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A (COMPREHENSIVE) SEXUALITY EDUCATION?

A Qualitative Field Study About the Support or
Resistance of Communities Toward Sexuality
Education in Guatemala.

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Abstract

Sexuality education is considered a fundamental element to improve public health outcomes, informing young people about their rights and sexual health, and contributing to sustainable development. However, in many countries around the world, it remains a sensitive topic, often as a result of sociocultural and religious taboos, which due to recent efforts has received renewed resistance and opposition. The research aims to explore the implementation of sexual politics in Guatemala with a focus on its practical translation in the classroom environment. The objective of the study is to investigate the impact of communities on the stigmatized subject of sexuality education in the department of Guatemala and to contribute to the understanding of how this might affect teachers in their role as educators, and consequently the quality of sexuality education.

The data was collected through 12 semi-structured respondent interviews with Guatemalan secondary school teachers. Using a thematic analysis, three themes were formulated: apparent conservatism, guidelines and limitations, and choice of teaching approach, to study teachers' experiences in relation to the response of communities toward sexuality education. Additionally, the theoretical categories of potential dichotomies, linguistic framing, and delivery strategies were used as a tool to answer the research questions. The main findings show that individual character, professional environment, and context have a crucial impact on the teaching approach, which is identified as a decisive factor for being met with either resistance or support by the communities. The thesis argues that the challenge to either adapt or confront a cultural context that views sexuality education as culturally sensitive will most likely persist, due to the universality of the concept of CSE.

Keywords: Comprehensive Sexuality Education, Sexual Politics, Resistance, Support, Communities, Secondary School Teachers, Guatemala.

Abbreviations

ABC Abstinence, Be Faithful, Use A Condom

CSE Comprehensive Sexuality Education

HIV Human Immunodeficiency Virus

IPPF International Planned Parenthood Federation

LGBTQI Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex

MFS Minor Field Study

SRH Sexual and Reproductive Health

SRHR Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights

SDG Sustainable Development Goals

SIDA Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

STI Sexually Transmitted Infections

TA Thematic Analysis

UNESCO United Nations Educational Scientific, and Cultural Organization

UNFPA United Nations Population Fund

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1. Introduction

On International Women’s Day, March 8th, 2022, the “Life and Family Protection Law” (Law 5272) was approved by Congress in Guatemala with an overwhelming majority. Law 5272 would modify the penal code to criminalize miscarriages and impose up to 10 years of prison for women obtaining abortions, or anyone promoting or facilitating its access (Kitroeff et al., 2022). It prohibited same-sex marriage and made it illegal to prosecute individuals for discriminating against LGBTQI+ people. Moreover, the law prohibited comprehensive sexuality education by banning schools from teaching gender equality and sexual diversity. The Congress also declared March 9th as the “National Day of Life and Family”, affirming the Guatemalan state to be ‘pro-life’. The passing of Law 5272 led to international condemnation and widespread national protests. As a result, Guatemala’s president Alejandro Giammattei announced that the law would violate the Constitution and the country’s international human rights obligation and therefore exercised his presential veto power, which shelved the bill on March 15th, 2022 (Amnesty International, 2022). As the protests following the approval of law 5272 erupted less than 3 weeks before the departure date for my field study, it further emphasized the topicality of comprehensive sexuality education in international politics as well as its global impact.

Sexuality is an integral part of human life. Multiple international human rights bodies* declare that children and young people have the right to receive accurate, comprehensive, scientific, and culturally sensitive sexuality education in schools, grounded in international standards (Council of Europe, 2020). The United Nations (UN) Agenda 2030 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) further acknowledge the need for sexuality education to achieve several goals (SDGs), such as good health and well-being, quality education, and gender equality (United Nations, 2022). Many countries have made significant progress over the last decades in delivering sexuality education and improving its content to go beyond anatomy and reproduction, an approach referred to as comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). Nevertheless, sexuality education in schools remains a sensitive topic in many countries and

* The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the European Social Charter, the Lanzarote Convention, and the Istanbul Convention.

has received renewed resistance and opposition based on claims that it supposedly sexualizes children at an early age, spreads ‘gender ideology’, favors homosexuality, as well as deprives parents of their right to educate their children according to their beliefs and values (Council of Europe, 2020).

Guatemala is a lower-middle-income country that struggles to live up to international standards when it comes to human rights and gender equality. Social services such as healthcare and education are not benefiting the whole population and public institutions are underfunded and weak. Despite progress, access to sexual and reproductive health and rights remains precarious (Sida, 2021). Furthermore, Guatemala has a rate of 33% of unintended pregnancies where 21% of those who have given birth are 15-19 years old, which makes it one of the highest rates of teen pregnancies in Latin America (Gutierrez, 2019). Statistics show that young people start having sexual relations earlier, with little to no information, or as a result of violence (Monzón et al., 2017). Three in four adolescents have their first sexual experience before the age of 17 but only 8% use a contraceptive or sexually transmitted infection (STI) prevention method the first time they have sex. Moreover, even though the HIV rate in adults has been declining over the past years, it remains concentrated with 70% of people infected living in Guatemala City (Rhodes, 2014).

Guatemala has an existing legal and policy framework supporting a rights-based and gender-focused CSE (Guttmacher Institute, 2017). During the 2008 Latin American and Caribbean ministerial declaration “Preventing through Education”, Guatemala committed to providing CSE in primary and secondary schools. However, due to insufficient budgets and political will, the development of a comprehensive rights-based curriculum in collaboration with international agencies has lacked continuity. Even if certain topics of sexuality education are included in the Basic National Curriculum, the main emphasis remains on biology and offers no comprehensive coverage of gender or rights (ibid).

Previous research on CSE (Miedema et al., 2020; Eisenberg et al., 2022; Sa, 2021) presents how the approach is seen to promote healthy sexual development and better sexual knowledge, as well as reduce sexual risk-taking behaviors and delay sexual activity among adolescents. However, one major challenge in Guatemala has been to reconcile deeply rooted conservative

approaches that reject and stigmatize aspects of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services with rights-based approaches, emphasizing adolescents' right to comprehensive SRH information. A recent study made by the Guttmacher Institute (2017), shows that many teachers convey conservative messages that having sex is dangerous, that abortion is immoral, and that young people should abstain from sexual relations until marriage. Moreover, parents are often opposed to, rather than supportive of, teaching sexuality education which sometimes leads to restrictions or plain avoidance of certain themes. A high proportion of 61% of the study's informants argued that families do not support CSE. The strong presence of conservative groups and the clear influence of the Church in public education policy have also intervened in the development and illustrate the low capacity for tolerance of CSE (Monzón et al., 2017). These findings, along with a growing body of literature (Ocran, 2021; Lazarus, 2019; Rijdsdijk et al., 2013) that explore some challenges imposed by local communities, fueled my interest to further investigate the impact of these voices and especially, how they might affect the delivery of sexuality education in schools.

After the section that introduces the aim and research questions of this thesis, a review of previous literature is presented, highlighting the most important and relevant research in relation to the study. The section is followed by the theoretical categories, along with an explanation of how they are used to measure the resistance and support of communities in relation to sexuality education. Thereafter, the methodology section with research design, collection of data, sampling, and thematic analysis is discussed. Finally, the results of the study are presented in the analysis where the research questions will be answered and discussed with previous research, before the final conclusion and proposal of further research.

1.1 Aim and research questions

In this thesis, the implementation of sexual politics in Guatemala has been studied with a focus on its practical translation in the classroom environment. The topic of interest is the support and resistance of the Guatemalan communities toward sexuality education. This study is solely based on the personal experiences and perceptions of secondary school teachers. The main purpose of this study is to investigate what impact the communities have on the sensitive and stigmatized subject of sexuality education. But also, to contribute to the understanding of how

it affects teachers in their role as educators and thereby the quality of the delivered sexuality education. A thematic analysis was used to analyze the teachers' experiences in relation to the reactions and responses of communities regarding the delivery of sexuality education, to answer the following research questions:

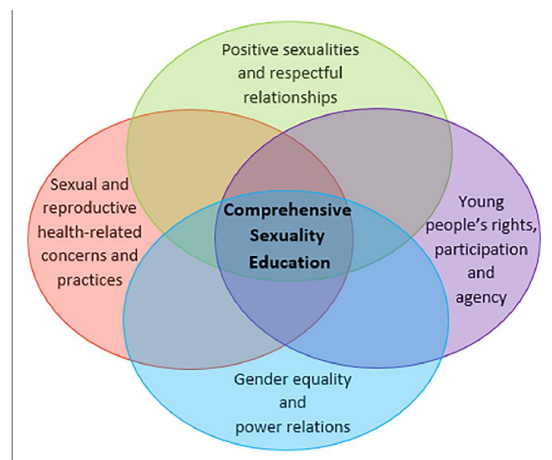
- How do secondary school teachers describe the resistance or support of communities as facilitating and/or impeding the delivery of sexuality education in Guatemala?
- How does the resistance or support of communities as described by secondary school teachers impact the quality of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in Guatemala?

2. Literature Review

This chapter will provide an overview of the field of interest and aims to position this study in relation to existing research and literature about CSE. The section will start with an overview of research about CSE and will thereafter be divided into four parts with respective factors that have been shown to impact teachers' delivery of sexuality education, thus challenging, or facilitating the implementation of CSE. The first section will present the importance of providing training and resources for educators and the second section will discuss the teacher's conservative value/moral system, whilst the third section will look at the teacher's comfort and confidence. The final section will examine the support and resistance from the community, which will be the focus of interest in this study. Worth mentioning is that these factors will be presented independently but are nevertheless considered dependent on one another.

2.1 CSE

Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) is ultimately described by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as a curriculum-based approach to acquiring evidence-informed, accurate, and age-appropriate information on sexuality, that aims to teach about the physical, cognitive, emotional, and social aspects of sexuality. CSE ultimately “aims to equip children and young people with knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that will empower them to: realize their health, well-



Components of comprehensive sexuality education.

Figure 1 - Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)

being, and dignity; develop respectful social and sexual relationships; consider how their choices affect their own well-being and that of others; and understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives” (UNESCO, 2018: 16).

The notion of CSE has in recent years gained increasing attention within the international community and is seen as an important means to improve public health outcomes, inform young people about their rights and sexual health, and contribute to sustainable development

(Miedema et al., 2020). The term has mainly been used in the US to separate it from ‘abstinence-only education’ which gained popularity in the 1990s. On the other hand, the concept of CSE was introduced in Europe by the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) in 2006 but became more common a couple of years later after the two most active UN agencies in the field of sexuality education adopted it, namely the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNESCO (Ketting et al., 2021). In literature, CSE is often associated with abstinence-plus education, which is closer related compared to abstinence-only education. Abstinence-plus education, also known as the ABC approach (Abstinence, Be Faithful, Use a Condom) first and foremost promotes abstinence but still encourages safe-sex practices and the use of contraception to avoid STIs. However, it does not include the realities of gender and power relations as in CSE (Miedema et al., 2020).

Studies about CSE has been conducted in many different parts of the world and researcher have agreed with the education style, but some have also voiced critical concerns against the CSE approach due to its foundation in Western ideal. Despite this, most of the researchers who are positive about the educational approach explain that CSE is perceived to promote healthy sexual development and has shown evidence of reducing sexual risk-taking behaviors and delaying sexual activity. Moreover, the approach revealed to lower homophobia and homophobic bullying as well as reducing dating violence and building sexual abuse prevention skills. Furthermore, it has been shown to enhance knowledge and skills which support healthy relationships and increase students’ understanding of gender diversity (Eisenberg et al., 2022). A study on parental attitudes conducted in Minnesota, USA, from 2006 to 2021 shows a great increase in support of CSE over the past 15 years, including topics previously considered highly controversial such as abortion and gender identities (ibid).

