree
5. Sex education is important for the well-being of the youth.	3.35	0.71	Strongly Agree
6. Sex education will improve people's moral values.	3.35	0.71	Strongly Agree



7. Sex education will improve family and community values.	3.37	0.69	Strongly Agree
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>3.30</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree/Not Practiced at All; 1.76- 2.50 Disagree/Less Practiced; 2.51-3.25 Agree/Moderately Practiced; 3.26- 4.00 Strongly Agree/Highly Practiced

Table 5 shows the results of the findings that students believe that sex education is important for the youth and must be taught in schools. The results also state that respondent's belief that sex education will improve people's moral values and view on such topic. However, in the indicator that "Sex education is aligned with my personal or religious beliefs" with a mean value of 2.90 and a standard deviation of 0.82 is interpreted as *Agree/Highly Practiced*. It shows that the mean value is quiet low compared to the other indicators. It must be noted also the low mean is consistent with table 3 where much of the mean does not exceed 3.00 value and some are almost near the Disagree value. It is an indication the religious group influence the respondents' beliefs towards sex education. Moreover, the results implies that students' personal or religious beliefs on sex education does not act as a barrier in achieving sexual knowledge which is reflected in the overall mean with a remark as *Strongly Agree/Highly Practiced*. The results validate the findings of Wanyonyi (2018), that students have open beliefs towards sex education and are willing to learn about it and think it will be helpful to them in the long run.

**Table 6. Perceptions of the Respondents on Behaviors towards Sex Education**

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I am open-minded to talk about sex education.	3.37	0.74	Strongly Agree
2. I had adequate knowledge of sex education.	3.17	0.74	Agree
3. I would like to engage in learning sex education.	3.17	0.79	Agree
4. I am knowledgeable about the use of contraceptives.	3.08	0.83	Agree
5. I am confident that I can answer questions on any topic of sex education.	2.62	0.87	Agree
6. I am always eager to learn about sex education.	2.92	0.87	Agree
7. I am always prepared in learning sex education topics.	3.07	0.78	Agree
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>3.05</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree/Not Practiced at All; 1.76- 2.50 Disagree/Less Practiced; 2.51-3.25 Agree/Moderately Practiced; 3.26- 4.00 Strongly Agree/Highly Practiced

Table 6 shows the result of the findings shows that students are eager to learn sex education in schools. The result also shows that respondents are open-minded to talk and learn about sex education. Moreover, the results implies that behavior of students towards sex education does not act as a barrier in achieving sexual knowledge which is reflected in the overall mean with a remark as *Strongly Agree/Moderately Practiced*. The results validate the findings of Zhang et al. (2013) in their study that students having more open attitudes and behavior are geared toward sex and other related topics. The results also implies that students may have sexual experiences that contribute to their knowledge on sex education and contraceptives and make them eager to learn sex education and it coincides with the study of Li et al. (2017).

**Table 7. Perceptions of the Respondents on Preferences towards Sex Education**

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I prefer to learn about Human Development topics such as reproduction, puberty, sexual orientation, and gender identity on sex education subject.	3.38	0.61	Strongly Agree
2. I prefer to learn about Relationships such as families, friendships, romantic relationships, and dating on sex education subject.	3.22	0.70	Agree
3. I prefer to learn about Personal Skills such as communication, negotiation, and decision-making on sex education subject.	3.18	0.77	Agree
4. I prefer to learn about Sexual Behavior such as abstinence and sexuality throughout life on sex education subject.	3.15	0.76	Agree
5. I prefer to learn about Sexual Health such as sexually transmitted diseases, contraception, and pregnancy on sex education subject.	3.33	0.73	Strongly Agree
6. I prefer to learn about Society and Culture such as gender roles, diversity, and sexuality in the media on sex education subject.	3.33	0.66	Strongly Agree
7. I prefer to learn about an abstinence-based topic on sex education subject.	3.23	0.75	Agree
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>3.26</b>	<b>0.57</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree/Not Practiced at All; 1.76- 2.50 Disagree/Less Practiced; 2.51-3.25 Agree/Moderately Practiced; 3.26- 4.00 Strongly Agree/Highly Practiced

