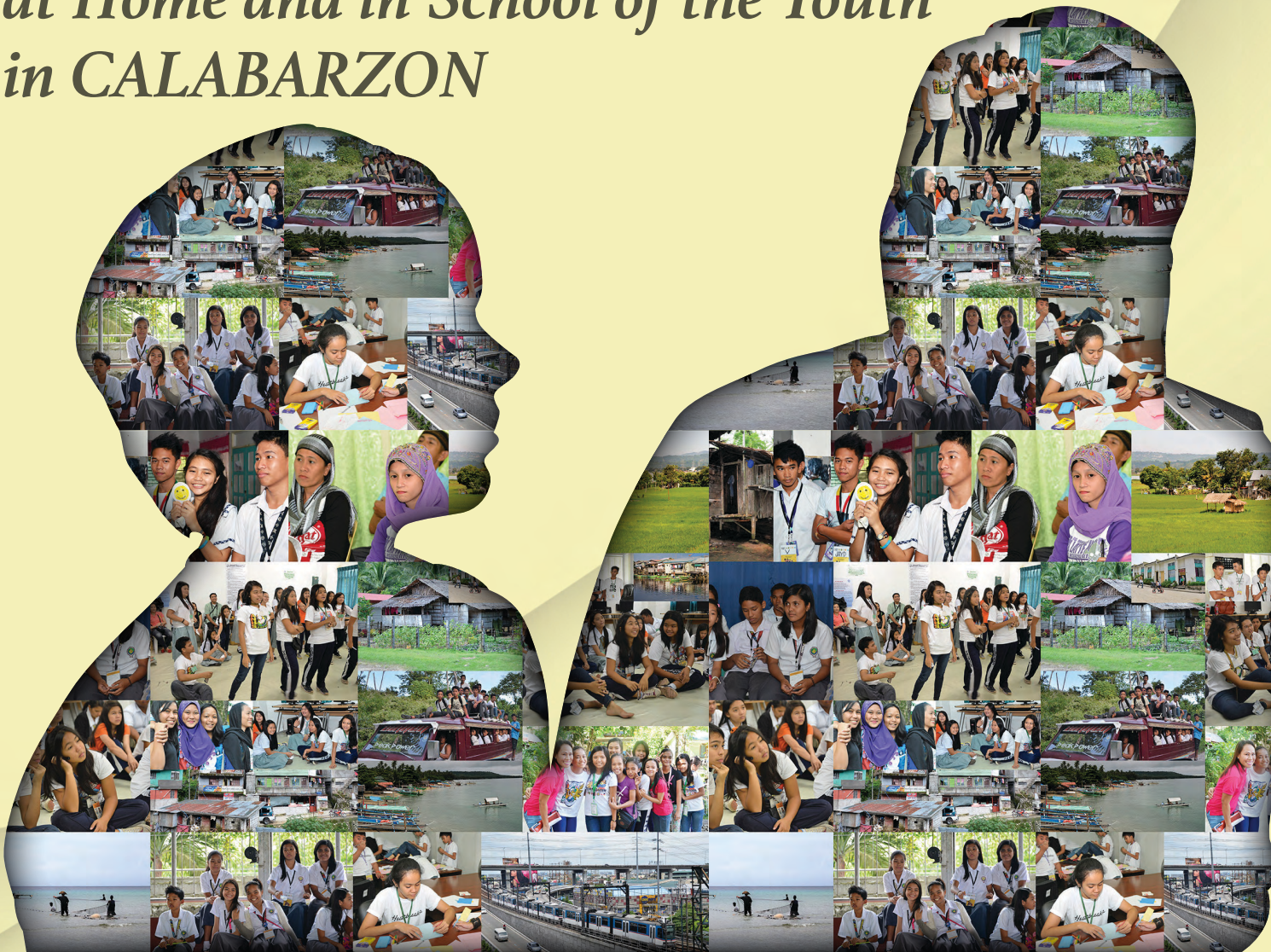


# Post-Millennial Filipinos: Renewed Hope vs Risks

Further Studies of the 2013 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality (YAFS) Study

*Correlates of Sources of Information on Sex  
and Reproduction and Discussion of Sex  
at Home and in School of the Youth  
in CALABARZON*



WORKING PAPER SERIES 2016-06

Gloria Luz M. Nelson, Maria Midea M. Kabamalan and Christian Joy P. Cruz

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“Post-Millennial Filipinos: Renewed Hope vs Risks”: Further Studies of the 2013 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality (YAFS) Study – *Correlates of Sources of Information on Sex and Reproduction and Discussion of Sex at Home and in School of the Youth in CALABARZON* is funded by the Commission on Population and developed in partnership with the Demographic Research and Development Foundation, Inc.

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## Message from the Executive Director

Since the turn of the century over fifteen years ago, the Philippines has seen the rise of the millennial generation of young Filipinos who are currently shaping the political landscape in late 2016 as they take a committed stand on the issues of the day.

It is appropriate for those concerned with Philippine development work to now start looking at the next generation of Filipinos and the Commission on Population has had a tradition of producing studies concerning young people.

“Post-Millennial Filipinos: Renewed Hope vs Risks” compiles 17 regional papers based on the dataset of the 2013 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality (YAFS) Study. These studies explore and discuss the emerging issues and concerns of the youth that need appropriate policy and program responses.



The latest YAFS comes more than a decade after the 2002 YAFS. The 2002 YAFS showed the concerns of the millennial Filipino much like the latest YAFS of 2013 marks the rise of the Filipinos born around the turn of the century and could foretell the shape of things to come for the 21<sup>st</sup> century young Filipino.

The post-millennial Filipino is focused on screens (smart phone, tablet and monitor) and the media is full of “hashtag-worthy” statements of 140 words.

The studies we are presenting continue to note and update matters such as sexual risk behaviors, early sexual involvement, teen pregnancy, reproductive health problems including sexually-transmitted infections as well as non-sexual risk behaviors such as smoking, alcohol abuse and drug use as well as suicide ideation and lifestyle.