However, Roodsaz (2018) argues that there is a paradox between the idea of universality and simultaneously appealing to cultural sensitivity when promoting CSE in non-Western countries. According to the author, a true conversation about sexuality education can only take place by including local politics, modes of sexuality knowledge, and collective concerns instead of othering and implicitly downplaying them in relation to the idea of universality (ibid). Moreover, a study conducted with young Tanzanians emphasizes the need to rethink how the concepts of ‘relevance’ and ‘culture’ are conceptualized in CSE, considering that traditional

values and norms in the sub-Saharan African context are determined to be the most important challenge to adopt CSE. In addition, researchers call for a stronger recognition of transnationality, poverty, and lasting legacies of colonialism as well as a stronger awareness of the cultural and historical particularity of comprehensiveness when discussing ‘culturally sensitive’ approaches to sexuality education in non-western contexts (Coultras et al., 2020; Miedema et al., 2020).

On the other hand, there are studies conducted in non-Western countries showing evidence of success after applying CSE. A study in China has demonstrated the effectiveness of CSE intervention which after sociodemographic and influence controls showed that the adolescents displayed significantly better sexual knowledge, greater rejection of sexual double standards, and substantial endorsement of nontraditional gender roles. The tensions between youth sexuality and current Chinese sexuality education, therefore, call for a paradigm shift (Sa, 2021). An Iranian study on stakeholders’ perspective of CSE in Iranian male adolescents further emphasized how the family is greatly influenced by today’s communication channels while the educational societal policies are based on religious views and values, despite young people’s access to the virtual world. The result of the study demonstrates a consensus among participants to adopt a positive and holistic view of sexual issues based on a multidisciplinary approach to policymaking (Gelekholaee, 2021).

2.2 Training and resources

A fundamental aspect of CSE is competent educators that provide students with evidence-based tools for life based on a comprehensive view of sexuality. One of the most mentioned factors that are considered to impact the delivery of sexuality education was training and resources for the educators. According to the comparative study in Ghana, Peru, Kenya, and Guatemala made by the Guttmacher Institute (2017), evidence from Guatemala show that teachers lack systematic access to sexuality education training of sufficient duration. The main obstacle teachers face when delivering sexuality education is a lack of time (78%), lack of resources or teaching materials (73%), and lack of training or sufficient knowledge (61%). In addition, among those who received training, teachers stated that they rarely cover all the topics of CSE (Monzón et al., 2017: 32, 52).

Similarly, Ocran (2021) argues in a case study from Ghana that teachers are highly encouraged to implement the CSE curriculum even though they are improperly oriented and poorly equipped to deliver it. Inadequate teacher orientation when wanting to implement CSE might result in teachers being uncomfortable when teaching certain topics as well as delivering inaccurate sexual health information to students. He further claims that the particular context is not considered in the teaching resources to help teachers adopt a CSE curriculum (ibid). Moreover, Castillo et al., (2019) emphasize in their study on CSE and future teaching practices in Ecuador how previous education in the field of sexuality education is key to its implementation.

Given the sensitive and controversial nature of sexuality education, its implementation may be stressful for teachers and student teachers, generating resistance and hindering teaching practices. Therefore, previous education might have helped overcome feelings of inadequacy, negative attitudes, self-doubt, and uncertainty about the knowledge and skills required (Castillo et al., 2019: 41).

Equipping teachers with appropriate knowledge and skills is one of the most recurring factors that are brought up by scholars regarding the delivery of adequate CSE. But as the following sections will show, positive attitudes, as well as policy changes, might not be sufficient as they need to be complemented by providing teachers with knowledge, skills, and confidence to teach CSE topics. Lastly, a study conducted about teachers' attitudes towards sexuality education in Tanzania shows how the low status of sexuality education in the curriculum is affecting teachers' capabilities to deliver adequate sexuality education to Tanzanian students (Mkumbo, 2012).

2.3 Conservative value/moral system

Sexuality education is perceived by many as both a delicate and controversial topic and multiple scholars (Castillo et al., 2020 & 2019; Monzón et al., 2017; Mkumbo, 2021; Rijdsdik et al., 2013), argue about the importance of teachers' attitudes and their personal beliefs when it comes to the delivery of any sexuality education, especially the implementation of CSE. The second identified factor affecting the delivery of sexuality education is therefore teachers' conservative value/moral system. For instance, the Guttmacher Institute's study (2017) shows that many teachers in Guatemala convey conservative messages that having sex is dangerous,

that abortion is immoral, and that young people should abstain from sexual relations until marriage. Moreover, the strong presence of conservative groups and the clear influence of religious institutions, such as the Church in public education policy have intervened in the development and illustrate the low capacity for tolerance of CSE (Monzón et al., 2017).

As Castillo et al. (2020) argue; “Factors rooted in the culture of teachers, such as judgmental attitudes and prejudices towards sexuality education may act as critical barriers to implementation in some classrooms. (...) Teachers’ values inevitably influence their involvement in a subject that is branded as sensitive and controversial” (Castillo et al., 2020: 204). Therefore, aspects such as teachers’ moral views of adolescents’ sexuality, subjective norms, beliefs and practice, attitudes, and self-efficacy toward sexuality education are fundamental for the quality of implementation (Rijsdik et al., 2013). More so, teachers’ attitudes might even be a decisive predictor of willingness to teach sexuality education in schools, as high self-efficacy beliefs and positive attitudes are significantly related to behavioral intention to teach CSE (Mkumbo, 2021; Nuñez et al., 2018). If teachers are uncomfortable discussing certain topics that are opposed to their own values or might be considered controversial, there is a risk of generating defensive attitudes that lead the teachers to see the students as opponents rather than young people with education needs (Castillo et al., 2020). Thus, teachers maintain both a biased and reductionist view about sexuality during adolescence (Guttmacher, 2017). For this reason, individual values and attitudes need to be considered in the design of sexuality education programs in schools, as this challenges their orientation and dispositions to implement CSE appropriately (Ocran, 2021).

2.4 Comfort and confidence

Many teachers express having difficulties teaching certain topics of sexuality education such as masturbation, abortion, condom use, sexual orientation, and contraception, often due to the cultural context (Mkumbo, 2012; Castillo et al., 2020; Lazarus, 2019; Rijsdik et al., 2013). Thus, the third factor seen to influence the delivery of sexuality education is comfort and confidence. Scholars have observed that subjects concerning psychological aspects of sexuality education are particularly conceived as more challenging to teach, compared to sexuality education solely based on biological facts (Mkumbo, 2012). Evidence suggests that the personal struggles faced by teachers when delivering sexuality education are mostly related to

discomfort, stress, and resistance among teachers themselves, which is impeding their practice (Castillo et al., 2020). Along with previously cited factors such as inefficient training, low academic prestige, and time constraints, the lack of interest by educators and discomfort around topics traditionally perceived as taboo are identified as common obstacles (Lazarus, 2019).

Previous research shows that even if support for sexuality education and the inclusion of certain topics in the school curriculum exists among teachers, they might still lack the capabilities and comfort of teaching all the key sexuality education topics. This suggests that adequate training is necessary for teachers to develop their skills and confidence to handle sexuality education efficiently in the classrooms (Mkumbo, 2012). Furthermore, Castillo et al. (2019) argue that personal accomplishment will get enhanced by a strong sense of self-efficacy, meaning that teachers' motivation and interest to include CSE in daily teaching practices will become higher if they feel confident enough to address different topics of sexuality education (Castillo et al., 2019). Comfort and confidence should therefore be considered factors of interest worth studying as they can serve to facilitate the implementation of CSE. According to a study of a CSE program implemented in Uganda, "Teachers' confidence in teaching and discussing sexuality issues in class (self-efficacy) appeared as an important associative positive factor of fidelity of implementation" (Rijsdik et al., 2013: 350).

2.5 Support and resistance from communities

The last factor that will be presented because of its apparent significance on teachers' capacities to deliver sexuality education is support and resistance from communities. The role of the surroundings and their strong influence on CSE is a factor that has been highlighted more frequently by scholars in recent years (Ocran, 2021; Lazarus, 2019, Monzón et al., 2017). Making it well known that sexuality was, and in some parts of the world still is, considered a subject that belongs in the private sphere, makes it difficult to implement a comprehensive approach depending on the conservative or traditionalistic social context. Teachers are met with resistance from non-supportive school environments, religious bodies, and parents, on the basis that a CSE curriculum promotes promiscuity, among other things (Ocran, 2021). "There is a real and perceived resistance from various communities, as well as negative attitudes, misconceptions, and distrust of the purpose and content of the curriculum" (Lazarus, 2019: 30).

According to a study made by the Guttmacher Institute (2017), teachers in Guatemala identified resistance among parents as an important factor that is limiting the teaching of CSE. More than 60% of both teachers and key informants felt that parents were unsupportive of the CSE program (ibid). Another study conducted in Uganda presents how teachers emphasized that support from school management, other teachers, and the community, as well as the school culture, are fundamental factors that facilitate the implementation of CSE. Moreover, teachers expressed concern over the support from the community and parents, but at the same time recognized the necessity to involve them in the sexuality education of their children to create supporting norms and attitudes of sexual and reproductive health and rights based on a comprehensive approach (Rijsdik et al., 2013).

Compared to other factors mentioned above, the support and resistance from communities is the least researched factor within the field of CSE and will therefore be the topic of interest of this study. By choosing teachers as the target group as they are the ones translating sexual politics into practice in their classrooms, the thesis could contribute to the academic research area to get a deeper understanding of the experiences of teaching and delivering sexuality education in secondary schools in Guatemala. But more importantly, it aims to contribute to the understanding of the role of communities in a country's education politics and how deeply rooted social constructs might affect teachers' capabilities to deliver adequate sexuality education. There is also an existing research gap when it comes to qualitative research as most of the existing research is based on a quantitative methodology around CSE. Lastly, the research could also be used for further work on normative changes in relation to policy implementation and advocacy work and development within the field of sexual and reproductive health and rights in Latin America.

3. Theoretical Framework

This section aims to conceptualize how to measure the resistance and support of communities when teachers are delivering sexuality education in Guatemala. A model has been developed identifying three factors that matter when implementing CSE practically in different sociocultural contexts, namely potential dichotomies, linguistic framing, and delivery strategies. These elements are considered complementary to get an integral picture of the situation when sexual politics are transferred to the classroom environment. The theoretical framework will function as a tool to answer the research questions by analyzing the collection of data from the respondent interviews after the findings have been transcribed and coded.

3.1 Potential dichotomies

CSE is rooted in transnational commitments, based on the Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) framework that has been largely promoted and implemented in multiple resource-poor countries. Western European countries in collaboration with local NGOs have invested extensively in sexuality education programs in low-resource countries to improve the lives of young people. Even if these programs carry a universal promise, they are supposed to be ‘adapted’ to specific sociocultural-targeted contexts since they are often developed in Western donor countries. However, the question remains whether the crucial epistemological differences are sufficiently recognized when attempting to make sexuality education programs ‘culturally sensitive’ (Roodsaz, 2018). “Despite the implicit universal ideal in SRHR discourse, cultural sensitivity appeals to diversity as another important virtue, suggesting a paradoxical relationship between the two” (Roodsaz, 2018: 108).