Table 7 shows the result of the findings that students have diverse preferences regarding what topic will constitute and learn in sex education class. The results show that students want to learn about the topic like reproduction, puberty, sexual orientation, and gender identity. The results also tell students want to learn about Sexual Health such as sexually transmitted diseases, contraception, and pregnancy on sex education subject. Moreover, the result implies that students' topic preferences to talk or learn in sex education do not act as a barrier in achieving sexual knowledge which is reflected in the overall mean with a remark as *Strongly Agree/Highly Practiced*. The result validates the findings of Astle et al. (2020) and Coleman (2022), that students have different preferences regarding what topic will constitute sex education.

**Table 8. Perceptions of the Respondents on Customs towards Sex Education**

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. Sex education has a positive view on the customs of our family and community.	2.80	0.84	Agree
2. Sex education is an acceptable topic in our customs.	2.87	0.77	Agree
3. Sex education matches our cultural values.	2.72	0.78	Agree
4. Sex education can help the way of life of our community.	3.08	0.74	Agree
5. Sex education is integrated into our customs.	2.73	0.80	Agree
6. Sex education is being taught in the customs of our family and the community.	2.77	0.81	Agree

7. Sex education can help improve the well-being of the youth as it is viewed in our customs.	3.03	0.80	Agree
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>2.86</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>Agree</b>

*Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree/Not Practiced at All; 1.76- 2.50 Disagree/Less Practiced; 2.51-3.25 Agree/Moderately Practiced; 3.26- 4.00 Strongly Agree/Highly Practiced*

Table 8 shows the result of the findings shows that sex education is an acceptable topic in the customs in their community and family. Also, the results tell that sex education matches the cultural values of their community and family and therefore it is being taught as it is viewed that it will help the wellbeing of the youth. The results implies that the custom of students whether in their community or belonged group does not act as barrier in achieving sexual knowledge which is reflected in the overall mean with a remark as *Agree/Moderately Practiced*. The result is in contrast with the findings of the research of Roudsari et al. (2013) and UNESCO (2019), that customs are with tensions between sex education. Cultural opposition focuses on the nature and content of sex education programs rather than the significance of it. Many were confused that sex education is synonymous with sexual behavior education (Roudsari et al., 2013).

**Table 9. Perceptions of the Respondents on Lifestyles towards Sex Education**

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. My socio-economic background is above the poverty line.	2.97	0.74	Agree
2. My socio-economic background helps me in learning sex education.	2.97	0.82	Agree
3. My socio-economic background can provide for my need to learn.	3.08	0.79	Agree
4. My socio-economic background helps me to widen my knowledge of sex education.	3.13	0.79	Agree
5. My socio-economic background helps me to engage more in learning about sex education topics.	3.00	0.80	Agree
6. My socio-economic background can help me to widen my understanding of the importance of sex education.	3.08	0.74	Agree
7. My socio-economic background gives me a positive view of sex education.	3.15	0.76	Agree
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>3.05</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>Agree</b>

*Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree/Not Practiced at All; 1.76- 2.50 Disagree/Less Practiced; 2.51-3.25 Agree/Moderately Practiced; 3.26- 4.00 Strongly Agree/Highly Practiced*

Table 9 shows the result of the findings shows that most of the respondents have a socioeconomic background that is above the poverty line but some falls on low socioeconomic status. Also, the socioeconomic background of the respondents can provide their need to learn especially in sex education. Moreover, their socioeconomic background helps them to engage more in learning about sex education topics and widen their understanding of the importance of it. The result implies that the lifestyles or the socio-economic background of most of the students that is above the poverty line does not act as a barrier in achieving sexual knowledge which is reflected in the overall mean with a remark as *Agree/Moderately Practiced*. The

findings support Yadav (2013) assertion that whether between from high- or low-level socioeconomic status, it has no effect on students' attitudes toward sex education.