We invite you to tune in to the latest findings about the post-millennial Filipino. It can only result in a more informed thread of interaction with the shapers of our country’s future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Juan Antonio A. Perez III'.

**Juan Antonio A. Perez III, MD, MPH**

Executive Director

Commission on Population





## **Background**

The 2013 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality (YAFS) Study is the fourth installment of a series of nationally representative cross-sectional surveys on Filipino youth aged 15-24 (for YAFS 1 and 2 and 15-27 for YAFS 3). The YAFS has yielded valuable information about young people's sexual and non-sexual behavior, education, labor force participation, family relationships, attitudes and values regarding certain issues concerning them, personal characteristics like self-esteem, and adverse conditions like suicidal ideation and depression symptoms, all of which are of pertinence to one's understanding of this significant sector of society. The 2013 YAFS or YAFS 4 in particular was a response to the need of updating information on the situation of today's young people. From YAFS 3 in 2002, there have been many important new developments in the environment where young people are situated that need to be studied as these affect not just their sexual and non-sexual risk taking behaviors but also their total well-being. For instance, the changes in communication and information technology such as the prevalent use of cellular phones and the internet and the new forms of communication that these have produced like social networking were not explored in the previous YAFS. The foregoing expansion in technology is presumed to have resulted to notable changes in the patterns and topographies of courtship, dating and relationships among young people. The upsurge in the incidence of HIV infection primarily among men who have sex with other men (MSMs) requires more recent reliable data on male sexual and non-sexual risk behaviors which is currently not available because regular survey rounds like the National Demographic and Health Surveys conducted every five years does not routinely include men. Moreover, with YAFS 4, core behaviors that have been monitored over time in YAFS 1, 2 and 3 were also updated. Among these are the sexual risky behaviors, such as the prevalence of early sexual involvement, teen pregnancy and reproductive health problems including sexually transmitted infections (STIs) as well as non-sexual risk behavior like smoking, drinking and drug use.

With the wealth of information yielded by the YAFS 4, the Commission on Population (POPCOM) in partnership with the Demographic Research and Development Foundation, Inc. (DRDF) came up with seventeen (17) regional papers (Regions 1-13, 4B, CAR, NCR and ARMM) that explore and discuss the emerging issues and concerns of the young people that need appropriate policy and program responses.



# **Correlates of Sources of Information on Sex and Reproduction and Discussion of Sex at Home and in School of the Youth in CALABARZON**

*Gloria Luz M. Nelson,<sup>1</sup> Maria Midea M. Kabamalan,<sup>2</sup> and Christian Joy P. Cruz<sup>3</sup>*

## **Abstract**

Using data from the 2013 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality Study (YAFS4), this paper explored the sources of information on sex of CALABARZON youth aged 15 to 24 years. It aimed to determine whether sex is discussed at home and whether there are persons in school with whom the youth can discuss sex. Results based on a probability sample ( $n = 1,137$  youth) show that the youth's main sources of information on sex are a combination of materials and persons, especially among those aged 20–24, those who have at least some college education, urban residents, those belonging to the middle income level, and those who are either students or unpaid family workers. Sex is rarely discussed at home, but urban dwellers and those who chose non-family and friends as role models are likely to discuss sex at home. In addition, females and those who are better educated are more likely to discuss sex at home, and they reported that there are persons in school who can help them with sex-related problems. The preferred person whom the youth consult on sex matters varies by the kinds of information they need; these persons are mainly family members, school staff, church leaders, and health professionals. The study confirmed that family, school, church, health institutions, and mass media as sources of information on sex share significant roles in the sexual socialization of the CALABARZON youth.

**Keywords:** sources of sex information, role models, CALABARZON youth

## **Background and context**

CALABARZON, designated as Region IV-A and located south of Metro Manila, is the acronym for the five provinces in Southern Tagalog: Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon. Figure 1 shows the map of these provinces and their vicinities. The region consists of 129 municipalities of about 12.61 million people. The total CALABARZON youth population is

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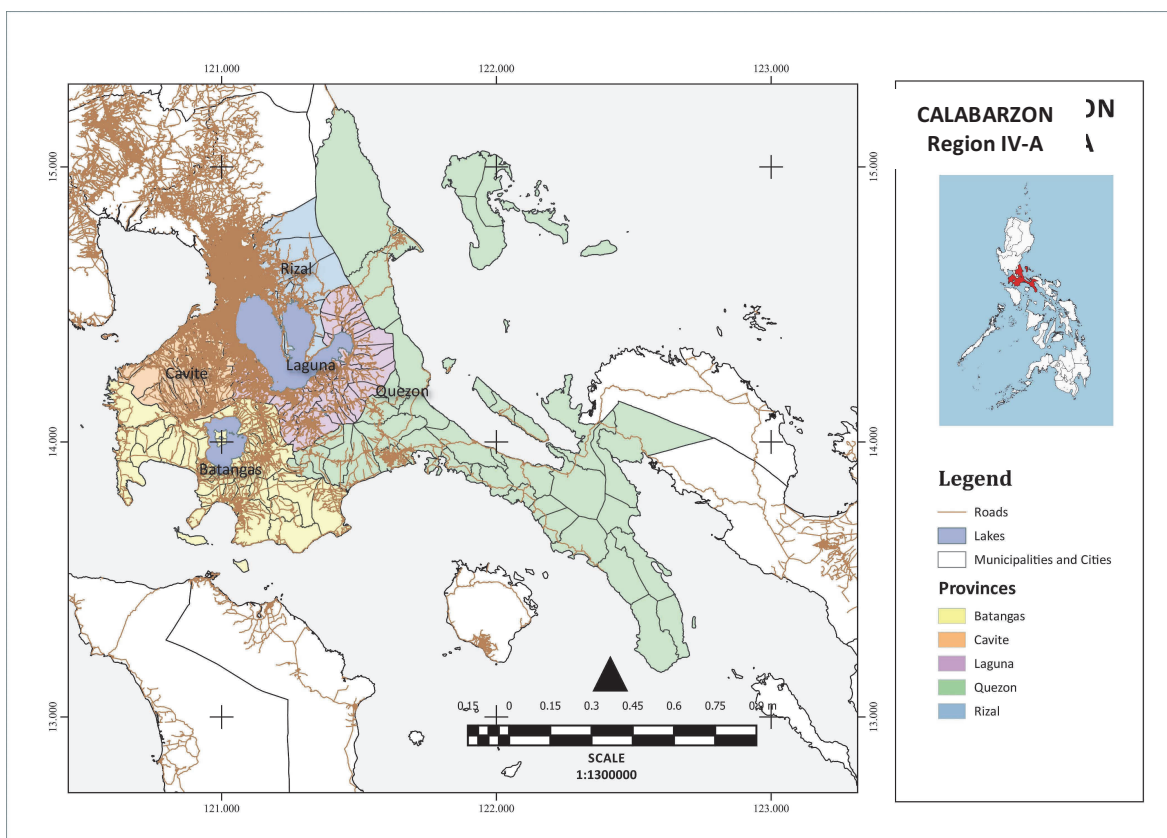
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2,396,690 as of 2010. The region ranks second after the National Capital Region (NCR) in terms of the youth population. They constitute 13.3 percent of the 18 million youths of the country.