CSE is seen to promote sexual freedom, autonomy, modernity, and reason, which is reinforced by a ‘secular logic’ that dominated the ‘health-based’ approach in Western sexuality education. Religion is however excluded from the discussion as it has been allocated to the private sphere and therefore outside of public matters (Rasmussen, 2012). CSE is linked to empowerment and progress, which can therefore point towards an Othering mechanism that excludes subjectivities and agencies shaped within a religious framework. By analyzing the foundation of the CSE framework and thereby its historical and cultural specificity, it could create a more equal and

inclusive conversation about the organization of sexuality education (Roodsaz, 2018). “Rather than suggesting neutrality, the idea is to explicitly present the ideological positioning underlying the promoted model of sexuality” (Roodsaz, 2018: 112). This factor of potential dichotomies is therefore considered theoretically relevant when analyzing the present discourse of sexuality education among teachers and community actors. The existing discourse might in turn affect the resistance and support of communities and their attitudes toward sexuality education, thus making it harder or easier for teachers to deliver CSE with quality in Guatemalan classrooms.

3.2 Linguistic framing

As previously mentioned, CSE is based on a Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) framework. However, the concept of ‘rights’, as opposed to ‘health’, has become a loaded discussion on how to frame the work in relation to sexuality education. ‘Sexual rights’ are often considered by stakeholders to be culturally insensitive in comparison to sexual health issues being culturally acceptable (Roodsaz, 2018). According to Rasmussen (2012), Western sexuality education models are commonly founded on the ideology of rights, even though the concept of health holds an important place in contemporary Western conceptualizations of sexuality education (ibid). However, by framing rights as something connected to health, it disrupts its association with disobedience and transgression. “Via health, rights can become a matter of collective well-being and thus culturally acceptable rather than the contestation of cultural norms” (Roodsaz, 2018: 116). Moreover, different ways of resisting the rights-based approach have been identified by scholars. This includes questioning its universality and secular normativity underlying this dominant framework, as well as using the word for practical reasons when framing work towards Western donors instead of using it for ideological reasons, which in turn can be seen as faking compliance and mocking the norm (Roodsaz, 2018).

Furthermore, when it comes to the language itself, avoidance of the use of certain words can be interpreted as a sign of cultural sensitivity (Roodsaz, 2018). Teachers have also expressed that there exist norms and rules about the appropriate terms to use and how to use them, especially with sexuality and sexual organs. In addition, teaching in the native language has often been shown to be more problematic as words related to sex tend to have both heavy and charged connotations (Helleve et al., 2009). Nevertheless, stakeholders within organizations work hard

to facilitate discussions about sexuality, more importantly in the context of classrooms (Roodsaz, 2018). In this study, language is considered a fundamental factor that could be decisive for the community to either support or show resistance to the sexuality education of young people in Guatemala. The way teachers linguistically frame sexuality education in the classrooms and the choice of words used will therefore be studied to investigate how it affects the reception of sexuality education among the communities. More specifically, is the language adapted to the context? Is cultural sensitivity considered when speaking about sexuality? How much does the language influence teachers' capabilities to deliver quality CSE to their students?

3.3 Delivery strategies

Moving away from the linguistic aspect, it is further important to bring attention to the practical approach of sexuality education and how it might be affected by the potential support or resistance from the community. To create space for a 'speakable' sexuality, an environment of comfort for both students and teachers is vital for these conversations to take place (Roodsaz, 2018). The cultural context might affect how teachers enact the curriculum, especially if it encompasses them challenging prevailing sociocultural norms which could cause reactions from parents. This is often related to teachers reporting that they lack support from other colleagues or staff at their institutions. Additionally, teachers also worry about losing their student's respect and trust if they were to discuss material considered deviant from the norm (Browes, 2015).

Scholars such as Helleve et al. (2009) argue that teachers generally tend to either claim moral neutrality or maintain an adaptive approach regarding the relevance of culture, often depending on if their own beliefs, personal values, and comfort zones are contradicted when teaching these topics. Culture might sometimes even be used by teachers to cover up challenges or personal values. Studies have shown that some teachers perceive sexuality education as a way of restoring the moral values of young people who lacked guidance due to a moral decline in their community, others viewed their teaching as morally neutral, while some said it was something they had to adjust in accordance with cultural norms as there exist borders not to cross (ibid). However, this may result in decisions to completely avoid certain topics of sexuality education that are considered more sensitive, which undermines the foundation of CSE to go beyond the reproductive aspects of adolescent sexuality (Roodsaz, 2018).

Homosexuality, abortion, and masturbation are the most culturally sensitive subjects that tend to be skipped, shortened, or avoided. Negative beliefs usually pre-exist which are hence reinforced by both teachers and students in the classroom, especially when assumptions and messages around these topics are not acknowledged nor addressed. These perceptions held by all actors involved can become powerful in the sense that they lead to embarrassment and ultimately silence, which may be a factor that contributes to program modification (Helleve et al., 2009; Browes, 2015). However, sexual diversity for example has a particular culturally hypersensitive status and is rarely treated in certain contexts due to cultural and social constraints (Roodsaz, 2018; Helleve et al., 2009). “Sexual diversity marks one of the boundaries of the emancipatory trajectory attributed to CSE, allowing its proponents to claim a ‘truly’ transgressive position in the field” (Roodsaz, 2018: 118).

From a sexuality educational point of view, it is, therefore, a challenge to either adapt or confront a cultural context, given that local beliefs, practices, and values might make it hard to teach sexuality education at all. Lastly, local communities are rarely homogenous and the more diverse a local community is,

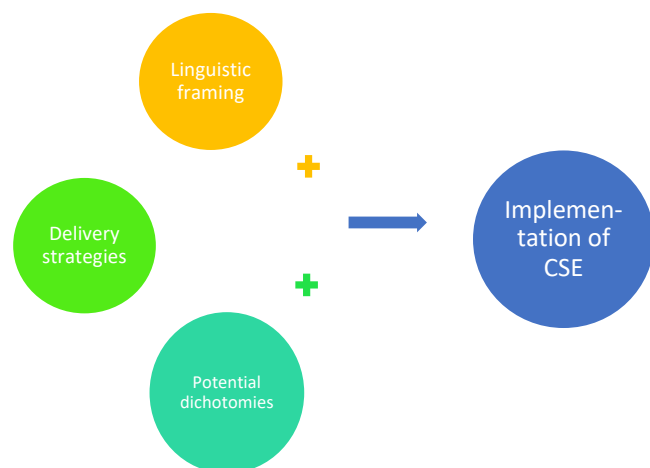


Figure 2 - Theoretical framework

the harder it is to have all perspectives in mind when trying to adapt accordingly in a culturally sensitive way (Helleve et al., 2009). The practical approach taken by teachers to deliver sexuality education in Guatemala is therefore considered a factor of great importance when analyzing the support and resistance shown by the communities towards their teaching. This factor will be especially interesting when studying how the teachers chose to handle community resistance or not, and how this ultimately reflects on the quality of CSE in Guatemala.

To summarize, I expect these three factors to be interrelated and significant to the implementation of CSE in different sociocultural contexts. Figure 2 above illustrates how the potential dichotomies, the linguistic framing, and the delivery strategies are considered

complementary to the potential support or resistance that teachers might receive from local communities. Together, the demonstrated factors will be decisive for the practical implementation of sexual politics and most importantly CSE in Guatemalan classrooms.

4. Methodology

The following section will explain the methodological approach that was used in this qualitative study to answer the research questions. The chapter will first describe the research design and how the data was collected through semi-structured interviews along with the choice of sampling. The thematic analysis will thereafter be discussed, ending with a part about methodological criticism and some ethical considerations.

4.1 Research design

According to Braun and Clarke (2013), qualitative research uses words as data as it seeks to interpret and understand meanings and recognizes data in a specific context. Qualitative research is not about numbers, nor does it provide one single answer. A key aspect of qualitative data is that it treats context as important since knowledge and information always come from somewhere. It thus recognizes that biases exist and thereby includes them and the subjectivity of the data in the analysis. “Qualitative research is exploratory, open-ended and organic, and produces in-depth, rich and detailed data from which to make claims” (Braun & Clarke, 2013: 58). Moreover, this study will be based on experiential qualitative research as it is the participants’ experiences, views, and interpretations that are in focus, instead of them being used as a foundation to analyze something else. This will allow the study to focus on the participant’s framing of the subject of sexuality education to answer the research questions and find out things in the collected data that might have gotten lost with a quantitative method (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

In this study, semi-structured interviews were chosen as the qualitative method for data collection as my purpose is to investigate the impact and the role of the community through the perspective of teachers, regarding sexuality education. According to Magnusson and Marecek, (2015), semi-structured interviews are rarely right or wrong questions, meaning that the form of the answer is not built into them. When using semi-structured interviews, respondents may disclose personal details about their lives while asked to offer opinions and judgments, without the influence of the interviewer. The open-ended questions leave the respondent free to answer however they want to, which works well to obtain complex and rich content. In addition, semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to add follow-up questions that could be of value

for the analysis later on. After each interview, field notes such as general observations, impressions, reflections, and feelings were written down which could contribute to the analysis of the study, beyond the interviews themselves (ibid).

4.2 The interviews

The interview guide was carefully constructed in relation to the research questions and the aim of the study. Since sexuality education is such a sensitive topic in the cultural and social context of Guatemalan society, much thought was put into the wording and the order of the questions. To begin with, background information was given about the study, and some socio-demographic variables that qualified as relevant for the study without compromising participants' anonymity were taken from the participants. The first couple of questions were asked to introduce the subject to the participants and were therefore rather general to make them open up and slowly build up a sense of comfort and confidence in me as a researcher. The more sensitive questions were strategically positioned in the middle and the interview ended with a couple of broader questions that would summarize the conversation. A pilot study was then conducted with my supervisor in Guatemala so that I could receive guidance and recommendations about the questions asked and their linguistic formulation, as all the interviews were conducted in Spanish. This benefited the study in the sense that a local person was able to revise my interview guide to avoid falling into the trap of cultural collisions and language barriers that could either offend, confuse, or scare away the participants and hence impede the results. However, even though Spanish is not my native language, I consider myself to be fluent enough to not encounter problems during the interviews, transcription, or analysis of the data.

The interviews were conducted with secondary school teachers in the department of Guatemala during a field study between the 30th of March and the 26th of May 2022. Due to the sensitivity of the topic, I gave a couple of alternatives and asked the participants to choose the location of the interviews so that they would feel comfortable answering the questions. The quality of the recording was also considered to reduce interruptions, distractions, or other noises, but was sometimes difficult to avoid. The interviews conducted in the participant's workplace resulted being the best for the recording because we could sit privately in a quiet, separate room. Those conducted in a public space such as a commercial center were in contrast quite noisy, which

sometimes made the transcription a bit challenging. Nevertheless, those challenges mainly affected the transcription and did not have a significant impact on the credibility of the data. Lastly, the participants were informed that the interview would last approximately one hour but that they were free to talk as little or as much as they wanted without concern about the time. The shortest interview lasted 41 minutes and the longest one lasted 96 minutes. The interview guide can be found in Appendix 1.

4.3 Sampling

In terms of geography, the study was first planned to be conducted in Guatemala City since a big comparative study between rural and urban areas in Guatemala had already been made a couple of years ago (Monzón et al., 2017) and a study of that size would require more resources and time, considering that I only had 8 weeks in the field. However, I was still aiming at filling a research gap and since many projects regarding sexuality education and SRHR are usually concentrated in rural parts of countries, and in the case of Guatemala



Figure 3 - Department of Guatemala

it turned out to be a challenge to recruit participants only from the capital, I later change my sampling to the department of Guatemala to get a wider regional reach.