### 4.3. Sex Education Knowledge

**Table 10. Students Level of Knowledge on Sex Education Topics**

Scores	Frequency	Remarks	
4-5	HD	27	
	R	4	
	PS	12	
	SB	11	High
	SH	15	
	S&C	10	
2-3	HD	29	
	R	24	
	PS	32	
	SB	28	Average
	SH	26	
	S&C	34	
0-1	HD	24	
	R	32	
	PS	16	
	SB	21	Low
	SH	19	
	S&C	16	

*Legend: HD-Human Development; R-Relationships; PS-Personal Skills; SB-Sexual Behavior; SH-Sexual Health; S&C-Society and Culture*

Table 10 shows the students level of knowledge on sex education topics. The result of the findings shows that in the Human Development topic students possessed basic to advance knowledge where much of the students scored average and high. In the Relationships Personal Skills, Sexual Behavior, Sexual Health, and Society and Culture topic, the result of the findings shows that students possess little to basic knowledge and many of the students scored low to average. This implies that students had low level of knowledge on various topic on sex education. The result validates the findings of Gallao et al. (2018) and Nesan et al. (2021), regarding sexual knowledge, some students scored high in some topics of sex education while some scored low.

**Table 11. Students Level of Knowledge on Sex Education**

Scores	Frequency	Percentage	Remarks
24 - 30	0	0	Advanced
21 - 23	4	6.7	Proficient
18 - 20	11	18.4	Approaching Proficient
15 - 17	12	20	Developing
0 - 14	33	54.9	Beginning
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Legend: 90 and above (Advanced); 85-89 (Proficient); 80-84 (Approaching Proficiency); 75-79 (Developing); 74 and below (Beginning)

Table 11 shows the level of knowledge of students on sex education. The results of the findings show that few students got a higher score, some are in the mid-level, and almost half of them got a lower score. This implies that the majority of the students got a lower level of knowledge on sex education. It also tells that student possess little applicable knowledge of sex education that is essential for their wellbeing and for making daily life choices. The result validates the findings of, Gallao et al. (2018) and Nesan et al. (2021), that students of today's generation have a low level of knowledge on sex education. The result of the study also implies that a basic sex education that is integrated with the K-12 curriculum is not enough and a Comprehensive Sexuality Education is needed and must be implemented equally in the whole country as soon as possible.

#### 4.4. Test of Correlation Between Variables

**Table 12. Correlation between Sociocultural Environment and Students Level of Knowledge on Sex Education**

Sociocultural Environment	Human Development	Relationships	Personal Skills	Sexual Behavior	Sexual Health	Society and Culture	Sex Education Knowledge
Family	-	-	-.408**	-	-	-	-
School	-	-	-	.316*	-	-	-
Religion	-	-	-.297*	-	-	-	-

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 12 shows the correlation between the Sociocultural Environment and Students Level of Knowledge on Sex Education. The result of the result of the findings shows that the computed r value -.408 of Family is significant with Personal Skills with a moderate relationship. The result of the findings implies that Family influences the level of knowledge of students on personal skills topic. The result shows that sex education is an acceptable topic in the family and it is open for discussion however in the result on the level of knowledge of students on personal skills topic, almost a quarter of the respondents obtained a low score. It shows that despite the openness of the family to talk about sex education there are maybe misconceptions about certain topics that influence students' knowledge on personal skills topic. Despite having a 2.27 in the overall mean perception and an interpretation of Agree/Moderately Observed, it must be noted that two indicators show Disagree/Less Observed, these statements were "I can freely talk about any sex education topic in my family" and "Sex education topic was introduced in our family during our early or late childhood." This is because the topic is contentious and a taboo within the household. Parents find it embarrassing to talk about the topic with their children (Nyarko, 2014 & Ram et al., 2020).