The sheer size and growing number of the young population in the region makes them an important and interesting subpopulation to study. Moreover, the proximity of CALABARZON to Metro Manila would likely lead the youth to imbibe a more cosmopolitan characteristic, which includes being more likely to be sexually adventurous. Aside from the proximity of CALABARZON to NCR, sexual curiosity is at its peak during this developmental stage. Given the characteristics of the youth who are at a stage of actively searching for information on sex-related topics, how do these young people acquire their information on sex and reproduction? In particular, does their choice of sexual information vary by their social and economic characteristics? Is sex discussed at home, and do people in schools provide an opportunity to address the concerns and issues of the youth on sex? As primary socialization agents, the family and the school are expected to be critical educators of today's youth on sexual relationships.



*Note.* Generated using Quantum Geographic System (QGIS), January 26, 2016.

Figure 1. Map of CALABARZON and its vicinity

The availability of sources of information on sex and sexuality has increased the pace of the process of sexual socialization. The traditional and common sources of sexual socialization are parents, friends, schools, the church, and mass media. But in recent times and primarily because of the advancement in information technology, sex and sexuality information from various sources such as the Internet, cable television, movies, magazines, and videos has become more widespread and possibly more influential than traditional sources. The many sources and varieties of information available to the youth may not directly translate to being well informed, especially on topics about sexual matters, where the youth's choice of information is not based on the reliability and validity of the source but on whether it fits their lifestyle. The present generation of youth, also known as the *millennials*,<sup>4</sup> the selfie generation, or the first batch of *digital natives*,<sup>5</sup> tends to want everything at the tip of their fingers. Therefore, they are likely to choose sources of sexual information that are accessible and can cover a wide range of topics (Ward, 2003). This study is relevant because the nature of the sources of information can influence sexual risk behavior, especially among young females, whose romantic relationships may not always turn out to be positive. The risk that young people face as they experience sexual maturation is a challenge not only to the youth, but also to the adult population and to relevant institutions that are in charge of looking after the welfare of the youth.

## **The present study**

This study first identifies the sources of information on sex reported by the youth in CALABARZON. The other outcome variables are the discussion of sex at home and the availability of person/s to talk to on sex-related problems in school. The study then extends the analysis by examining the relationships of socio-economic characteristics with the aforementioned outcome variables: the sources of information on sex and reproduction and the discussion of sex at home and in school.

## *Research questions*

This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the young people in CALABARZON?
2. What are the sources of information on sex of the youth in CALABARZON?
3. Do the young people discuss sex at home?
4. Do they have someone to consult in school when they are confronted with a sex-related problem?

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<sup>4</sup> Millennials, also known as Generation Y or the Net Generation, are the demographic cohort that directly follows Generation X. They are individuals born between 1982 and 2004 (Howe & Strauss, 1991).

<sup>5</sup> Digital natives are those born after 1980. This term highlights the importance of new technology within the lives of the younger generation (Hesper & Eynon, 2010).

5. With whom do the young people in CALABARZON discuss sex and other related matters at home and in school?
6. How do sources of information, discussion of sex at home, and discussion of sex in school differ by selected social and economic characteristics?

### *Objectives of the study*

This study has the following objectives:

1. To determine the sources of information on sex of the youth in CALABARZON
2. To determine if young people discuss sex at home and whether there are persons in school whom they can consult when confronted with a sex-related problem
3. To determine with whom the youth discuss sex and other sex-related matters at home and in school
4. To determine the association of socio-economic characteristics (age, sex, educational attainment, urban-rural residence, wealth index, religiosity, marital status, and role models) and outcome variables (the sources of information on sex and reproduction and the discussion of sex at home and in school)

## **Review of related literature**

### *Sources of information on sex*

Studies have shown the importance of the source of sexual information in influencing sexual risk behavior. For example, if the parents or relatives are the sources of information, the youth are likely to delay engaging in sex. In contrast, when the youth get their sexual information from friends or the mass media, the likelihood of having sexual initiation increases (Wallmyr & Wellin, 2006). The debate in the Philippines surrounding the passing of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Bill in 2012 centered on the who, where, what, and how of the socialization about sex. One issue at the center of heated arguments is that teaching adolescents about sex and reproductive health would encourage them to indulge in sexual activities rather than prevent them from doing so. Despite the sensitivity of sex as a topic, there is increasing agreement and acknowledgment that the youth in the context of a free world have a wide range of sources to choose from. The sources of information available to the youth can be persons (family, friends, and school personnel) and materials provided by the media in the form of print or via information technology such as video, Internet, movies, and television. Bleakely, Henessey, Fishbein, and Jordan (2009) found that different sources of information were associated with different types of underlying beliefs about having sex. When sources of information are mothers, fathers, grandparents, and religious leaders, there are negative beliefs about sex. On the other hand, when

friends and cousins are the sources of information, there are more positive beliefs about sex. Thus, it is not surprising that due to the variety of information on sex and related topics, the level of exposure of today's youth on sex and reproduction is far more advanced than that of the youth in the past.