As Braun and Clarke (2013) describe, qualitative research often uses smaller samples than quantitative research. The most important is to have enough data that will tell a rich story but not too much that it prevents a complex and deep engagement with the information. Due to the time limit of 8 weeks in the field to prepare and conduct the interviews as well as transcribe and analyze the data, I chose to conduct interviews with 12 respondents. The final sample size was also based on the concept of saturation as Braun and Clarke (2013) state that it refers to the

point where no new information is generated by adding additional data. In this case, I had identified more teachers who agreed to participate in the interview, but I decided to keep my sample size to 12 participants as I eventually reached a point where I felt that the data collected was starting to look quite similar, so I, therefore, evaluated that conducting more interviews would not generate any new information.

The sampling strategy used in the selection of interviewees is the so-called snowballing or friendship pyramiding, which forms part of convenience sampling. According to Braun and Clarke (2013), it means that the sample is being constructed through the network of the participants and the researcher. Most commonly, the researcher asks a participant if they can think of anyone else who might want to participate in the study. As mentioned above, it turned out to be difficult to find participants who firstly were teaching sexuality education in secondary school and secondly were willing to participate in the study because of the sensitivity of the topic. For this reason, I had only recruited one interviewee before leaving Sweden for Guatemala and the major search for participants took place once I was in the field.

Consequently, I spoke about my study to both Guatemalan friends and strangers wherever I went. I asked if they knew any teachers who could in turn put me in contact with someone delivering sexuality education to secondary school students. Moreover, my local NGO contacts and local supervisor in Guatemala were of great help and we scheduled meetings to discuss how they best could assist me with my field study. They put me in touch with a local partner organization relevant to my study, which found respondents based on the criteria that they needed to be secondary school teachers delivering sexuality education in the department of Guatemala. Summaries of the profiles of the interviewed teachers are presented on the following page in Table 1.

Table 1 - Profiles of interviewed teachers

Respondent	Age	Socio-economic status	Religion	Level of importance of religion in personal life*	Teaching subject	Teaching experience	Private or public institution	Religious institution	Mixed school
Alphonso	36	Middle class	Catholic	60-65%	History and social science	17 years	Private	No**	Yes
Beatrice	35	Middle class	Catholic	Medium	Psychology	15 years	Private	No	Yes
Clarisa	41	Middle class	Catholic	60-70%	Pedagogy and social science	20 years	Private	No**	Yes
Daniela	55	Middle class	None	-	Natural science	30 years	Public	No**	Only girls
Esmeralda	56	Middle - lower class	Evangelic	"Rules my life"	Chemistry and biology	30 years	Public	No	Yes
Fabiola	60	Middle class	Catholic	High	Pedagogy and educational science	16 years	Public	No	Yes
Gustavo	37	Middle class	Christian	"Fundamental part"	Music	13 years	Public	No	Yes
Hortencia	39	Middle - upper class	Catholic	80%	Communication and language, technology	15 years	Public	No	Only girls
Imelda	35	Middle class	Christian	"First place"	Social science	15 years	Private	Yes	Yes
Juanita	38	Middle class	Evangelic	"Primordial"	Natural science	18 years	Private	Yes	Yes
Karmen	28	Middle class	Evangelic	Regular	Natural science	9 years	Private	No	Yes
Lucia	37	Middle class	Christian	Very important	Productivity and development, natural science	12 years	Public	Yes	Yes

Note: The names of the respondents are fictional

*Self-defined by respondents

**Secular but religiously influenced

Worth mentioning is that six participants were gathered with the help of a local NGO that specifically educated the teachers in CSE. This means that half of the respondents had received extensive training within the topic of study while the other half either had taken smaller courses about subjects of sexuality education or none at all. For this reason, there is a risk that the profiles of six of the respondents selected by the NGO are somehow biased if those teachers were for example chosen based on their successful participation in the training. However, in case the data collected appear to be different between the participants who received training from the NGO compared to those who did not, I believe it would rather increase the quality of the study, as it is a variable I will handle with transparency in the analysis. Lastly, receiving assistance from an NGO was also a decision taken to lower the risk of a potential bias.

4.4 Thematic analysis

The interviews were conducted, recorded, transcribed, and then summarized in a thematic analysis (TA). A thematic analysis was chosen as the qualitative analytic method for this study, based on Braun and Clarke's (2012) six-phase approach to thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke describe a thematic analysis as: "a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2012: 57). The benefits of thematic analysis are its accessibility and flexibility, allowing the researcher to focus on the data in different ways. In this study, an inductive approach to data coding and analysis will be used, meaning that the codes and themes will derive from the content of the data themselves in a bottom-up approach. However, as Braun and Clarke (2012) state, it is impossible to be purely inductive, so coding and analysis therefore usually combine both an inductive and deductive approach. The thematic analysis is experiential in its orientation and will therefore focus on "giving voice" to meanings and experiences of that knowable world (ibid). I found this qualitative analytic method to be the most relevant for my study to answer the research questions when working with larger data sets.

The first step to thematic analysis is to get familiarized with the data by listening to the audio files and rereading the transcript while taking observational, yet casual notes. Step number two consists of generating initial codes, which will be the building block of the analysis. Through codes, the researcher can identify and label a feature of the data that might be relevant to the research question. The codes will usually be a combination of descriptive and interpretative, but they need to be inclusive and systematic. As the coding process evolves, modifications or incorporations of new codes may also arise. In the third phase, I shifted from codes to themes which was an active process of construction rather than discovery. This includes reviewing the coded data to identify similarities or overlaps between codes to create themes or subthemes. This phase ends with a thematic map presenting the outlined themes, preparing for the following step of reviewing potential themes. This fourth step is mainly about quality checking but involves checking the themes against the extracts of data or so-called quotes to see if they are functional. Some question that could help this step is: is this a theme or just a code? Does it say something useful about the research question and my data set? What does it exclude or include? Is the theme supported by enough data? Phase number five and six consist of defining and naming themes and producing the report. It involves the deep analytic work of shaping the

thematic analysis by selecting extracts and then analyzing each theme around them (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

4.5 Methodological criticism

The reliability of the study is determined by the probability of obtaining the same results if or when another researcher would conduct the study. As always with studies that revolve around the attitudes of individuals, these remain both context and time specific. Kuckartz (2014) claims that it is considered difficult to establish a criterion to achieve good quality as every qualitative study is unique and therefore different. Braun and Clarke (2013) further argue that reliability is not considered an appropriate criterion for qualitative research in contrast to quantitative research. “Reliability (...) is also rooted in a realist view of a single external reality knowable through language, whereas qualitative approaches acknowledge multiple realities or the context-bound nature of reality” (Braun & Clarke, 2013: 525). Furthermore, qualitative studies are known to generate questions about generalizability. However, because of the interest in the detail of a specific phenomenon, generalizability is rarely considered a meaningful goal for qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2013). In this study, my results can therefore not be generalized to a wider or different population than the one studied, since 12 qualitative interviews are not representative of all secondary school teachers in the country. Nevertheless, the results are relevant to my research sample and the investigated phenomenon and will still produce results and a rich analysis with the theoretical framework.

Regarding the sampling strategy of snowballing, I am aware that it does not ensure the inclusion of a diversity of different groups in a population, nor are the participants self-selected. The participants hence have a closer connection, and the result might be less representative compared to a convenience or stratification sampling (Braun & Clarke, 2013). However, I considered snowballing to be the best option for the study due to the sensitive nature of the topic and hence the limited willingness of teachers to be interviewed on the subject. The teachers who chose to participate in the study will therefore inevitably be more open to discussing sexuality education as the interviews were voluntary. Moreover, because of the size of the study and its limitations in terms of time and resources, it can't be representative of the entire population of Guatemalan teachers.

Moreover, in this study, the language barrier needs to be considered as the interviews were held in Spanish, which is my fourth language even if I am fluent. There is always a risk of misinterpreting an answer when doing research in another language, which is why permission was asked to record the interviews to be able to relisten and caution will be taken during the transcribing process. All translations of interviews from Spanish to English in this thesis are my own unless otherwise noted. Furthermore, Dulić (2011) mentions how language can cause limitations for the researcher to determine source bias. Since I am familiar with the Guatemalan context, I am aware of the existing stigma around sexuality education and the intimate nature of the topic of study. Participants could thus potentially seek to answer the questions correctly which could cause bias in the collected data. However, the validity will be kept by staying transparent in the methodology work, following the same interview guide and guidelines around coding, while remaining conscious of my subjective interpretation as a researcher.

Finally, an issue that could cause the results to be flawed is my role as a researcher and the potential bias during the interviews. It is inevitable to exclude the fact that I as a white, European, middle-class woman am going to a developing country to conduct interviews about a topic that is deeply intimate, stigmatized, and taboo in Guatemalan society. It is therefore crucial as an interviewer to strive for the highest possible objectivity on the field and make the participants feel at ease to express themselves freely, without giving the impression that I am searching for something already defined in advance, by orienting to follow-up questions in a specific direction or adding personal opinions and values to their answers. By being aware of my own conceptions and beliefs about the topic, I can strive to minimize bias as much as possible from my end of the interviews.

4.6 Ethical considerations

Throughout the interviews, I aimed at being the most transparent as possible about the study, the purpose of the interviews, and how the data was going to be used. All the participants were informed that the interviews were both voluntary and anonymous and that they could choose not to answer a question or end the interview at any time without any compromise if they so wished. The names of the participants were changed to pseudonyms when presented in the table of profiles to further protect their identities. The collected data was explained to be used for scientific reasons only and were going to be handled with high confidentiality by no other than

me. I also asked for permission to record the interviews, informing them that the audio recording would mainly be used as an assistance tool in the transcription process. Finally, all the recordings would be deleted at the end of the study and if they had an interest in reading the final product of the thesis, I would gladly send them a copy (Magnusson & Marecek, 2015).

5. Analysis

This section will present the result of the data collected from the qualitative interviews, which will seek to answer the research questions in this study. Three themes were identified using a thematic analysis: *apparent conservatism*, *guidelines and limitations*, and *choice of teaching approach* and consist of patterns and subthemes. The themes will not be used separately to answer the research questions, but rather analyzed jointly as they work as complementary elements when treating such a complex topic as sexuality education in a specific context. Moreover, the themes have been identified in close relation to the categories of potential dichotomies, linguistic framing, and delivery strategies, so that the theoretical framework is continuously present in the analysis for the purpose of answering my research questions.

5.1 Apparent conservatism

This theme maps how respondents describe existing conservative values in Guatemalan society, and how conservatism among teachers and lack of modernity might affect the delivery of sexuality education to students in secondary schools. This relates to the theoretical category of potential dichotomies because the universality of SRHR might be seen by Guatemalan actors as incompatible with existing conservative and religious standards, which will challenge the delivery of sexuality education to secondary school students. The discourse of apparent conservatism will consequently result in a higher risk of explicit resistance toward sexuality education among parents and community members. Based on the answers of the participants, they are all reflecting quite deeply on the traditional and conservative structure of the Guatemalan society and comparing their reality with others around this topic.

And with respect to diversity, I think that one must learn to handle all these issues in the 21st century, one must be broader. If it is happening in other countries, why does Guatemala want to stay in the cave era? #4

We are obviously still a third-world country right, and it is difficult for us to get out of our traditions, our beliefs. That is what is greatly affecting our progress and the ability to provide quality sexual education. #8

Even if the respondents are not explicitly addressing a dichotomy, they are reflecting upon the contrasts by mentioning the concepts of conservatism and modernism, but also by comparing Guatemalan traditionalism with an ancient epoch in relation to progressiveness, as seen above. However, one reoccurring pattern of apparent conservatism that can be classified as a subtheme is *sociocultural and religious taboos*. Respondents expressed much thought regarding the negative impact of sexuality education which is a subject of taboo around them, both in a sociocultural and religious aspect.

