

A Study on Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Secondary Schools of Hong Kong (2022)



平等機會委員會
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION



All **473** local secondary schools were invited to join the questionnaire survey

5 focus group discussions conducted



203 questionnaires received (Response rate of 42.9%)



Interviewed **26** principals, teachers, NGO workers and school social workers

Current Situation



2% of the schools taught sexuality education as a **separate subject**



85.2%

of the schools included sexuality education **in different school subjects** (e.g. Biology, Liberal Studies)



13.8%

of the schools had **no sexuality education in formal lessons**

Teaching Hours in the 2018/19 School Year



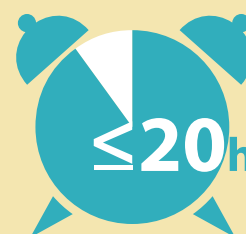
75.4%

of the schools **did not have a target of lesson hours** allocated to sexuality education for different subjects per year



Around half

of the schools offered **5 hours or below** of sexuality education classes in junior and senior secondary levels



Over 90%

of the schools offered **20 hours or below** of sexuality education classes in both levels

Common Activities Organised by Schools

55.7%

Group or individual counselling sessions



52.2%

Sharing/discussion at Form Teacher Periods



31.0%

Talks in morning assemblies



16.3%

Extra-curricular activities (e.g. drama contests, game booths, quizzes, etc.)



12.3%

No activities

Topics Covered in Sexuality Education

covered by most schools



96.1%

Self-image and self-concept



95.1%

Friendship, dating and courtship



93.6%

Puberty

covered by fewest schools



54.2%

Sex, law and ethics

LGBT

46.8%

Sexual orientation and gender identities



40.9%

Sexual informed consent

Who Teaches Sexuality Education?



80.8% of the schools **did not** have the post of **sexuality education coordinator**

93.1% of the schools invited **external organisations** to teach sexuality education in the 2018/19 school year



Among the schools in which sexuality education is taught by teaching staff (2018/19 school year):

On average, each school had **4.7%** of teaching staff **taken professional development courses** related to sexuality education

47.6% of schools said that their staff who taught sexuality education **had NOT taken any relevant professional development courses**



56.7% of the schools **did not** provide **support to parents** to help them teach sexuality education to students



95.3% of them **did not** **require** teaching staff to take relevant professional development courses before teaching sexuality education

Challenges

Nearly half (49.7%) of the interviewed school representatives believed sexuality education in secondary schools is **insufficient or very insufficient**



Top difficulties encountered by schools

1



82.3%

No time for it as the school curriculum is already jam-packed

2



60.6%

A lack of relevant training for teachers

3



56.2%

A lack of structured or appropriate teaching materials

Quotes from the Focus Group Discussions

A social worker responsible for implementing sexuality education



“Teachers are not fully prepared to teach sexuality education”

A student asked a teacher in class, **“Have you ever had sex? How was it like?”** That teacher said that he could not react but blushed at the question. Since he had never expected to be challenged by students in class, he felt embarrassed and remained silent. **He had no idea how to proceed with the class.**

School management is relatively conservative. They think that the topic of safe sex should not be introduced to school, and that it would be best to keep students from the knowledge of contraceptive methods. The view of the school management is not in line with that of social workers and counsellors. **Given the conservative approach of the school management, it would not be easy for teachers to organise related activities.**

“School management and frontline staff have different views”

A teacher responsible for implementing sexuality education



A social worker responsible for implementing sexuality education



“Sexuality education has a low priority”

After a video capturing two students kissing in a classroom went viral online, the school management asked us to give students a sexuality education lesson. **My perception is that the school does not welcome us except when remedial measures are needed.**

Recommendations

What did school representatives want the government to do from the aspect of policy?



62.6% Widely **promote the importance** of sexuality education among parents and the general public

61.6% **Revise the existing guidelines** on sexuality education in schools



55.7% Set **recommended lesson hours** for sexuality education in different school subjects

What resources did school representatives want the government to provide?



74.9% Provide schools with **comprehensive teaching materials** on sexuality education in **different media**

69.5% **Subsidise schools to hire NGOs** to provide on-site sexuality education courses



64.5% Provide **funding and incentives** to encourage teachers to **take relevant courses** on sexuality education

Quotes from the Focus Group Discussions

A teacher responsible for implementing sexuality education



“Implementing sexuality education using innovative approaches”

Students gave positive feedback when **drama performance** was adopted in teaching sexuality education. When it comes to the activities in the classroom, they prefer **more practical knowledge**. We need to teach them about contraception or how to define sexual harassment, which they may have no idea at all.

As sexuality education evolves, the focus has **shifted from purely imparting physiological knowledge to value education**. The key is to encourage students to uphold the values of **respecting others** in all circumstances.

“Sexuality education should help build positive attitudes towards gender equality”



A teacher responsible for implementing sexuality education