### *Family and friends as sources of information*

Family members are important sources of basic needs including information on sex; as such, the family is recognized as an important part of socialization. Both the World Health Organization and the report from the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development emphasized the importance of healthy sexual development to overall mental and physical well-being. Although sexuality is an integral part of human life, it is deliberately not discussed at home. The national trend on the proportion of youth who ever discussed sex at home has declined in the last 10 years, from 15.9 percent to 9.7 percent (Demographic Research and Development Foundation [DRDF] & University of the Philippines Population Institute [UPPI], 2014). The avoidance of this topic is consistent with the Filipino norm that values modesty and deferred sexual gratification.

Family members are often cited as important sources of sexual and health information. Studies on the communication of the family regarding sexual health, however, have provided both positive and negative results. The variability in the findings is attributed to the timing of the communication (before or after sex is initiated) and the nature of the message (e.g., do not have sex or the use of condom; Karofsky, Zeng, & Kosorok, 2000; Hutchinson & Cooney, 1998; Hutchinson, Jemmott, Jemmott, Braveman, & Fong, 2003; Shtarkshall, Santelli, & Hirsch, 2007). The main message that the adolescents receive from family members centers on the risk associated with sex and/or protected sex. The most common messages that adolescents recalled from their sexual learning experiences with family members included (1) the risks associated with sex (e.g., sexually transmitted diseases and unplanned pregnancy), (2) protection (e.g., condoms, birth control methods, generic "protection"), and (3) relationship advice. Whitaker and Miller (2000) found that discussion between parents and their teenage children about specific sexual issues can, to some extent, reduce the influence of peer norms on sexual activity or buffer teens from peer pressure. Parents' discussion of sex with their children may even foster "parental closeness" built on the longer and frequent time spent with children, thus increasing their influence on their children, specifically on decisions regarding sexual matters.

The youth go to their friends when they experience anxiety due to a lack of confidence in starting a relationship with the opposite sex. The choice of persons or materials to serve as a model is not necessarily random but follows the homophily assumption that the youth's choice of role model or the person they seek information from is somewhat similar to them. This means that people who share similar social characteristics such as age, gender, and occupation are likely to



make similar choices and have similar interests and opinions. This further implies that similarity in social characteristics translates to frequency of interactions (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). This notion partly explains why peers are strong influencers; by definition, peers have many things in common. Moreover, their frequent interactions may mean that they are likely the persons to go to when the need arises, such as the need for information on sex.

### *School as source of information*

The family members as the “significant others” of the youth represent their interpersonal relations in the sexualization process. The school, on the other hand, is where the youth become aware of the “generalized others.” The teachers, counselors, and other school officials can address sex-related problems, since the youth spend more time in school. Sex education in school is normally integrated into science classes (e.g., biology) in the Philippines, and it is expected to be a matter-of-fact academic discussion on “the sperm meeting the egg.” This method lacks the flavor or the “*kilig*” factor (i.e., demonstration of strong liking mixed with admiration and excitement for a person, event, or idea) that would satisfy the youth’s curiosity, which they often aggressively look for in other information sources. Bankole, Biddlecom, Singh, and Zulu (2007) found that for both male and female adolescents in Malawi and Uganda, health facilities and professionals are not major sources of information on sex and reproductive health.

### *Media as a source of material information on sex*

Mass media play a significant role in the lives of the youth. As a socialization agent, the mass media fill the gap on the information about sex learned at home and in school. Daneback, Månsson, Ross, and Markham (2012, p. 595) found that men and women of all ages use the Internet to seek information “about the body, about how to have sex and out of curiosity.” Their study showed that the use of the Internet to look for information about sex is more common among younger people than among older people.

Understandably, this may be related to the frequent use of the Internet among the younger age group. The study further suggested that Internet-mediated sexual activities engaged in by the young people vary across sexual orientation; for example, bisexual men and women are more frequent users of the Internet in seeking sexual information compared with heterosexual men and women (Daneback, Ross, & Månsson, 2008). Other than sexual orientation, Bleakely et al. (2009) also found that the youth who relied on the media as a source of information are older. A local study by Cruz, Laguna, and Raymundo (2002) showed that when the youth are regularly exposed to newspapers and videos, they are also likely to indulge in commercial and premarital sex. Among the six media types, namely television, movies, music, Internet, magazines, and video, watching television was reported as the most informative media source about sex. In 2005, 70 percent of

2005, 70 percent of television programs in the United States contained some form of sexual content (Kunkel, Eyal, & Finnerty, 2005).

### Conceptual framework

The studies cited above are predominantly from Western sources. Although the youth are universally characterized based on their shared interest and degree of similarity in exposure to social media, there are variations in their sexual behavior, partly due to the normative or cultural factors in their respective societies. Such societal factors, which may influence the search for sexual and reproductive information, are an important consideration in choosing the factors that would determine the three outcome variables, namely sources of information, discussion of sex at home, and discussion of sex in school. These determinants define the nature of the socialization of the youth in the Philippine context, who are at a crucial age at which they are absorbed in finding their sexual identity. Other than age, characteristics such as sex, educational attainment, type of residence, socio-economic status, degree of religiosity, and role models are likely to determine their choice of source of materials on sex and their discussion of sex either at home or in school. Religiosity is considered an important determinant, since it can be a proxy for conservatism, which somehow provides some clues as to the youth's choice of information source. The position (educational attainment and wealth index) that one occupies in society to some extent specifies the various forms associated with the achieved status of the youth (i.e., in school or at work). These roles are modeled to either persons whom the youth admires or to the materials available to the youth (see Figure 2).