The culture is so deeply rooted, the machismo, the moral part, the church, the religious part. (...) Many things are imposed and are imposed by the religion. So I think this is an extremely big challenge, and this is definitely connected to conservative families, with families that say concerning the part of the sexual, of the moral, that 'this is a sin, how are they going to teach you this, how you are going to learn that?!'. #3

This should no longer be a taboo, the cultural burden is too heavy, the religious burden that we still have in Guatemala. Guatemala is a country that still brings a lot, but of course, it is a country that has struggled to develop and is far behind in many things. #2

Furthermore, participants mentioned different situations to illustrate the conservative structures of the society they live in and put it in contrast with other phenomena, such as alcohol consumption among youth. This further emphasizes the conflict of sexuality education in a sociocultural context with apparent conservative structures.

I believe that of all the social dynamics in the case of Guatemala, the most complex thing is to deconstruct that conservative thought for these issues (...) because there are things that are allowed. Young people getting drunk at 15 years old in open and public places that is fine but talking about sexuality in the classroom that is not, it's wrong. #1

Nonetheless, the norms around sexuality education and expectations held by parents were probably the most discussed topic and participants described many ways in which conservative views and values are present in the family at the center of the private sphere. Respondents expressed how parents' resistance took form as a response to sexuality education delivered in secondary school and what type of arguments were the most commonly used when questioning this education. This can be closely connected to the category of potential dichotomies when

arguments related to cultural relativism were expressed by parents due to the apparent conservatism in Guatemalan society, further demonstrating that the epistemological differences are not always sufficiently recognized in the attempt of making the sexuality education 'culturally sensitive'.

It remains a taboo subject. Because in Guatemala there are still a lot of conservative patterns in the families, so it is a problem (...) when these issues have been brought up in the classroom, there are parents who don't like it. They say that 'it is not good to teach that', there is still the idea that it is not good to teach children from a very early age certain terms because they even give different names to the genital organs (...) And also parents don't like to talk about these topics because they say that one is directing them toward what they would like to be. #9

I feel that at least here in Guatemala there are taboos and apart from that, for example, here in the community, there are many parents for whom it continues to be a taboo. We cannot talk to the student about sexuality because it is already seen as a sin. Like 'this subject should not be addressed' or 'who taught you that', even though we see that this must be taught already in elementary school. #10

There is a lot of taboo that not all parents due to religion also complain about. 'Why is my son receiving contraceptive methods if we are extremely Catholic and God says that it is good that all children have to be brought into the world and that it is a sin to plan everything' (...) And that they say no because 'their children are going to enter the life of adults. #11

The culture is very taboo when talking about sexuality. At home, they continue to grow very close-minded, with only what mom and dad tell them and there are even occasions when parents don't like that we in school talk or treat these topics with the children. #12

In addition, respondents talked about their role as teachers and educators in the school environment in relation to the sociocultural and religious taboo around sexuality education. But especially how conservatism might affect the delivery of sexuality education to students. The universality of SRHR might in this aspect enter in conflict with teachers' personal views and values, but more importantly, it demonstrates how deeply our environment affects us.

The biggest challenge is ideology. The ideology, the parenting patterns that are present, machismo, even sexism right (...) There must be a change in that, and it all depends on

the teachers because there are still teachers who unfortunately still don't like to give this type of subject, which makes them uncomfortable and that is where we need to make progress, from the youngest to the oldest. #9

Yes, the churches most of all have a lot of influence on the teachers so that they won't teach it, or so that they teach only what the Bible says. So yes, there is a great influence. Also, they even say that the Guatemalan way of being is machismo, it is always influencing the fact that some topics are not addressed. #8

Lastly, respondents argued that sexuality education might be seen by the communities as a threat to social dynamics and highlighted the sociocultural and religious implications of comprehensive sexuality education. This can be further be highlighted with the category of potential dichotomies where an Othering mechanism becomes present when the secular logic of CSE collides with an apparent conservatism.

Talking openly about these situations attacks our conservative, patriarchal system a lot, which is maintained in our country, and this would allow many social institutions that exist in Guatemala to be deconstructed. And I think that for that same reason, sex education is seen as a threat because it could transform much of the situation, (...), it would destroy or deconstruct much of the social construction that we have. #1

Another pattern of apparent conservatism that can be classified as a subtheme is *generational chains*. Participants mentioned the effect of generational chains which further illustrates how deeply rooted the conservative view of sexuality education is. The subtheme is closely linked to the *sociocultural and religious taboos* and needs to be understood in relation to each other. Participants' reasoning of the generational chains demonstrates how hard it is to break these patterns no matter the cultural sensitivity, and it also helps understand the resistance shown in Guatemalan communities.

It is very difficult because we are in a context where the parents of the students that we currently have, have been educated with taboos on sexuality, the grandparents too. So it is a generational chain that first of all has not allowed us to enter the subject of sexual education without seeing it as a taboo and secondly, even less has it allowed us to enter the topic of comprehensive sexual education, because we have not been able to achieve that the word sexuality cease to be something shocking to people. #2

Many teachers are from the same generation as the parents, for whom it is taboo or gives them anxiety to talk about these topics in the classrooms because they are not prepared to answer questions. #2

The subthemes of social and religious taboos as well as generational chains further give an insight into how the phenomena affect the way teachers enact the curriculum, both regarding the linguistic framing and practical approach of delivery strategies in classrooms, which will be discussed in the following sections.

5.2 Guidelines and limitations

The collected data strongly indicates that secondary teachers in Guatemala sometimes must follow strict guidelines on what the school allows to be taught due to third-party reactions and are thus limited when delivering sexuality education to their students. This theme aligns with the theoretical category of linguistic framing as it demonstrates the fundamental impact language can have when speaking about sexuality education, to either receive support or resistance from the communities. The guidelines and limitations that teachers experienced are therefore closely bound to the linguistic framing, both in terms of discourse and within the frame of existing norms and rules about sexuality education. The theme of guidelines and limitations focuses on the respect participants need to show to the context, by adopting a culturally sensitive approach when teaching sexuality education in secondary schools in Guatemala.

To begin with, respondents discuss how they must respect the parents' opinions or requests regarding how they deliver sexuality education, as well as institutional demands concerning restrictions and modifications of the curriculum. Even if most respondents expressed that they had experienced institutional limitations and prohibitions to address certain topics, others emphasized that the focus rather is on the chosen method and framing of sexuality education, as seen below. However, the guidelines and limitations were all presented with the purpose of avoiding potential negative reactions from parents, which means that great efforts are made to prevent any form of resistance towards the delivered sexuality education.

From above they gave me instructions to remove it. 'These topics are not going to be discussed in your classes', and they are in the national education program. 'But they

are in the national education program?'; 'No, that would mean getting us in trouble... You're not going to talk about this, remove that and look over how you modify it and how you adapt it.' (...) So, we always end up in a sexual education that is not comprehensive because there are topics that you do not touch, there are topics that they don't allow you to give, and those were the instructions I received. #2

Sometimes in many sectors, they limit it because the less they know, it is easier so to say that a cultural and social structure is established. #12

What we had are recommendations on how we approach it. To know how, in what way to address, how to deal with the topics to not harm the students. And to not generate discontent among parents. (...) To know how to approach the subject to not like launch it over them either, but rather take it little by little so that they understand better. (...) But to tell us 'not this topic please', not once. On the contrary, we have had support in this sense and material. #9

The first identified subtheme to guidelines and limitations is *applied professionalism*. Respondents expressed the importance of delivering a correct sexuality education so that students would use the right terms when speaking about different topics. The linguistic framing is thus present both for the purpose of expanding their knowledge and encouraging them to stop using pejorative words or nicknames, but also to avoid the risk of the information being distorted or misunderstood when leaving the classroom and hence creating situations of conflict in the communities or with parents.

Also, mention them and say that this is not how they are called, they should be called by their real name. But that is the way, I try to be the most professional I can to avoid problems with the parents as well. #9

Yes, that is very cared of in each classroom because there are many students who go home and hear 'what did you do today', and they begin to tell what they did. So if as a teacher, we say a word that is not correct, then the student will say 'the teacher said this or the teacher said that', which will create a situation of conflict in our community. It's therefore a matter of using each term correctly as it is established. #10

So we do have to deal with these subjects very carefully with the kids because sometimes the information is distorted and they come home saying something else. They don't tell us 'look, don't say that, don't give this type of topic' but they do tell us 'be careful with the methods when you give these topics', because the information can be distorted. #11

Another aspect the respondents presented is that they must stay consistently neutral and avoid all types of personal views and values to remain professional in their teaching of sexuality education. This included the need to evaluate where the limit is drawn of saying just enough, sticking to the theoretical part of the teaching to not disrupt the sociocultural context, and at no point giving their personal opinions to their students. Again, always as a preventative purpose so that parents would not complain about the given education being inappropriate for their children.

Because you know that if you say too much, you can get in trouble. If you want to give more information to the adolescents, you can get in trouble and you have to always think about making it very objective because you can't say "I think", "I believe", because you can provoke the dad or mom to come and say 'you are putting your ideas in the head of the student'. It's about feeling comfortable with what you do because you know that you are trying to do it well, you are trying to educate on a subject that few dare to educate. #2

That's why I'm telling you these are questions above all, when the kids come and tell you 'what do you think' or else, you have to know how to handle it because sometimes parents will come and tell you, 'are you saying that this is okay?!' #2

You always answer carefully to not affect the part about context, I always try to do it based on the theory, always from the objectivity so that there is no opportunity, I mean so the dad does not have the opportunity or even the people who choose the school may have said to the institution that there are topics that are treated to a certain limit, I always try to answer as objectively as possible. #2

The second identified subtheme to guidelines and limitation is *deviation from the norm* which demonstrates when participants act in a different way than what is socially expected of them, thus defying the established norms of teaching sexuality education with the risk of receiving resistance over support from communities. Respondents expressed situations both with parents and with community members where they have chosen not to care about the other party's negative response to their teaching and keep justifying the importance of giving a complete education to their students that involves using correct language no matter the stigma. They further claimed that the need to censor themselves in the classroom inevitably has an impact on the quality of education in schools and especially a comprehensive approach.

But as I am telling you they are people, how everyone is influenced depends on how they are right, because they wanted to change my way of being but I won't change. I even go to a church, and they have said no to some of these topics, 'the bible says this and this', but I said no I have learned it in another way, so I am going to teach it in my own way. I think that is the correct way. #8

Even sometimes the Church itself which is not my work that is purely secular, but the church sometimes has some reactions, but I always try to talk about it, to negotiate how we can talk about it because I think it is important. #5

Everything that has to do with sexual education one has to embrace. And just like the word itself, comprehensive. And if one starts to say 'this yes, this no', automatically one is twisting the information. So no, I am comfortable expressing. That is why I have also had problems because they see me like that, merely liberal on these types of subjects. #4

However, some expressed that they complied because the social norm of respecting the parents' opinion on their child's education was in the end too deeply rooted, but not without giving their own point of view.

*'Nooo I'm just saying that I respect it, right', 'look now my son said that this is fine'. Well...in my perception, it's not bad either *laugh*, but I'm going to respect what you say and I'm sorry, I'm not going to talk to your son about this again or answer questions of this type. #2*

In other cases, respondents claimed it was important to meet resistance with communication by giving a proper explanation to the complaining parent, in this case taking advantage of the linguistic framing to further emphasize the importance but especially the right of the student to gain knowledge in sexuality education. It was only in these circumstances that the concept of 'rights' was identified as opposed to 'health'.

