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SEXUALITY GUIDANCE FOR YOUNG WOMEN AGED 13-16

– creating content for the EDDIS-project's digital
learning platform

BACHELOR'S THESIS | ABSTRACT

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SEXUALITY GUIDANCE FOR YOUNG WOMEN AGED 13-16

- creating content for the EDDIS-project's digital learning platform

The research for this thesis has focused on how educating young women aged 13-16 about their sexual rights including the right to their own sexuality and the right to education about sexuality can benefit their sexual development. The thesis investigates what kind of education young women aged 13-16 are getting in school, what is the most effective way to educate young women in these matters and how sexuality education directed to young women can lead to positive sexual experiences later in life and. By exploring these subject's, the aim is to find out how educating young women about their sexual rights can benefit their sexual development.

The aim of the thesis is to create material to help open discussions, share knowledge and educate young women on their sexual rights and to highlight the gaps in young women's sexuality education. To encourage young women to become aware of their sexual rights and hopefully empower them to explore and enjoy their own sexuality from informed, safe and reliable sources. To help reach the aim three development tasks where These are the development tasks that aim to be challenged and answered in this thesis: what are the most common themes on compulsory school sex education and what are missing for young women aged 13-16, what are different ways to educate young women age 13-16 on the importance of understanding their own sexuality and self-exploration and according to the literature does teaching young women age 13-16 the importance of sexuality and self-exploration lead to positive sexual experiences later in life?

The purpose of this thesis was to produce educational material that increase young womens knowledge about sexual rights and improve their sexual health and sexual well-being. The age group that our materials is aimed at are 13-16-year old's and the materials will be published on Turku University of Applied Sciences' EDDIS-project's digital learning platform.

As a product of this thesis an educational comic book strip for young women aged 13-16 has been created. The aim of the comic book is to encourage young women to become aware of their sexual rights and hopefully empower them to explore and enjoy their own sexuality.

KEYWORDS:

Sexual rights, sexuality education, sexuality, young women

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SEKSUAALIKASVATUSTA 13-16-VUOTIAILLE NUORILLE NAISILLE

- sisällöntuottoa EDDIS-hankkeen digitaaliselle oppimisalustalle

Tässä opinnäytetyössä tutkittiin miten nuorten 13-16 vuotiaiden naisten kouluttaminen heidän oikeuksistaan heidän omaan seksuaalisuuteensa ja oikeuteen koulutukseen heidän seksuaalisista oikeuksistaan voi hyödyttää heidän seksuaalista kehitystään. Tutkittiin millaista opetusta 13-16-vuotiaat tytöt saavat koulussa, millaisia erilaisia tapoja on opettaa näitä asioita tytöille ja miten tytöille suunnattu seksuaalikasvatus voi johtaa positiivisiin seksuaalisiin kokemuksiin myöhemmin elämässä. Tunnustelemalla näitä aiheita tavoitteena oli saada selville, miten opettamalla nuoria naisia heidän seksuaalioikeuksistaan voi hyödyttää heidän seksuaalista kehitystään.

Opinnäytetyön tavoitteena oli luoda materiaalia auttamaan keskustelun aloittamista, jakaa tietoa ja opettaa nuoria naisia heidän seksuaalioikeuksistaan ja korostaa nuorten naisten seksuaalikasvatuksessa olevia aukkoja. Toiveena oli kannustaa nuoria naisia tulemaan tietoisiksi heidän seksuaalioikeuksistaan ja voimaannuttaa heitä tutkimaan ja nauttimaan omasta seksuaalisuudesta tarjoamalla informaatiota turvallisesta ja luotettavasta lähteestä. Tavoitteen saavuttamiseksi luotiin kolme kehitystehtävää, nämä olivat: Mitkä ovat yleisimmät teemat, joita käsitellään 13-16-vuotiaiden nuorten pakollisessa opetussuunnitelmassa ja mitkä teemat puuttuvat, mitä erilaisia tapoja on opettaa 13-16-vuotiaita nuoria naisia heidän oman seksuaalisuutensa ymmärtämisen tärkeydestä ja johtaako 13-16-vuotiaiden nuorten naisten opettaminen heidän omasta seksuaalisuudestaan positiivisiin seksuaalisiin kokemuksiin myöhemmin elämässä.

Opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli tuottaa opettavaista materiaalia, joka lisää yläkouluikäisten tietoa seksuaalioikeuksista ja kohentaa heidän seksuaaliterveyttään ja hyvinvointiaan. Kohderyhmämme oli 13-16-vuotiaat ja materiaali julkaistaan Turun Ammattikorkeakoulun EDDIS-hankkeen digitaalisella oppimisalustalla.

Digitaaliselle oppimisalustalle luomamme materiaali oli opettavainen sarjakuva 13-16-vuotiaille nuorille naisille. Sarjakuvamme tavoitteena oli kannustaa nuoria naisia heidän seksuaalioikeuksien tiedostamiseen ja toivottavasti voimaannuttaa heitä tutkimaan ja nauttimaan omasta seksuaalisuudestaan.

ASIASANAT:

Seksuaalioikeudet, seksuaalikasvatus, seksuaalisuus, nuoret naiset

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BZgA	Federal Centre for Health Education
EDDIS	A Digital Program for Sexual Education in Secondary Schools
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
IPPF EN	International Planned Parenthood Foundation European Network
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex
SRE	Sex and relationship Education
WAS	World Association for Sexual Health
WHO	World Health Organisation
YSAFE	Youth Sexual Awareness for Europe

1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis will explore how educating young women aged 13-16 about their sexual rights including the right to their own sexuality and the right to education about sexuality can benefit their sexual development. The thesis findings and research will be used to create an educational comic book strip for young people to access through the EDDIS project.

The EDDIS-project is a project developing a digital learning platform for young people from ages 13-16. The project is international involving four countries: Finland, Greece, Portugal and Lithuania. EDDIS develops sexuality education materials together with students, teachers and sexuality education professionals. The aim of the project is to enhance basic knowledge of sexual health and sexuality amongst young people aged 13-16. Once the platform is ready it is meant to be available to young people all around Europe. (Turku University of Applied Sciences 2018)

When working with people on the project it was highlighted the need for more material on the sexual rights and we were given the freedom to define what rights we wanted to focus on. For the thesis we are using Väestöliitto's (The Family Federation of Finland) sexual rights for the young people. Focusing on the right to your own sexuality and the right to information about sexuality, taking a female point of view. (Ilmonen and Korhonen 2015, 10)

During discussions of the thesis project it became clear the lack of knowledge given to young women about their sexuality, particularly how young women can and should be exploring themselves. This lack of information for young women about pleasure, desire, masturbation and encouragement to explore themselves leaves young women ignorant to their sexuality and could hinder their sexual development. (Kar et al 2015)

This thesis should challenge and break down the taboos set for young women and encourage holistic self-exploration to help young women foster and develop positive relationships with themselves. Through understanding and embracing their right to their own sexuality and to sexuality education.

A key goal of this thesis is to investigate what kind of education girls aged 13-16 are getting in school, how sexuality education directed to girls can lead to positive sexual experiences later in life and what is the most effective way to educate young women in these matters. By exploring these subjects, the research and final thesis product aim to

find out how educating young women about their sexual rights can benefit their sexual development.

2 SEXUAL RIGHTS

Sexual rights are basic rights that are based on UN's human rights declaration. Sexual rights have also been defined by other organizations such as International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and The World Association for Sexual Health (WAS). Sexual rights are based on the ideas of freedom, equality, privacy and self-determination. (Väestöliitto 2020b)

Väestöliitto has made a list of sexual rights especially for young people that are based on international sexual rights. The rights are divided into seven categories, and they are: right to your own sexuality, right to information about sexuality, right to protect yourself and right to be protected, right to sexual health services, right to equality and non-discrimination, right to privacy and right to influence. (Ilmonen and Korhonen 2015, 10)