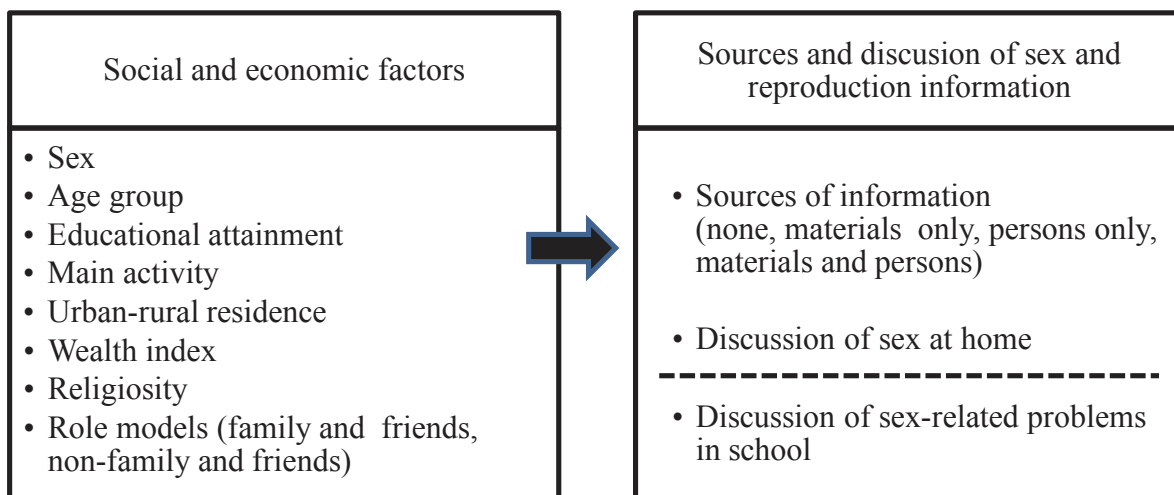


Figure 2. Determinants of information by types, sources, and discussion of sex and reproduction information

## Data and methods

To answer the research questions posed above, data from the 2013 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality Study (YAFS4) were used. The survey is a nationally representative, cross-sectional survey on the Filipino youth aged 15–24 years, conducted by DRDF and UPPI. This is the latest in a series of surveys (predecessor surveys were conducted in 1982, 1994, and 2002) on adolescent sexuality and reproductive issues. This series of surveys has served as the primary source of information on sexual and non-sexual risk behaviors and their determinants in the Philippines. The sample surveyed from CALABARZON is made up of 1,137 youth (unweighted data) from 41 barangays across the five provinces of the region. In each sample barangay, all young people aged 15 to 24 years from 15 randomly selected households were interviewed. Face-to-face interviews were conducted for an average of two to three hours each.

The youth were asked the following questions:

1. If you have questions about sex, whom will you likely consult?
2. What are your sources of information about sex?
3. In case you are confronted with a sex-related problem, is there somebody in your school who can help you with your problem? Who is this person? Is this person male or female? (Note: the youth respondents could name as many people as possible, and the interviewer checked the appropriate category/categories mentioned)

The answers of the youth to the above questions are differentiated based on the following characteristics: sex, age, type of residence, educational attainment, religiosity (as indicated by their frequency of attending church-related rituals), wealth index (a socio-economic status measure of the household to which the respondent belongs, with 1 as the poorest and 5 as the wealthiest), and top role models (either family and friends or persons other than family and friends).

In this study, sources of information about sex were gathered from the first two aforementioned YAFS4 questions. The responses were categorized as “none” if the respondent said “none” to both questions, “persons only” if the respondent had an answer to the first question and said “none” to the second, “materials only” if the respondent said “none” to the first question and had an answer to the second, and “both persons and materials” if the respondent had an answer to both questions. The categories for both questions were not read out to the respondents. Persons likely consulted regarding sex include the father, mother, brother, sister, other relatives, spouse/partner, friends, doctor/nurse/midwife, teacher/professor, counselor, and health center staff. Material sources of information on sex include books, magazines, newspapers, comics, TV, radio, family planning materials, school charts/films, and the Internet.

Data analyses were done using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM-SPSS Statistics 23). Chi-square tests were used to determine the association of the dependent variables (sources of materials, discussion of sex at home, availability of persons in school to discuss sexual concerns) across background factors such as sex, age, main activity, residence, religiosity, socio-economic status, education, and role models. All  $p$ -values less than .05 were considered statistically significant.

## Results

The results of the study are reported according to the following topics: profile of the youth in CALABARZON, outcome variables (i.e., sources of information on sex and reproduction, discussion of sex at home, and availability of persons in school with whom to discuss sex related-concerns), the differences in these outcome variables across the socio-economic characteristics of the CALABARZON youth, and the persons with whom the young people discuss sex at home and whom they consult in school when confronted with sex-related concerns.

### *Characteristics of CALABARZON youth*

A total of 1,137 young people in CALABARZON were interviewed for the YAFS4. Table 1 shows that a little more than half of the youth are females. The majority (61.2%) of respondents were from the younger age group of 15–19 years. About 70 percent have either been to high school or have graduated from high school or were taking vocational courses, while close to one fifth have some college education. About half of the CALABARZON youth belong to the two wealthiest quintiles. The majority (65.0%) reside in rural areas. When asked about their main activity in the past three months before the survey, two in five respondents said they were studying, while nearly a third said they were working. About six in ten did not attend religious rites on a weekly basis; we consider them “less religious” compared with those who attend religious rites at least weekly. When asked whom they see as their top role model, 86 percent named a family member or a friend.