The parents come and say 'Mx I don't agree that these topics are discussed ' but I then explain to them and the importance of it and 'ah well, then it's okay, Mx.' Then they get a little calmer, but it is more about the ignorance of what is going to be talked about and what is going to be addressed. #9

Well, I think that sometimes if the information is not well accepted, one would have to face the person who disagrees, to explain, to talk to them. (...) Well, I believe that we

should assert our rights and those of young people because their lives are at stake right, it is our main goal. #7

Other respondents also argued about each person's right to choose by illustrating how they were actively separating their personal beliefs about homosexuality yet encouraging the students to form their own identities and opinions about something as personal as sexual orientation. This was especially the case when it came down to religion, where teachers actively tried to deliver sexuality education from a social point of view and not a religious one. In this instance, linguistic framing played an immense role in the delivery of sexuality education.

Now as for sexual diversity and gender, I have my point of view according to the Bible and homosexuality is condemned because it speaks about two sexes, female and male. But I believe that in their freedom each person can choose, I see it as a vice, to have a vice or not to have it, right? Of course, the Bible forbids it, and I wouldn't practice it. But I think that the adolescent should be aware of what it is because I will not come and simply forbid it. #5

There are many religious denominations. Personally, I have my personal point of view, my personal position but I try not to influence the education on this subject. And I try to let the children also see it from a social point of view and not a religious one because to come and place a religious point of view here is a debate that can be very uncomfortable. #12

Lastly, the choice of words used by the participants in the interview was observed to a certain point and it was clear that all the teachers tried to use adequate language when discussing topics about sexuality education. Despite the linguistic framing having great importance, it was however clear that a right-based approach was dominating even though health-related issues such as teen pregnancies, sexual violence, poverty, and malnutrition were widely discussed in the Guatemalan context. The linguistic approach is however undeniably intertwined with the practical approach, which will be discussed henceforth.

5.3 Choice of teaching approach

This theme outlines the different motives behind participants' teaching methods when delivering sexuality education in secondary schools. As seen above regarding themes and patterns, factors such as context, professional environment but also individual character are

seen to have a fundamental impact on the choice of teaching approach each respondent established. The choice of teaching approach naturally aligns with the theoretical category of delivery strategies because of the underlying incentives to aim for support rather than resistance from communities, when delivering sexuality education in a conservative sociocultural context. Different patterns were identified, which were thereafter transformed into two larger subthemes.

The first one can be classified as *cautious teaching and avoidance*. Based on the answers of the participants, a large majority expressed feelings of fear and anxiety about negative parental reactions towards their teaching of sexuality education in secondary schools. Their shared experiences offered insight into the effort teacher put to navigate the topic while staying alert and cautious to avoid potential confrontation situations with parents. The linguistic framing as discussed above was also of great importance here.

Sometimes I feel very anxious or very afraid inside the classroom to say something, or do something, or discuss the subject and use a tool, a video, an image, something that is going to cause me to get in trouble as a teacher. #2

I think that teachers and principals are very afraid. They are very afraid of the parents, of the parents' reactions. #3

Some respondents even mentioned how the complaints from parents in the worst-case scenario could result in them getting reported to authorities or be a life-threatening risk in certain communities, which further highlights the importance of delivery strategies in relation to sexuality education.

We have to be very careful when educating them because parents can complain, in fact, they can even file a complaint about why the school is introducing these topics, right? #11

The community where the educational center is located is also very complicated. We have to be very careful and vigilant when dealing with these subjects because it can put the life of the student, including our own lives at risk. These are very sensitive subjects, I would say. #12

A reoccurring pattern of participants' feelings of fear and worry about receiving reactions from parents was *avoidance*. Many spoke about a common approach taken by teachers to simply avoid situations related to sexuality education that could result in them getting in trouble or causing confrontational situations with parents or with actors of the communities. Many were based on personal experiences with colleagues who would rather not convey messages about sexuality education in their classroom, even though they have a positive mindset toward its delivery and agree on its importance and necessity for young people. This was especially the case for teachers who did not teach natural science, which is seen as the only socially accepted subject to handle these topics, if not done at home.

The only thing is that of the twenty teachers, perhaps three of us are open to talk about these topics. Not the others, they don't even touch them, they don't approach them, they prefer to avoid them. #8

The discussion of bringing it to the classroom is already reduced to 10% because not everyone is encouraged by their own situations and experiences, there are even those who feel that it could not be addressed from our area. #1

In Guatemala, people avoid talking about it and teachers avoid it for the same reason, because they don't know them or because they don't know how to deal with it, or for fear that the parents will say something. But we are a few who take the time to address these subjects with the students. And well, more than anything, also because of true belief, those who are very religious do not raise it because of it, those who give priority to the topics do not address it either, they feel that it is a waste of time, and they are not addressing it. #8

The second subtheme to Choice of teaching approach is *modification of method rather than content*. Here, participants emphasized that the practical change should be based on the approach and method of teaching rather than the content itself. During the interview, respondents reflected deeply on the need for cultural sensitivity and expressed how the context might bring them difficulties when teaching sexuality education. Thereby, the focus lay on changing the method of teaching different topics related to sexuality education without letting it affect the student's right to information. This was expressed by participants in order to handle explicit resistance from parents or the communities, which further emphasizes the importance of delivery strategies.

If you have to change, then you have to change. It is necessary to change, but perhaps not the topic itself, rather the methodology, the techniques, those would have to be changed. #6

At some point, it might become the position of many parents who prefer that their children are not to be talked to about certain subjects and regarding sexuality because they have this position regarding the belief according to their faith and they prefer their children not to be oriented that way. (...) When we have a situation like this, we try to change the approach a bit without ceasing to give importance to everything right, if it is comprehensive, we have to put all perspectives. #12

Furthermore, with the purpose of not cutting the students off completely with their environment, one respondent also tried to work on that cultural awareness in the class while having cultural sensitivity in mind, by giving them homework involving their realities. This approach shows how the teacher instead opted for a modification of the method of teaching, to facilitate the delivery of information to the students. This could be seen as a practical means to generate support towards sexuality education, by opting for an including delivery strategy.

They also do interviews at home, for example, 'what does mom think, what does dad think', because you can't completely separate them from their context, you have to respect what the parents want you to say in the classroom. So these are one of the things we do that I have benefited from is that they go home, they interview what their grandparents think, how they were educated, and all the part of the load of the context. #2

Moreover, many participants shared how they had dealt with a situation where they had to adapt their approach when delivering sexuality education to their students. Some completely complied with the demands of the parents to exclude their child from the class when the subject of sexuality education was taught due to religious reasons, others tried to respond to the resistance with information or by giving that student a different work material. However, respondents emphasized that even if parents complained about the sexuality education class, it was only on rare occasions that students had to be completely excluded from taking part in it.

If parents complain, they must be listened to, because we can't teach things that are not authorized, right? If there is a situation, we talk to the parents and explain to them

in spite of the law, because there are laws, there are norms. Then there's no problem.

#6

Because I do remember that I had a girl who almost didn't participate at all and told me because of her religion she couldn't. (...) And her mother had told her that she didn't have to read this book. And I told her that it's a shame because they don't want the students to open their eyes to reality right., I told them, the mother and the girl that her mother can come and talk to me because it is important that you know about these subjects. The mother never came but I couldn't force the girl to read either. #8

One family did not want their daughter to be exposed to the information we were sharing. So we simply had to not remove the student from the situation, but rather at the moment when we gave the lesson, the girl was assigned something else so that she would not be present and we tried to find strategies for her to participate in the educational space of this topic. (...) The father of the family simply expressed his disagreement and discomfort and asked if we could find another strategy to work with the girl. So we looked for a way and it was resolved like this. #12

Finally, the subtheme also demonstrates how respondents' efforts and adaptation sometimes is rewarded with acceptance and support from the communities. Parents as well as political and religious leaders have shown gratefulness towards sexuality education, especially in vulnerable communities where the literacy level is low. Some participants claimed that parents typically expressed a higher tolerance if they had knowledge of the teaching approach which in turn leads to a process of normalization of the subject.

I think many parents are grateful, they don't like to address the topics but when they are talked about, they are grateful. There are about a hundred parents, two perhaps who want to continue blindfolded. #8

In the case where I work, many times the political or religious authorities are grateful because all this helps the community. Because imagine if you are not being guided, cases happen, one realizes that cases happen that should not happen. #7

According to the participants' answers, the choice of teaching approach when delivering sexuality education to their students is a decisive factor for the possible outcome of being met with either resistance or support by the communities. Teachers' enactment of the curriculum will be affected by the cultural context and especially in a conservative environment that sometimes requires them to challenge prevailing norms. Finally, most of the participants

maintained an adaptive approach to the delivery strategies, which highlights their ambitions of a culturally sensitive approach, especially when it came to certain topics such as abortion and homosexuality.

6. Discussion

As explained at the beginning of the thesis, the aim of this research is to study the practical translation of Guatemalan sexual politics into the classroom environment and to understand how teachers are met with resistance or support from communities when they are delivering sexuality education and how it affects its quality. This chapter, therefore, strives to answer the research questions by analyzing the data with the theoretical framework and previous research presented above. The first part will explore the first research question; “How do secondary school teachers describe the resistance or support of communities as facilitating and/or impeding the delivery of sexuality education in Guatemala?”, while the following part will discuss the second research question; “How does the resistance or support of communities as described by secondary school teachers impact the quality of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in Guatemala?”.

6.1 Description of resistance or support by communities

As presented in all themes above, secondary school teachers in Guatemala experience significant resistance in their attempt to teach sexuality education to students. In line with what Ocran (2021) claimed, the data showed that communities are expressing resistance on the basis that sexuality education would supposedly encourage adolescents to have sex, opt for contraceptives instead of abstinence and that the teachers would be ‘orienting’ them a certain way, which all goes against religious rules and norms. One of the most reoccurring subjects in the interviews was based on the theme of apparent conservatism and the existing taboos around human sexuality and sexuality education as such. Respondents discussed how these socially constructed norms are maintained by society and passed on from generation to generation, as well as how challenging it is to break those patterns because of the hegemony’s moral values in this context.

Results from the interviews showed a deep understanding of how culture determines social taboos and respondents highlighted how these have been greatly influenced by religion due to the strong presence of the Catholic Church, and especially how religious arguments often are used as a reason for actors and especially parents, to oppose the delivery of sexuality education.

An issue that was raised to a great extent was how teachers themselves actively contribute to the resistance by excluding important topics of sexuality education in their classes, due to their personal values and beliefs. This coincides with the argument of Castillo et al. (2020) that neutrality will be more difficult to achieve when dealing with sensitive and controversial subjects. For this reason, respondents spoke about the importance of their role as educators to deconstruct the social stigma around sexuality education, which could further help combat other social issues, such as the widespread problem of violence in Guatemala.

The resistance expressed by the communities due to the subtheme of social and religious taboos was shown to impede sexuality education through public and private disapproval in numerous ways. Participants mentioned how parents are interfering with the content of the classes and are putting limitations both on their children and on the teachers with certain topics of sexuality education. However, the role of the institution was the most discussed during the interviews, as respondents emphasized how the schools rarely stood up against parental confrontations or complaints directed toward their employees. As the theme presents, this resulted in institutional limitations and guidelines from above that the teachers had to comply with, which often restricted them or forced them to transform their course guide, even though the subjects were officially included in the national curriculum. In other words, participants claim that the ministry of education is not the actor in charge of Guatemalan sexuality education, parents are.

