**One subject that schools can offer is…**

Earlier this month, I have attended a seminar about Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Awareness. The participants were also a college student like me, and I have noticed that most of them are not yet comfortable on topics like this. It is a Human Immunodeficiency Virus awareness so of course there would be topics related to it such as primary sex characteristics, sexual intercourse, and preventions of transmitting this disease. When the speaker asked the Tagalog term for vagina, no one answered “puke” loudly because as a Filipino, it is a taboo or inappropriate for us to say words\s like ‘puke’ or ‘tite’. Another thing, when the speaker demonstrated the proper way of putting on condom for the sake of teaching us because it is one of the protections that you can use to avoid the transmission of HIV, I heard my seatmate whispered “yuck” because it was demonstrated using a dildo and some of the listeners were also laughing during the demonstration. This story just simply implies that people are still lack of sex education up until these days. For me, having sex education as one subject that schools can offer would help students to be more open-minded related to sex and sexuality, to be more responsible in terms of their sex life, and to foster a healthier relationship.

We cannot deny the fact that many of us are still not open to talk about sex in general, whether it has something to do with our sexuality or just simply sex because talking about these things are still taboo for us Filipinos. Implementing sex education at schools can give us wider perception about topics like this and that it is not just a “sex education” that you would just simply talk about obscene topics related to sex. Sex education has broader topic aside from sex, in here, we would study our reproductive organs together with its functions as well as our reproductive health, puberty, sexual and gender identity, importance of sexual consents and boundaries, communication skills, sexual decision-making, sexually transmitted diseases (STD’s) , prevention including its preventions, how it can be transmitted, the disease testing, and the treatments, as well as dispelling myths and stigma surrounding STIs and HIV/AIDS, pregnancy and parenthood, healthy relationships, and also addressing issues of sexual violence and abuse.

Studying sex education would also help students to be more responsible in terms of their sex life because we can’t take sex away to humans since it is a human nature. As what I have said, in sex education you would encounter a topic about sexually transmitted infections including HIV and AIDS, as well as pregnancy and parenthood. If the students are already knowledgeable enough about these topics, then they would know how they could avoid it. Especially that STI’s as well as teenage/early pregnancies are one of the societal issues that we face today. It has been recorded that as of 2018, the Philippines already has 77, 000 people that are living with HIV according to World Health Organization (WHO) and that rate could have increased along the years. However, according to Save the Children, a 35% of hike in teenage pregnancy in the Philippines has been addressed. That is why having sex education in the Philippines is crucial to prevent the rising of these rates.

In studying sex education, we would also learn to have an effective communication skill to express our feelings, desires, and concerns to the relationship that we are in. Learning on how to communicate effectively would also teach us to listen actively to whoever is speaking. Related to having an effective communication skill is learning on how to ask consent to our partner or to anyone. Sex education would also teach us to respect boundaries especially if someone is uncomfortable on what we are doing. It would also talk about emotional intimacy and the healthy and unhealthy characteristics of a relationship. In this way, the students would foster a healthier relationship with the people around them especially with their partners.

In conclusion, it is impossible to overstate the significance of sex education. It is essential to equipping people with the information, abilities, and self-assurance to make knowledgeable choices regarding their relationships and sexual well-being. Sex education lowers the chance of early and unwanted pregnancies, STDs, and sexual abuse and violence by offering thorough and age-appropriate information that encourages respect, consent, and good communication. Sex education also fosters positive views toward sexuality. Let's acknowledge that sex education plays a crucial role in promoting sexual health, welfare, and equity for all people, regardless of age, gender, or background, as we push for its inclusion in schools and communities. Together, let's pledge to promote comprehensive sex education as a basic human right and a means of ensuring that people in the next generations lead safer, healthier, and more fulfilling lives. Thank you!

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