Table 1. Profile of the youth in CALABARZON

Characteristics	Percent
Sex	
Male	47.1
Female	52.9
Age	
15–19	61.2
20–24	38.8
Education	
No schooling/preschool/elementary	12.4
High school undergraduate	36.9
High school graduate/vocational	32.1
College+	18.6
Residence	
Urban	35.0
Rural	65.0
Main activity	
None	8.1
Student	39.8
Unemployed, looking for work	6.0
Housework	13.9
Working (including unpaid family worker)	32.3
Religiosity	
Religious (Once a week or more)	39.5
Less religious (Less than once a week)	60.5
Top role models (Rank 1)	
Family and friends	85.9
Persons other than family and friends	6.5
None	7.6
N of cases	1,137

### *Outcome variables*

More than half (58.6%) of the youth in CALABARZON reported that their source of information on sex and reproduction is a combination of materials and persons (see Table 2). One in every four young people in the region (24.5%) cited “persons only” as their source of information on sex and reproduction, while only 4.2 percent reported “materials only” as their source of information. Thirteen percent said they do not have any source of information on sex and reproduction. This result is low compared with the national level, where 41.6 percent of the youth have no material source of information and 21.6 percent have no person as a source of information on sex. As shown in Table 2, the majority (86.8%) of youth do not discuss sex at home. However, this absence of discussion at home is somehow compensated by the fact that more than half of the youth (57.8%) who are in school have recognized the availability of persons in school who can help them with sex-related concerns. Nevertheless, although the youth are aware of their presence and functions, this does not necessarily mean that the youth discuss sex and reproduction with them.

Table 2. Percentage distribution of the sources of information on sex and reproduction, discussion of sex at home, and person in school available for sex-related concerns of the youth

Characteristics	Percent
Sources of information on sex and reproduction	
None	12.7
Materials only	4.2
Persons only	24.5
Both materials and persons	58.6
<i>N of cases</i>	<i>1,123</i>
Discussed sex at home	
Yes	13.2
No	86.8
<i>N of cases</i>	<i>1,129</i>
Availability of anybody in school who can help R with a sex-related problem <sup>a</sup>	
Yes	57.8
No	42.2
<i>N of cases</i>	<i>448</i>

<sup>a</sup>Asked only of those who are currently in school.

### *Sources of information on sex and reproduction*

The outcome variables were examined against the relevant socio-demographic characteristics; the results are shown in Table 3. A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relationship between sources of sexual information and relevant socio-demographic characteristics. Table 3 shows that more youth in urban areas seek sexual information from both materials and persons, while more rural youth consult persons only. There is also an education gradient wherein educational attainment increases along with the proportion of youth who reported both materials and persons as their sources of information on sex and reproduction. Close to three in every four respondents with college education (72.9%) sought sexual information from both materials and persons. Interestingly, as the youth's educational attainment increases, a decreasing proportion seek sexual information from persons only, from 34.6 percent of those with at most elementary education to 15.7 percent of those with college education.

Table 3. Sources of information on sex and reproduction by selected socio-economic factors of the youth

Socio-economic factors	Source of information				N of cases
	None	Materials only	Persons only	Materials & persons	
Sex					
Male	10.3	4.1	23.8	61.8	534
Female	14.9	4.2	25.1	55.7	589
Age					
15–19	14.6	3.6	23.9	57.9	686
20–24	9.8	5.0	25.4	59.7	437
Residence***					
Urban	10.8	2.8	18.6	67.8	388
Rural	13.7	4.9	27.6	53.7	735
Highest level of schooling ***					
Elementary or lower	14.7	2.9	34.6	47.8	136
High school undergraduate	17.1	4.6	23.6	54.8	416
High school graduate/ vocational	11.1	3.3	26.9	58.7	361
College	5.7	5.7	15.7	72.9	210
Religiosity					
Religious	12.4	2.7	23.1	61.8	442
Less religious	13.0	5.0	25.3	56.7	679
Wealth index***					
Poorest	20.5	8.0	21.6	50.0	88
Second	14.0	3.2	28.0	54.8	186
Middle	15.1	1.4	29.1	54.5	292
Fourth	9.0	4.5	24.5	62.1	290
Wealthiest	10.9	6.4	18.0	64.8	267
Main activity***					
None	22.2	1.1	23.3	53.3	90
Student	11.4	4.3	22.9	61.4	446
Unemployed, looking for work	13.2	2.9	30.9	52.9	68
Housework	20.3	6.3	25.9	47.5	158
Working (incl. unpaid family worker)	8.6	4.2	24.9	62.3	361
Role models ***					
Family and friends	11.3	4.4	24.1	60.3	964
Non-family and friends	8.1	2.7	20.3	68.9	74
None	32.9	3.5	32.9	30.6	85

\*\*\*  $p < .001$ .



There are also differences in the source of information of the wealthiest, the middle class, and the poorest. More middle-class youth get information from persons only compared with the wealthiest youth. More students (61.4%) and working youth (62.3%) seek information from both persons and materials as compared to the youth who reported housework as their main activity in the past three months (47.5%). The youth's role model is also a significant factor that differentiated the youth in relation to their choice of sources of information. More of those who have "family and friends" as their top role model reported persons as their only source of sexual information, while more of those who chose non-family and friends as role models reported both persons and materials as their sources.

The respondents were also asked if, given a choice, they would like to learn about sex and reproduction from the following: father, mother, brother, sister, friends of the same sex, friends of the opposite sex, school teachers, imams or Muslim religious leaders, and medical professionals. If they said yes to learning about sex and reproduction from any of the aforementioned persons, they were asked what type of information they would like to get from these sources. These types of information include general topics about sex, contraception, sexual positions/techniques, and sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS. This study further seeks to find out which types of sexual information the respondents would like to get from the persons from whom they would like to learn about sex and reproduction. A significant proportion of the youth (18.9%) indicated that they would not like to learn about sex and reproduction from the aforementioned persons.

The youth prefer to learn about STIs including HIV/AIDS from their fathers and brothers. Imams/religious leaders, medical professionals, opposite-sex friends, school teachers, and mothers are the preferred source of information on contraception. Same-sex friends are the preferred source of information on sexual positions/techniques (Table 4).

