

CSE: Whose Morality?

A qualitative, multi-stakeholder, institutional analysis of how conflicting gender and sexual norms influence the adoption and implementation of CSE at Curaçao

- K.M.T. Brands

Introduction

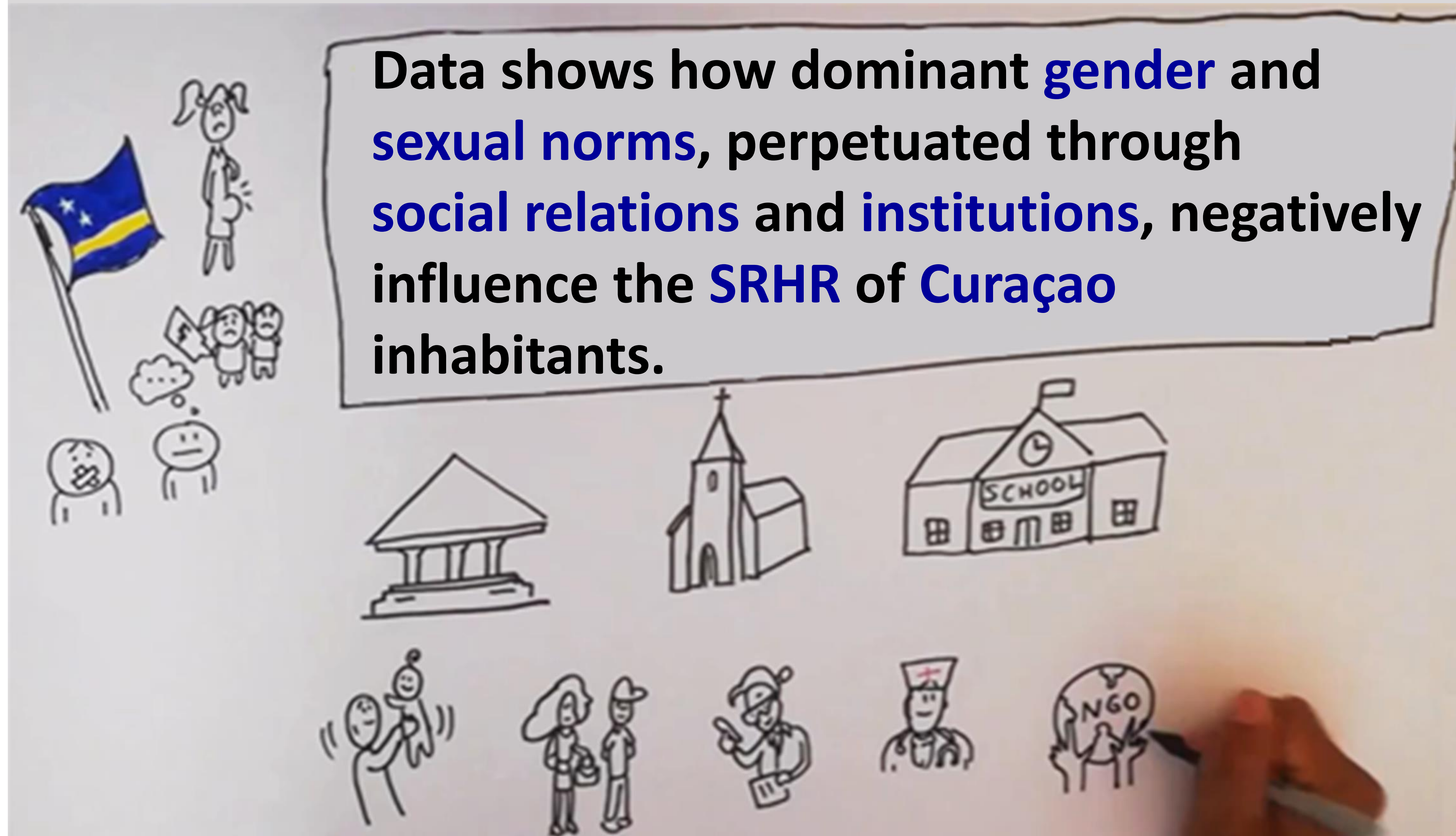
- ❖ Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) has been stated as particularly effective in teaching adolescents safe sexual behaviour and autonomy before they become sexually active.
- ❖ However, in many countries, the process of implementing CSE in schools is resisted or recontextualised in light of conflicting gender and sexual norms. Propagated through social relations and institutions, these norms subsequently affect adolescents' (sexual) agency.
- ❖ Nevertheless, research on the influence of social relations and institutions on CSE policy are lacking. Moreover, countries' norms that conflict with CSE curricula tend to be studied by focusing on religious and cultural norms as binary factors of influence, rather than the possible deeper, intersecting gender and sexual norms they underlie.

Research Location: Curaçao

The research has been conducted in Willemstad, Curaçao.



Despite the island's rising adolescent pregnancies between 2010-2015, lacking knowledge about the prevention of STIs and pregnancies, encapsulated child prostitution and taboo on discussing sexuality, School-Based Sexuality Education (SBSE) is not obligatory.



