**Group 2 (BSIT 4E-G2)**

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**“Alam Mo Ba? Promoting Comprehensive Sex Education"**

Sex education is considered as a taboo topic, since Philippines is a predominantly a Christian country. It is home to many conservative individuals. In this country that is said conservative, then why is the number of unwanted pregnancies heightened? Why is prostitution and cybersex are being common? And why is the number of people having HIV/AIDS are growing? These rising problems are concerning because it will not just cause young women to build their own families at a very young age, this will also cause a huge economic challenge to the entire country.

It is concerning that the majority in the country stand against abortion, but there is another side to the story. Many young women are forced to give birth despite being unable to afford raising a child. This is where comprehensive sex education plays a crucial role. But with that being said, sex education is a bridge that provided younger individuals the knowledge about their bodies, relationship, and sexual health. This gives them skills for them when making decisions, knowing the boundaries, and most importantly is having a healthy attitude towards intimacy and consent.

According to Philippine National Statistics (PSA), the country's population is expected to reach 108.8 million by 2020, with around 53 million people under the age of 25. This youthful population emphasizes the crucial need of balanced access to education, health care, and job opportunities for long-term development and progress.

RH Law or also known as Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012 is a Philippine law that is about giving free access to all modern contraceptives for all citizens. This law also endorses reproductive health education in government schools. But according to the survey that is conducted by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), there are only 15% of public high schools in the country has a functional Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) program.

The Borgen Project notes that approximately 80% of the Philippine population identifies as Roman Catholic, and the Church significantly influences the state of sex education in the country. The Church’s strong opposition to pre-marital sex raises concerns that sex education might lead to increased sexual activity among youth. This perspective complicates the effective implementation of the RH Law and slows down progress in establishing sex education programs in schools.

According to Save the Children ­˗ an organization in the Philippines that supports Filipino children, teenage pregnancy among Filipino women aged 15 and under between 2021 and 2022 hiked by 35%. Recent World Bank data shows that Philippines has 47 births annually per 1,000 women by aged 15-19. This is higher than the average adolescent birth rates wherein rate globally is 44 while in the ASEAN region there are 33.5. This causing the rate of 500 Filipino teenage who gives birth every day that results as “national emergency” in the country.

As stated by HIV & AIDS and antiretroviral therapy Registry of the Philippines (HARP) showed that from 1984 to March 2024, there were 129,772 diagnosed with HIV cases. This may significantly increase by 2020 with the estimate of 215,400 to 401,700 if HIV/AIDS prevention will continue to lack improvement. Department of Health (DOH) reported that 62% of the new HIV infections were among people aged 15-24.

We should advocate this topic for comprehensive sex education starting from Grade 4 because this is the stage when many young students begin experiencing key developmental milestones, such as menstruation for girls and circumcision for boys. Without comprehensive sex education, young people frequently seek out untrustworthy sources or fall to false information, leading to unsafe behaviors. The increasing rate of teenage pregnancies, HIV infections, and sexually transmitted diseases (STIs) among the Philippines' youth emphasizes the significance of early and proper education. Prostitution, cybersex, and other harmful actions keep growing because many people lack the knowledge to make good choices.

By advocating for sex education at an earlier age, we aim to equip students with the knowledge they need to navigate these changes in a healthy, responsible way, helping them understand consent, boundaries, and self-care. This is crucial in preventing unwanted pregnancies, reducing STIs, and fostering respect and understanding about their bodies. Implementing comprehensive sex education helps reduce stigma by promoting open conversations about sexual health, which normalizes these discussions and decreases feelings of shame.

[*https://borgenproject.org/sex-education-in-the-philippines/*](https://borgenproject.org/sex-education-in-the-philippines/)

[*https://hellodoctor.com.ph/sexual-wellness/sexuality-education-in-philippine-high-schools/*](https://hellodoctor.com.ph/sexual-wellness/sexuality-education-in-philippine-high-schools/)

[*https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/comprehensive-sexuality-education*](https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/comprehensive-sexuality-education)

[*https://www.savethechildren.net/news/jump-35-teen-pregnancies-philippines-prompts-calls-increase-sex-education-and-health-services*](https://www.savethechildren.net/news/jump-35-teen-pregnancies-philippines-prompts-calls-increase-sex-education-and-health-services)

[*https://philippines.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UNFPA\_Policy\_Brief\_Teenage\_Pregnancy\_%282020-01-24%29.pdf*](https://philippines.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UNFPA_Policy_Brief_Teenage_Pregnancy_%282020-01-24%29.pdf)

[*https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1224968#:~:text=The%20projected%20number%20of%20Filipinos,support%20continue%20to%20lack%20improvement*](https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1224968#:~:text=The%20projected%20number%20of%20Filipinos,support%20continue%20to%20lack%20improvement)*.*

[*https://reproductiverights.org/philippine-supreme-court-upholds-historic-reproductive-health-law/*](https://reproductiverights.org/philippine-supreme-court-upholds-historic-reproductive-health-law/)