The results show that the choice of persons as a source of information differs by the type of information sought by the youth. The choice of person as a source of information on specific topics by the CALABARZON youth, although largely based on their perceptions, is a significant finding of the study.

Table 4. Type of information sought by the youth by sources of information

Sources of information	Kinds of information about sex that the youth would like to get from their preferred source of information				
	General information	Contraception	Sexual positions/ techniques	STIs, HIV/AIDS	Others
Father	61.6	27.7	7.9	21.1**	3.3
Mother	61.3	28.9**	5.0**	14.3	5.0
Brother	62.1	21.7	6.2	27.3***	4.3
Sister	62.7	26.1	4.8*	15.3	5.6
Same-sex friends	60.8	24.5	9.2*	16.7	5.1
Opposite-sex friends	57.5	30.7**	10.1	18.9	3.9
School teachers	61.0	30.2**	4.7**	13.8	5.9
Imams/ religious leaders	62.8	34.4***	4.4*	12.2	5.0
Medical professionals	58.3*	30.7***	6.0**	16.7	5.2

*Note.* There are 215 respondents (18.9%) who reported that they would not like to learn about sex and reproduction from the above sources of information.

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

#### *Discussion of sex at home and persons in school available for consultation on sex matters*

Table 5 shows that, in general, CALABARZON youth do not discuss sex at home. However, more of the youth who live in urban areas discuss sex at home compared with those in the rural areas. Moreover, a higher proportion of the youth whose choice for role models are non-family and friends discuss sex at home as compared to those whose role models are family and friends.

Table 5. Discussion of sex at home by selected socio-economic factors of the youth

Socio-economic factors	Discussion of sex at home		
	Yes	No	N of cases
Sex			
Male	14.8	85.2	534
Female	11.8	88.2	595
Age			
15–19	12.5	87.5	690
20–24	14.4	85.6	439
Residence**			
Urban	16.0	84.0	393
Rural	11.7	88.3	736
Highest level of schooling			
Elementary or lower	10.7	89.3	140
High school undergraduate	12.9	87.1	417
High school graduate/vocational	12.4	87.6	362
College	16.7	83.3	210
Religiosity			
Religious	14.4	85.6	445
Less religious	12.5	87.5	682
Wealth index			
Poorest	10.2	89.8	88
Second	11.1	88.8	188
Middle	12.2	87.8	295
Fourth	14.9	85.1	289
Wealthiest	14.9	85.1	269
Main activity			
None	12.2	87.8	90
Student	15.0	85.0	448
Unemployed, looking for work	8.8	91.2	68
Housework	8.9	91.1	158
Working (incl. unpaid family worker)	14.0	86.0	365
Role models***			
Family and friends	12.7	87.3	969
Non-family and friends	17.6	82.4	74
None	15.1	84.9	86

\*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

When the social and economic characteristics of the youth are examined against the availability of anybody in school who can help them with sex-related concerns, females more than males reported to have persons at school whom they can consult on sex-related problems. Similarly, urban dwellers more than rural dwellers responded positively to this question. There is a positive relationship between education and availability of persons in school who can help the young people with a sex-related concern; as education increases, an increasing proportion reported the availability of a person at school whom they can consult on any sex-related concern. Youth with a higher level of education have a better opportunity than those with lower education to consult people in school who can advise them on sex and reproductive issues (see Table 6).

Table 6. Availability of anybody in school who can help the youth with a sex-related problem by selected socio-economic factors

Socio-economic factors	Discussion of sex in school		
	Yes	No	N of cases
Sex***			
Male	45.9	54.1	196
Female	67.1	32.9	252
Age			
15–19	57.9	42.1	394
20–24	57.4	42.6	54
Residence characteristics**			
Urban	66.5	33.5	164
Rural	52.8	47.2	284
Highest level of schooling**			
Elementary or lower	50.0	50.0	12
High school undergraduate	52.6	47.4	289
High school graduate/vocational	68.2	31.8	22
College	68.8	31.2	125
Religiosity			
Religious	62.9	37.1	194
Less religious	53.9	46.1	254
Wealth index			
Poorest	54.5	45.5	22
Second	50.8	49.2	63
Middle	54.0	46.0	100
Fourth	59.0	41.0	122
Wealthiest	63.1	36.9	141

\*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

Table 6. Availability of anybody in school who can help the youth with a sex-related problem by selected socio-economic factors (con't)

Socio-economic factors	Discussion of sex in school		
	Yes	No	N of cases
Role models ***			
Family and friends	59.6	40.4	381
Non-family and friends	66.7	33.3	36
None	25.8	74.2	31

\*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

A higher proportion of the young people who have non-family and friends as top role models have persons in school whom they can consult about sex-related matters.

In general, in CALABARZON, male youth discuss sex with their fathers and brothers, while female youth discuss this matter with their mothers and sisters. A higher proportion of female youth aged 15–19 years discuss sex with their mothers compared with the older youth aged 20–24 years. In contrast, more of the older youth discuss sex with their partners or spouses. Among males, a higher proportion of those belonging to the younger age group discuss sex with other relatives (Table 7).

In school, both male and female youth, regardless of age, reported the availability of either their teachers/professors/advisers or classmates and friends whom they can consult on sex-related problems.

Table 7. Person with whom sex is discussed at home and in school by sex and age group of youth

Discussion of sex at home and in school	Male			Female		
	15–19	20–24	Total	15–19	20–24	Total
<i>Person with whom sex is discussed at home</i>						
Father	34.1	51.4	41.8	21.4	7.1	15.7
Mother	31.8	42.9	36.7	73.8	46.4	62.9**
Brother	36.4	42.9	39.2	14.3	7.1	11.4
Sister	11.4	17.1	13.9	26.2	39.3	31.4

\*\*  $p < .01$ .