According to the results, the parents have a higher say in relation to the teacher when it comes to the education of their child due to traditions in the sociocultural context, which gives them more legitimacy compared with official institutions and agencies to decide what is best for the students. Because of the high status of parents but also community actors such as religious leaders, teachers expressed deep worry and even fear of getting in trouble by saying too much or the wrong thing, alternatively that the conveyed information would be distorted, which would lead to confrontational situations with parents. This aspect was shown to significantly impede the delivery of sexuality education as teachers focused more on preventative measures to avoid criticism and conflict rather than the educational outcome. Consequently, this suggests that the theoretical category of linguistic framing is highly relevant when delivering sexuality education in Guatemala and that the adaptation needs to be perceived through a perspective of cultural sensitivity.

Nevertheless, even if cultural relativistic arguments sometimes lead the secular logic of CSE to collide with apparent conservatism in the analyzed data, evidence showed that the theoretical category of potential dichotomies was rather absent. Nor did the results show a clear right versus health discourse as presented in the chapter of the theoretical framework. However, the data did not only show evidence of resistance, as some respondents also described support from communities in their teaching of sexuality education, especially in vulnerable communities where sexuality education has been shown to improve issues of sexual health and violence. In these communities, linguistic framing and delivery strategies were decisive factors that helped teachers deal with worries and distrust from parents and eventually facilitated the delivery of sexuality education. By adapting to the context and opting for an approach based on modifying rather than changing the content of the curriculum, the teachers managed to change the negative attitudes of communities toward sexuality education.

6.2 Impact on the quality of comprehensive sexuality education

As described above, resistance towards sexuality education was identified to a much larger extent in contrast to the support from communities, which evidently will have an impact on the quality of CSE. Results from the study showed that teachers felt the necessity to modify their teaching approach in accordance with institutional guidelines, suggested or imposed limitations, as well as anxiety and fear of parental reactions based on conservative norms and rules of the communities. This led respondents to express concern over the fact that the sexuality education ended up being incomplete and could not be classified as either integral or comprehensive. Furthermore, teachers disclosed that the quality of sexuality education will inevitably be affected due to their need to censor themselves in the classroom because of all the presented factors.

However, in the identified subtheme of deviation from the norm, some teachers showed evidence of challenging prevailing sociocultural norms to deliver CSE and were hence going against the resistance of both parents and the Church. This conforms with the research of Nuñez et al. (2018) who claimed that the confidence teachers feel to address topics of sexuality will make them more likely to include CSE in their teaching practice, as well as Rijsdijk et al. (2013)

who suggest that aspects like teachers' moral views of sexuality, norms, beliefs, attitudes, and self-efficacy toward sexuality education are fundamental for the quality of implementation. Nevertheless, some teachers in the study demonstrated how they were still attempting to deliver adequate sexuality education, even though their personal opinions and values concerning topics such as abortion and homosexuality were different. Data showed their ambition to equip students with the necessary tools and knowledge to make their own choices in life. These findings suggest that a culturally sensitive approach is not always the only option to deliver sexuality education of quality, but not all teachers might have the privilege nor the courage to deviate from the norm.

As suggested by a study made by the Guttmacher Institute (2017) in Guatemala, 61% of both teachers and key informants felt that parents were unsupportive of the CSE program. To improve those numbers and thereby increase the quality of sexuality education, many respondents mentioned how they would like to see an implementation of schools for parents. These findings are supported by the research of Rijdsik et al. (2013) that because of the low support, teachers recognize the necessity to involve parents in the sexuality education of their children to transform the norms and attitudes of SRHR which encourages a CSE approach. Moreover, the theoretical category of delivery strategies emphasizes the need to create a space for a 'speakable' sexuality which would ideally result in an improved environment for these conversations. However, it would be unrealistic to expect controversial topics such as sexual diversity to be delivered under the same circumstances as they are in contexts that do not classify this as culturally sensitive. In line with was Roodsaz (2018) suggests, it is a challenge to either adapt or confront a cultural context given the local sociocultural norms. Therefore, the delivery strategies for sexuality education will differ depending on teachers' conditions and circumstances to deliver sexuality education of quality and most importantly, deliver CSE.

It is undeniable that the practical approach of delivering sexuality education along with the applied linguistic framing is considered to be of fundamental importance when handling resistance from communities. Especially in the quest of finding the just balance of teaching a concept based on universality in a context with crucial epistemological differences. Evidence has shown that CSE is an important means to improve public health and inform young people

about their SRHR, and it is, therefore, essential to investigate how its quality can be further enhanced in different sociocultural contexts where the resistance of communities is tangible.

7. Conclusion

This thesis has highlighted how actors in the educational sector are deeply affected by their local communities and how they have a direct impact on the selected practical approach to sexuality education in secondary schools in Guatemala. Multiple scholars (Ocran, 2021; Lazarus, 2019; Guttmacher, 2017; and Rijdsik et al., 2013) have in recent years claimed that surrounding actors have a strong influence on CSE, whether it be school environments, religious bodies, or parents. However, the universality of CSE is also viewed as a challenge, when attempting to implement the sexuality education approach in different sociocultural settings. This study, therefore, sought to answer how the reactions from local communities function as facilitating and/or impeding the delivery of sexuality education and how it according to secondary school teachers consequently impacts the quality of CSE in Guatemala.

The results of this study show that Guatemalan actors such as parents, religious leaders, and even teachers themselves might see the universality of SRHR as incompatible with existing conservative and religious standards, which is something that will inevitably challenge the delivery of sexuality education. Findings show that the epistemological differences are not always sufficiently recognized in the attempt of making the sexuality education ‘culturally sensitive’. A conservative discourse will therefore lead to an increased probability of resistance among community members. Sexuality education might also be seen by the communities as a threat to social dynamics when the secular logic of CSE collides with an apparent conservatism.

Moreover, the study suggests that secondary teachers in Guatemala must follow strict guidelines on what is allowed to be taught in schools due to negative reactions and are therefore limited when teaching sexuality education. The language was identified as a fundamental factor in either receiving support or resistance from communities, as respondents expressed a necessity to respect institutional demands and parents’ opinions or requests regarding the addressed subjects. This thesis provides clear indications that individual character, professional environment, and context have a crucial impact on the teaching approach. Teachers paid much effort to navigate the topics while staying alert and cautious, to avoid potential confrontation situations with parents. The choice of teaching approach was identified as a decisive factor for being met with either resistance or support by the communities. Teachers’ enactment of the

curriculum was for this reason affected by the cultural context and especially because of its conservative nature.

To summarize, resistance towards sexuality education was identified to a much larger extent in contrast to the support from communities, which will evidently have an impact on the quality of CSE. Results imply that there is a widespread concern among teachers that the delivered sexuality education is not comprehensive, due to their censored and modified approach in line with institutional guidelines and limitations, but also anxiety and fear of parental reactions or confrontations. A culturally sensitive approach was nevertheless not the only option, in cases where teachers actively challenged prevailing sociocultural norms or managed to put aside their own bias in the classrooms. The quality was also seen to be widely affected by the teachers who rather avoided the subject of sexuality education in their class, due to personal opinions and values, insecurities, or indifference toward its importance. Thus, the thesis reinforces the notion that aspects such as teachers' moral views of sexuality, norms, beliefs, attitudes, and self-efficacy toward sexuality education are fundamental for the quality of implementation.

However, results further indicate that the challenge to either adapt or confront a cultural context that views sexuality education as culturally sensitive will most likely persist due to the universality of the concept of CSE. This means that the delivery strategies will differ depending on the teachers' conditions and circumstances to deliver sexuality education in schools. Ultimately, the more support communities show toward teachers delivering CSE, the less energy teacher will have to spill on worrying about negative reactions from parents. The efforts teachers put in when they are forced to handle resistance from local communities who oppose the content of the curriculum would instead be redirected and result in an enhancement of the quality of sexuality education in secondary schools. According to respondents of this study, the implementation of comprehensive and complete sexuality education could further contribute to combating different widespread problems such as teen pregnancies, sexual violence, poverty, and malnutrition in Guatemala.

Lastly, this thesis has created an opportunity for further qualitative research to be made on the aspects of CSE in a context that perceives sexuality education as culturally sensitive. As most of the existing research is of quantitative nature and focuses on the recipients of sexuality

education, more qualitative research is needed on the principal actors who are responsible for translating a country's sexual politics into practice in the classrooms. Furthermore, it would be interesting to investigate the relationship between CSE, poverty, and malnutrition as some participants briefly discussed during the interviews. Most importantly, the results suggest in line with Roodsaz's (2018) arguments that it is of great interest to explore the compatibility between the UN's universal concept of CSE and the challenges a practical implementation entails in different sociocultural contexts. Results from this study point towards promising pathways for future research on how the practical adaptation can be made and equip educators with tools on how cultural relativistic arguments should be met, to further enhance the quality of sexuality education around the world. Although the thesis focuses on the role and impact of local communities in relation to sexual politics and education, its results are expected to contribute to research on norm change when it comes to policy implementation and advocacy work, especially when it comes to development within the field of SRHR.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Interview Guide – English

Sociodemographic variables

Age:

Sex:

Socioeconomic status:

Religion:

Level of importance in personal life:

Teaching qualification/subjects:

Teaching experience in years:

Private or public institution:

Religious institution:

Questions:

1. What is your understanding of sexuality education?
2. Have you heard about comprehensive sexuality education before? If so, how would you explain it?
3. How would you describe the sexuality education given in Guatemala?
4. According to you, what is the purpose of teaching sexuality education?
5. Do you feel a certain responsibility as a teacher to teach sexuality education?

6. Have you attended any training courses on sexuality education?
7. Is sexuality education taught as part of the national curriculum or as an extracurricular activity at your workplace?
8. Are you provided with material from your institution, the state, an NGO, or else?
9. Could you describe a regular sexuality education class with your students?
10. How would you describe your teaching approach to sexuality education?
 - a. What tools do you use to teach? (media/audiovisual/art/poetry...)
 - b. Are there any special activities you use? (assignments/discussions/Q&A...)
 - c. Are the students allowed to ask questions?
 - d. Would you describe your students as receptive to the lessons?
11. What kind of support do you think you still need to better develop your sexuality education classes?

12. Do you feel comfortable teaching sexuality education?
 - a. If yes, could you explain how come?
 - b. If not, is there anything in particular that causes discomfort?
13. What topics would you consider the most controversial or sensitive to teach, and why?
14. When you deliver a lesson, are you cautious with the language you use? In what way?
15. Are there any words that are considered inappropriate to use in the classroom?

16. Are there subjects you prefer not to cover or refuse to teach (for personal reasons)?
17. Is it required to inform the parents or request their consent to teach certain topics of sexuality education at your institution?
18. Have you ever encountered problems with parents regarding your teaching of sexuality education?
19. Do you feel supported by your colleagues at your workplace for teaching sexuality education?
20. Have you ever received instructions or recommendations from your superior to avoid certain subjects or even abstain from teaching topics of sexuality education?
21. Do you believe it is necessary for you to modify your teaching of sexuality education depending on the reactions you are getting from parents/peers/religious groups?
22. How much influence do you consider the community outside of the school to have on teachers' delivery of sexuality education?
23. *In March, the Guatemalan congress passed law 5272 "Ley para la Protección de la Vida y la Familia" which would directly prohibit the teaching of sexual diversity and gender equality in schools. The president later declared that the law would be vetoed as it violates the Political Constitution of the Republic and international conventions to which Guatemala has been a signatory. How would you describe the reactions to this law?*
24. In your opinion, what are the main challenges affecting the practical implementation of comprehensive sexuality education in Guatemala?
25. What can be done in the local context to facilitate discussions and conversations about topics related to comprehensive sexuality education?