The result shows that the computed  $r$  value .316 of School is significant with Sexual Behavior with a weak relationship. The result of the finding also implies that schools influence the level of knowledge of students on sexual behavior topics on sex education. It shows that schools are providing adequate information about sex education topics. It must also be noted that schools teach sex education topics free from bias, personal beliefs, or religious inclination. The result of the sexual behavior topic test shows that majority of the students obtained an average score in the test. The result validates the report of DepEd according to an interview with Ms. Lerma M. Baldonado, Education Program Supervisor of DepEd Division Office – San Pablo City, that schools provide sex education and teachers teach the topic without bias and discrimination. It must be also noted that students perform well in some topics on sex education as they achieve the learning competency required.

The result shows that the computed  $r$  value  $-.297$  of Religion is significant with Personal Skills with a weak relationship. The result of the findings tells that religion influences the level of knowledge of students on personal skills topic. Despite the openness of religion on sex education which is shown in the result of perception, the result of the personal skills topic test shows that some obtained a low score. There are two groups within any religious group that are rival regarding sex education, the liberal and conservative. Such faction may disperse negative or positive view and knowledge on sex education topics such as personal skills that may cause misconception thus influencing their knowledge. The result validates the findings of Moles (2016) and Web (2022) that some churches and religious institutions are open on the topic of sex education in their institution and implementation of CSE. But not all religions are liberal, the Catholic Church argues that sex education in schools will encourage promiscuity, among other things (Bella, 2014).

**Table 13. Correlation Between Sociocultural Condition and Students Level of Knowledge on Sex Education**

Sociocultural Condition	Human Development	Relationships	Personal Skills	Sexual Behavior	Sexual Health	Society and Culture	Sex Education Knowledge
Attitudes	-	-	-	.375**	-	-	-
Beliefs	-	-	-	.386**	-	-	-
Behaviors	-	-	-	.301*	-	-	-
Preferences	-	-	-	-	-.256*	-	-
Customs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lifestyles	-	-	-	.396**	-	-	-

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 13 shows the correlation between Sociocultural Condition and Students Level of Knowledge on Sex Education. The result of the finding shows that Attitude influences students' knowledge on Sexual Behavior topic on sex education. This validates the findings of Nesan et al. (2021). According to their research students have a positive attitude towards sex



education. Regarding their sexual knowledge, some students scored high in some topics of sex education while some scored low.

The result of the findings shows that Beliefs influence students' level of knowledge on Sexual Behavior topic on sex education. The result validates the findings of Wanyonyi (2018), that students are willing to learn about sex education and think it will be helpful to them in the long run. As Christianity had a significant influence on some students' perceptions, it must be noted that some students want their sex education to be in line with Christian values and teachings. However, despite the positive beliefs' students have a variety of misconceptions about reproductive health and HIV infection, and knowledge on proper sexual behavior.

The result of the findings shows that Behaviors influence students' level of knowledge on Sexual Behavior topic on sex education. The result validates the findings of Zhang et al. (2013) and Li et al. (2017), that sexually experienced persons are those with higher knowledge of sexual education and students have more open attitudes and behavior toward sex and other related topics.

The result of the findings shows that Customs influence students' level of knowledge on Society and Culture topic. This implies that despite the acceptance of the culture toward sex education there might be some misconceptions about sex education topics that confuse students thus affecting their knowledge and scores. The result validates the finding of, Roudsari et al. (2013) and UNESCO (2019) that cultural opposition focuses on the nature or content that produces some of the most common misconceptions that such education is inappropriate.

The result of the findings shows that Lifestyles influence students' level of knowledge on Sexual Behavior topics on sex education. The result validates the finding of Atkins et al. (2012), that students from low socioeconomic backgrounds know less about sexual health education (anatomy, reproduction, development, and behavior) than their peers that are living beyond the poverty line and from Bella (2014), that students from affluent backgrounds are more knowledgeable in sex education topics.

## **5. Conclusion**

Based on the following findings, the following conclusions are formulated:

5.1. There is a significant relationship between Family and Personal Skills, School and Sexual Behavior, and Religion and Personal Skills.

5.2. there is a significant relationship between Attitudes and Sexual Behavior, Beliefs and Sexual Behavior, Behavior and Sexual Behavior, Customs and Society and Culture, and Lifestyles and Sexual.

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