Table 7. Person with whom sex is discussed at home and in school  
by sex and age group of youth (con't)

Discussion of sex at home and in school	Male			Female		
	15–19	20–24	Total	15–19	20–24	Total
Spouse	2.3	8.6	5.1	0.0	17.9	7.1**
Other relatives	20.5	0.0	11.4**	11.9	14.3	12.9
Other non-relatives	2.3	0.0	1.3	0.0	7.1	2.9
<i>Person whom R can consult on any sex-related matter</i>						
Teacher/professor/ adviser	65.8	63.6	65.6	82.6	75.0	81.7
Guidance counselor	51.9	45.5	51.1	60.4	50.0	59.2
Classmate/friend	81.0	81.8	81.1	78.5	75.0	78.1
School doctor/nurse	49.4	45.5	48.9	50.3	35.0	48.5
Others	15.2	36.4	17.8	25.5	0.0	22.5

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

## Discussion

The sources of information on sex and reproduction vary by the characteristics of the youth. The sources of information of the urban youth are more varied (both materials and persons) than those of the rural youth, whose information on sex comes mainly from persons only. The availability of a variety of information in the urban areas as compared to the rural areas can explain this difference. As the youth's level of education increases, information on sex from both materials and persons increases. The longer the youth stay in school, the higher the proportion who get information from various sources. Likewise, belonging to a household with a higher socio-economic status contributes to the ease of accessing more information from various sources. Why do the youth who have these characteristics get their information from both materials and persons? Various sources of information are usually found in the urban areas, while the youth who are more educated and belong to the higher wealth quintile can afford to get more sources of information. Internet use, for example, is not without cost. Moreover, computer shops are located in the urban

areas and in school settings. Materials and persons are also the source of information on sex for those who chose role models who are non-family members and not friends. These are the same youth who are urban dwellers, in school, and better educated. These youth with these characteristics and who chose materials and persons as their sources of sex information are likely to have wider exposure and more choices of persons to admire besides their significant others, who are in most cases family members and friends. There are no studies with similar findings.

The homophily assumption partly explains why certain kinds of information are best discussed with people of similar characteristics. The respondents seek information on sensitive topics such as sexual positions/techniques from same-sex friends. Although the use of contraception is an equally sensitive topic, the persons they preferred to discuss this topic with are their mothers, school teachers, and religious persons. When they want information about STIs and HIV/AIDS, on the other hand, they prefer to get it from their fathers or brothers. Male members of the family are perceived to be more knowledgeable on disease acquired through sexual intercourse. The saying that “mothers know best” even on matters related to sex is seemingly true based on the results of this study. For example, the mother is consulted especially among the younger youth on sensitive topics such as contraceptives. The attachment and closeness of the youth to their mothers is common among Filipino families. Thus, the importance of the mother’s presence in the household cannot be undermined. This study finding reinforces the significance of the role that family members, especially the mother, play in the sexual socialization of their children. Whitaker and Miller (2000, p. 266) found that the discussion of sex with family members “buffers teens from peer pressure.” It also fosters closeness between the youth and their family members. School teachers and religious leaders are also significantly related to certain kinds of information. This study finding shows that the family, school, church, and health professionals are important sources of the sexual socialization of the youth. This is in contrast to the findings on African youth by Bankole et al. (2007), who reported that health facilities and professionals provided by the school are not relevant sources of information on sex and reproductive health.

The discussion of sex at home remains rare in the Filipino household. When it does occur, it is among siblings and always takes the form of bantering instead of serious, heart-to-heart talks. In this study, when the youth were asked whom they want to consult on certain kinds of information on sex, their family members were the popular choice. Unlike in Western studies where the discussion of sex at home builds a strong bond between the youth and their family members, in the Philippine context, close family ties seem to be why CALABARZON youth chose family members as their choice of person as a source of information on sex and reproduction.

## Summary and recommendations

This study shows that the sources of information of the youth in CALABARZON are a mix of persons and materials; this can be viewed as more positive than negative, since the information they get from the media as the material source is assumed to be mediated by face-to-face interaction with persons of their choice. The findings of this study further showed that the youth's primary sources of sex information are family members, school staff, religious leaders, medical practitioners, and friends. These mixed sources of information may make the youth less likely to engage in sexual risk behaviors. This is in spite of their being millennials whose wide range of sources of information on sex and reproduction may increase their sexual risk behavior. Moreover, youth who stay in school longer are better able to access information not only from material sources but also from reliable persons such as school staff and medical practitioners.

Thus, it is important that the youth get more education or stay longer in school and preferably complete their studies, since better-educated youth are more discerning and schooling provides the latent function of postponing sexual initiation. As early as the elementary level, schools should provide personnel to properly guide the youth on matters related to sex. The school and the church should supplement and complement the support that the youth have from their families. Sex education must be institutionalized in the Philippines to at least monitor the content of the sexual information, particularly in terms of the accuracy and age appropriateness of the materials to be used. Such a policy on sex education would help ensure that the youth in all circumstances and contexts obtain the sexual health information that they need. Moreover, the school has the inherent capacity to teach sex education to a large number of young people. Having professional staff with knowledge and expertise on sex education is important in catering to the implicit and explicit sexual needs of the youth. All institutions (e.g., family, school, church) in charge of the youth's development should realize that continued involvement and commitment in the lives of the youth is necessary to optimize the opportunity to acquire the correct knowledge on sexual matters. The Commission on Population (POPCOM), a government institution, has been implementing the Adolescent Health and Youth Development Program in CALABARZON. POPCOM can tap youth leaders as peer educators and champions and initiate adolescent sexual and reproductive health classes. A film festival, one form of media popular among the youth, can also be used to promote adolescent reproductive health.

This study is not without limitations. The data presented are strictly associational, so causality cannot be determined. This is partly due to the small sample size to permit more inferential treatment of the data. As is typical for survey data, the study lacks the depth and richness of an idiographic study. This study, therefore, tells only half of the story of the quest for information on sex of the millennial youth. However, the data show that the youth's sources of information on sex are the same sources of information on the appropriate norms. As Filipinos, there are also appropriate norms on sex that the youth should learn from reliable institutions that are responsible for providing valid information on sex and reproduction.

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