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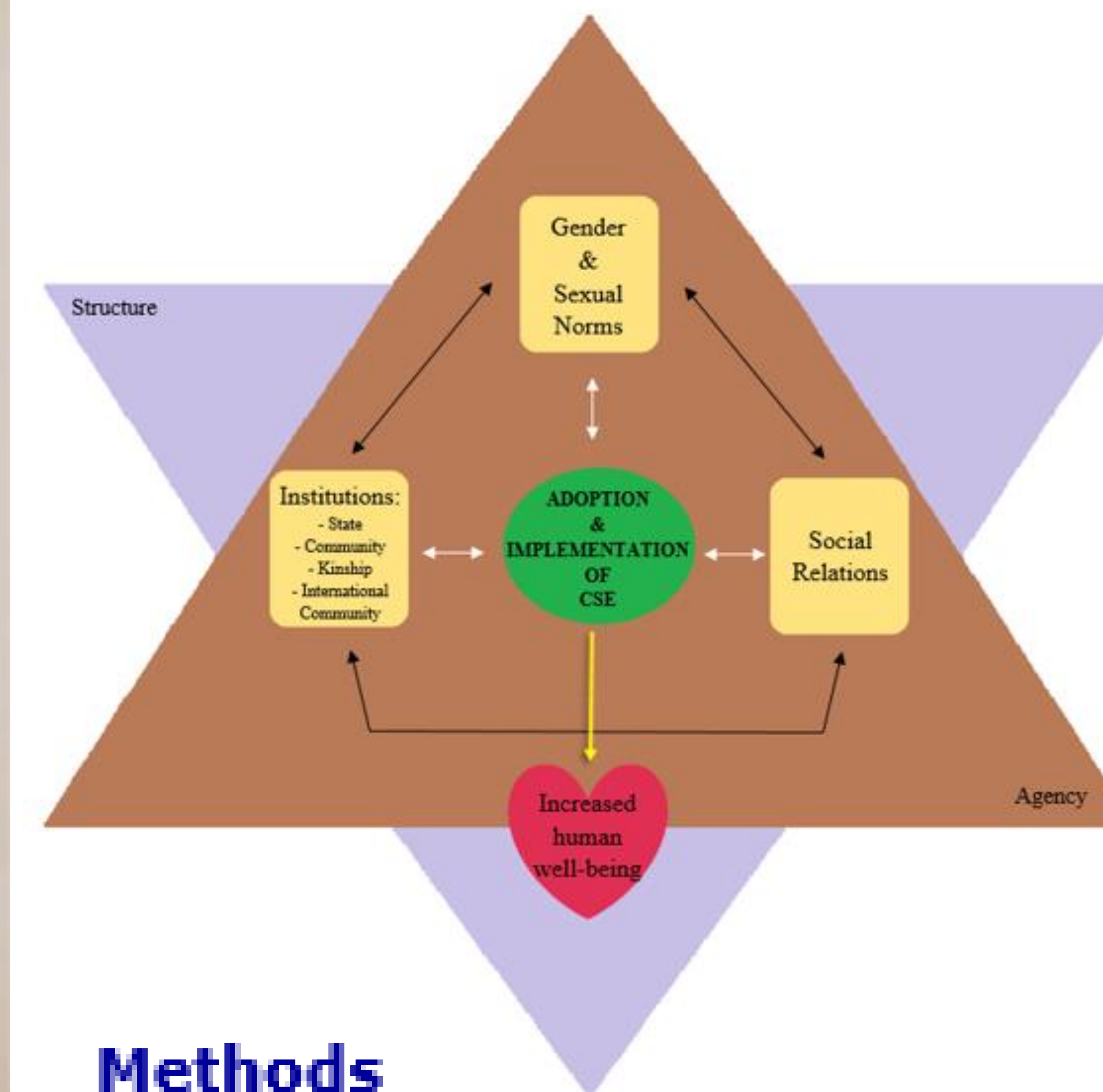


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Research Questions

- ❖ Main research question:
How do stakeholders perceive different institutions and gender and sexual norms affect the adoption and implementation of CSE in Willemstad, Curaçao?
- ❖ Sub-questions:
 1. How and for which reasons do institutions want to adopt and implement SBSE?
 2. How do stakeholders perceive gender and sexual norms affect the adoption and implementation of CSE?

Conceptual Scheme



Methods

- ❖ In collaboration with *Famia Plania*, a member of the Caribbean Family Planning Association (CFPA) and International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), in-depth interviews with multiple stakeholders were conducted and supplemented with secondary data, such as policy documents, reports, academic literature and censuses on Curaçao.

Discussion & Conclusion

- ❖ The data shows how dominant gender and sexual norms, perpetuated through social relations and institutions, negatively influence the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) of Curaçao's people.
- ❖ Here, dominant masculinity, corresponding homophobia and restricted sexual agency can be regarded as the main factors negatively affecting the islands' inhabitants.
- ❖ For these norms to be challenged and modified, the introduction of CSE could be particularly helpful, if seriously considering these sexual and gender norms. The results derived from this research aspire to not only benefit national policies at Curaçao on whether and how to implement culturally sensitive SBSE that corresponds with social norms, but possibly other Caribbean countries and global discussions on CSE too.