Appendix 2

Coding of Data – English

CATEGORIES	Potential dichotomies	Linguistic framing	Delivery strategies
THEMES	APPARENT CONSERVATISM	GUIDELINES AND LIMITATIONS	CHOICE OF TEACHING APPROACH
SUBTHEMES	Social and religious taboos Generational chains	Applied professionalism Deviation from norm	Cautious teaching and avoidance Modification of method rather than content
QUOTES	And with respect to diversity, I think that one must learn to handle all these issues in the 21st century, one must be broader. If it is happening in other countries, why does Guatemala want to stay in the cave era? #4	From above they gave me instructions to remove it. 'These topics are not going to be discussed in your classes', and they are in the national education program. 'But they are in the national education program?', 'No, that would mean getting us in trouble... You're not going to talk about this, remove that and look over how you modify it and how you adapt it.' (...) So, we always end up in a sexual education that is not comprehensive because there are topics that you do not touch, there are topics that they don't allow you to give, and those were the instructions I received. #2	Sometimes I feel very anxious or very afraid inside the classroom to say something, or do something, or discuss the subject and use a tool, a video, an image, something that is going to cause me to get in trouble as a teacher. #2
	We are obviously still a third-world country right, and it is difficult for us to get out of our traditions, our beliefs. That is what is greatly affecting our progress and the ability to	Sometimes in many sectors, they limit it because the less they know, it is easier so to say that a cultural and social structure is established. #12	I think that teachers and principals are very afraid. They are very afraid of the parents, of the parents' reactions. #3

	provide quality sexual education. #8		
	The culture is so deeply rooted, the machismo, the moral part, the church, the religious part. (...) Many things are imposed and are imposed by the religion. So I think this is an extremely big challenge, and this is definitely connected to conservative families, with families that say concerning the part of the sexual, of the moral, that 'this is a sin, how are they going to teach you this, how you are going to learn that?!'. #3	What we had are recommendations on how we approach it. To know how, in what way to address, how to deal with the topics to not harm the students. And to not generate discontent among parents. (...) To know how to approach the subject to not like launch it over them either, but rather take it little by little so that they understand better. (...) But to tell us 'not this topic please', not once. On the contrary, we have had support in this sense and material. #9	We have to be very careful when educating them because parents can complain, in fact, they can even file a complaint about why the school is introducing these topics, right? #11
	This should no longer be a taboo, the cultural burden is too heavy, the religious burden that we still have in Guatemala. Guatemala is a country that still brings a lot, but of course, it is a country that has struggled to develop and is far behind in many things. #2	Also mention them and say that this is not how they are called, they should be called by their real name. But that is the way, I try to be the most professional I can to avoid problems with the parents as well. #9	The community where the educational center is located is also very complicated. We have to be very careful and vigilant when dealing with these subjects because it can put the life of the student, including our own lives at risk. These are very sensitive subjects, I would say. #12
	I believe that of all the social dynamics in the case of Guatemala, the most complex thing is to deconstruct that conservative thought for these issues (...) because there are things that are allowed. Young people getting drunk at 15 years old in open and public places that is fine, but talking about	Yes, that is very cared of in each classroom because there are many students who go home and hear 'what did you do today', and they begin to tell what they did. So if as a teacher, we say a word that is not correct, then the student will say 'the teacher said this or the teacher	The only thing is that of the twenty teachers, perhaps three of us are open to talk about these topics. Not the others, they don't even touch them, they don't approach them, they prefer to avoid them. #8

	<p>sexuality in the classroom that is not, it's wrong. #1</p>	<p>said that', which will create a situation of conflict in our community. It's therefore a matter of using each term correctly as it is established. #10</p>	
	<p>It remains a taboo subject. Because in Guatemala there are still a lot of conservative patterns in the families, so it is a problem (...) when these issues have been brought up in the classroom, there are parents who don't like it. They say that 'it is not good to teach that', there is still the idea that it is not good to teach children from a very early age certain terms because they even give different names to the genital organs (...) And also parents don't like to talk about these topics because they say that one is directing them toward what they would like to be. #9</p>	<p>So we do have to deal with these subjects very carefully with the kids because sometimes the information is distorted and they come home saying something else. They don't tell us 'look, don't say that, don't give this type of topic' but they do tell us 'be careful with the methods when you give these topics,' because the information can be distorted. #11</p>	<p>The discussion of bringing it to the classroom is already reduced to 10% because not everyone is encouraged by their own situations and experiences, there are even those who feel that it could not be addressed from our area. #1</p>
	<p>I feel that at least here in Guatemala there are taboos and apart from that, for example, here in the community, there are many parents for whom it continues to be a taboo. We cannot talk to the student about sexuality because it is already seen as a sin. Like 'this subject should not be addressed' or 'who taught you that', even though we see that this must be taught already in elementary school. #10</p>	<p>Because you know that if you say too much, you can get in trouble. If you want to give more information to the adolescents, you can get into trouble and you have to always think about making it very objective because you can't say "I think", "I believe", because you can provoke the dad or mom to come and say 'you are putting your ideas in the head of the student'. It's about feeling comfortable with what you do because you know that you are trying to do it</p>	<p>In Guatemala, people avoid talking about it and teachers avoid it for the same reason, because they don't know them or because they don't know how to deal with it, or for fear that the parents will say something. But we are a few who take the time to address these subjects with the students. And well, more than anything, also because of true belief, those who are very religious do not raise it because of it, those who give priority to the topics do not address it either, they feel that it is a waste</p>

		well, you are trying to educate on a subject that few dare to educate. #2	of time, and they are not addressing it. #8
	There is a lot of taboo that not all parents due to religion also complain about. 'Why is my son receiving contraceptive methods if we are extremely Catholic and God says that it is good that all children have to be brought into the world and that it is a sin to plan everything' (...) And that they say no because 'their children are going to enter the life of adults. #11	That's why I'm telling you these are questions above all, when the kids come and tell you 'what do you think' or else, you have to know how to handle it because sometimes parents will come and tell you, 'are you saying that this is okay?!' #2	If you have to change, then you have to change. It is necessary to change, but perhaps not the topic itself, rather the methodology, the techniques, those would have to be changed. #6
	The culture is very taboo when talking about sexuality. At home, they continue to grow very close-minded, with only what mom and dad tell them and there are even occasions when parents don't like that we in school talk or treat these topics with the children. #12	You always answer carefully to not affect the part about context, I always try to do it based on the theory, always from the objectivity so that there is no opportunity, I mean so the dad does not have the opportunity or even the people who choose the school may have said to the institution that there are topics that are treated to a certain limit, I always try to answer as objectively as possible. #2	At some point, it might become the position of many parents who prefer that their children are not to be talked to about certain subjects and regarding sexuality because they have this position regarding the belief according to their faith and they prefer their children not to be oriented that way. (...) When we have a situation like this, we try to change the approach a bit without ceasing to give importance to everything right, if it is comprehensive, we have to put all perspectives. #12
	The biggest challenge is ideology. The ideology, the parenting patterns that are present, machismo, even sexism right (...) There must be a change in that, and it all depends on the teachers because there are still teachers who unfortunately still don't like to give this	But as I am telling you they are people, how everyone is influenced depends on how they are right, because they wanted to change my way of being but I won't change. I even go to a church, and they have said no to some of these	They also do interviews at home, for example, 'what does mom think, what does dad think', because you can't completely separate them from their context, you have to respect what the parents want you to say in the classroom. So

	type of subject, which makes them uncomfortable and that is where we need to make progress, from the youngest to the oldest. #9	topics, 'the bible says this and this', but I said no I have learned it in another way, so I am going to teach it in my own way. I think that is the correct way. #8	these are one of the things we do that I have benefited from is that they go home, they interview what their grandparents think, how they were educated and all the part of the load of the context. #2
	Yes, the churches most of all have a lot of influence on the teachers so that they won't teach it, or so that they teach only what the Bible says. So yes, there is a great influence. Also, they even say that the Guatemalan way of being is machismo, it is always influencing the fact that some topics are not addressed. #8	Even sometimes the Church itself which is not my work that is purely secular, but the church sometimes has some reactions, but I always try to talk about it, to negotiate how we can talk about it because I think it is important. #5	If parents complain, they must be listened to, because we can't teach things that are not authorized, right? If there is a situation, we talk to the parents and explain to them in spite of the law, because there are laws, there are norms. Then there's no problem. #6
	Talking openly about these situations attacks our conservative, patriarchal system a lot, which is maintained in our country, and this would allow many social institutions that exist in Guatemala to be deconstructed. And I think that for that same reason, sex education is seen as a threat because it could transform much of the situation, (...), it would destroy or deconstruct much of the social construction that we have. #1	Everything that has to do with sexual education one has to embrace. And just like the word itself, comprehensive. And if one starts to say 'this yes, this no', automatically one is twisting the information. So no, I am comfortable expressing. That is why I have also had problems because they see me like that, merely liberal on these types of subjects. #4	Because I do remember that I had a girl who almost didn't participate at all and told me because of her religion she couldn't. (...) And her mother had told her that she didn't have to read this book. And I told her that it's a shame because they don't want the students to open their eyes to reality right., I told the mother and the girl that her mother can come and talk to me because it is important that you know about these subjects. The mother never came but I couldn't force the girl to read either. #8
	It is very difficult because we are in a context where the parents of the students that we currently have, have been educated with taboos on sexuality, the	'Nooo I'm just saying that I respect it, right', 'look now my son said that this is fine'. Well...in my perception, it's not bad either	One family did not want their daughter to be exposed to the information we were sharing. So we simply had to not remove the

	<p>grandparents too. So it is a generational chain that first of all has not allowed us to enter the subject of sexual education without seeing it as a taboo and secondly, even less has it allowed us to enter the topic of comprehensive sexual education because we have not been able to achieve that the word sexuality cease to be something shocking to people. #2</p>	<p>*laugh*, but I'm going to respect what you say and I'm sorry, I'm not going to talk to your son about this again or answer questions of this type. #2</p>	<p>student from the situation, but rather at the moment when we gave the lesson, the girl was assigned something else so that she would not be present and we tried to find strategies for her to participate in the educational space of this topic. (...) The father of the family simply expressed his disagreement and discomfort and asked if we could find another strategy to work with the girl. So we looked for a way and it was resolved like this. #12</p>
	<p>Many teachers are from the same generation as the parents, for whom it is taboo or gives them anxiety to talk about these topics in the classrooms because they are not prepared to answer questions. #2</p>	<p>The parents come and say 'Mx I don't agree that these topics are discussed ' but I then explain to them and the importance of it and 'ah well, then it's okay, Mx.' Then they get a little calmer, but it is more about the ignorance of what is going to be talked about and what is going to be addressed. #9</p>	<p>I think many parents are grateful, they don't like to address the topics but when they are talked about they are grateful. There are about a hundred parents, two perhaps who want to continue blindfolded. #8</p>
		<p>Well, I think that sometimes if the information is not well accepted, one would have to face the person who disagrees, to explain, to talk to them. (...) Well, I believe that we should assert our rights and those of young people because their lives are at stake right, it is our main goal. #7</p>	<p>In the case where I work, many times the political or religious authorities are grateful because all this helps the community. Because imagine if you are not being guided, cases happen, one realizes that cases happen that should not happen. #7</p>

		<p>Now as for sexual diversity and gender, I have my point of view according to the Bible and homosexuality is condemned because it speaks about two sexes, female and male. But I believe that in their freedom each person can choose, I see it as a vice, to have a vice or not to have it, right? Of course, the Bible forbids it, and I wouldn't practice it. But I think that the adolescent should be aware of what it is because I will not come and simply forbid it. #5</p>	
		<p>There are many religious denominations, personally I have my personal point of view, my personal position but I try not to influence the education on this subject. And I try to let the children also see it from a social point of view and not a religious one, because to come and place a religious point of view here is a debate that can be very uncomfortable. #12</p>	