This thesis will focus on the right to your own sexuality and the right to information about sexuality. When beginning the research, links between these sexual rights and the research questions quickly began to form. It was hypothesised that if compulsory sex education for young people did not fully inform and encourage them to explore and enjoy their sexuality their rights are not being met. Deprived of a comprehensive education of basic sexual rights young people may not have a level of understanding of their sexuality which was further hypothesized would hinder their sexual development and intern could possibly lead to negative sexual experiences later in life. "There is a large body of research showing that high quality, comprehensive and rights-based sexuality education programs can delay initiation of sexual activity and unprotected intercourse, decrease the number of sexual partners, increase contraceptive and condom use, and therefore decrease unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections among young people" (IPPF 2009, From evidence to action, 3)

It is highlighted during throughout this thesis that when informing young people about thier rights it is important to do it in a positive and real way, ensuring not to miss crucial elements important in their sexual development. To simply state these rights to young people still leaves many gaps in the education of their rights. This thesis and learning material is compact and focused on young women and thier education of pleasure and positive education on sexuality according to their sexual rights. Education and knowledge of sexual rights can also have an impact on thier future sexual health. According to WHO "...sexual health is defined as "a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-

being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence.” (WHO- World health organization)

2.1 Sexual development and female sexuality

After a child has developed and learned how to have a healthy attachment and relationship to their parents and caregivers they grown into young adults and begin to look outward at their peers to continue their emotional development as researched in the article *Becoming a sexual being: The ‘elephant in the room’ of adolescent brain development*. “Both parental and romantic love facilitate nurturing, sensitive, responsive caretaking, but romantic love also includes distinct components, such as reciprocal power sharing and sexual desire.” (Suleiman et al 2016, 211) The article goes on to explore the importance of adolescents’ relationships and how they are perceived can positively or negatively affect a young person’s sexuality and development. Physical changes begin early in adolescents, young people also begin to develop abstract thinking and reasoning. A sense of identity and an interest in sex and sexuality develop. The ability to assess risk taking and behavior experimentation are a crucial part of Adolescence.

The development of sexuality during adolescence can be affected and determined by biological, psychological, and social factors. Several biological and psychological changes occur during adolescence and this can be extremely challenging for young people who are ill informed. A young persons’ sexual behavior after puberty is thought to be influenced heavily by the family and societies attitude to the changes which happen during puberty. (Kar et al 2015)

The brain develops and attempts to learn how to navigate these changes. Young people are vulnerable, and the emotional side of sexual development can become hindered. Young people must be taught skills and given guidance during their development. “A primary goal for adolescents is to learn how to engage in and navigate romantic and sexual relationships. In addition, these early romantic relationships have important implications for identity development, learning about sexual behavior, and future relationship trajectories.” (Suleiman et al 2016, 217)

Sexuality as defined by the World Health Organization is “a central aspect of being human throughout life encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviors, practices, roles and relationships. While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors.” (WHO 2006) When looking at female sexuality research suggest that young women’s sexual agency (Their ability to make decisions and make assertions concerning their own sexuality) is behind that of young men. “While young men experience more freedom in expressing themselves sexually, young women receive mixed messages about sexuality, and face more burden to express their own sexual desires in environments, which tend to support “male sexual values” (Klein et al 2018, 2)

In discussions of sexuality young women are still depicted as passive, discussions are not focused on the young women’s sexual desire and pleasure. This results negatively in their capabilities to make decisions and assert their wants and needs. Young women’s decisions are instead determined by sexual modesty and negative outcomes of sexual exploration such as pregnancy, STI/STD’s, pain, and social judgments. As young women tend to receive restrictive messages surrounding sexuality and are unable to access the information and knowledge which leads to the acceptance and the understanding of the importance of pleasure and desires their sexual development during adolescence can be hindered. (Klein et al, 2018) The small amount of research available about women’s sexual agency suggests it develops during adolescents through increased sexual experience, these experiences can affect how young women perceive their sexuality and well-being “Adolescence is probably the most important developmental period of making experiences and mastering tasks that will also mark further long-term out-comes with regard to a person’s overall (sexual) well-being (Klein et al 2018, 2)

2.2 Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Comprehensive sexuality education is seen as a holistic concept in which sexuality is a positive resource that enriches relationships and enhances satisfaction. (Seksuaalikasvatuksen standardit Euroopassa 2014, 7) Comprehensive sexuality teaches children and youth about topics such as the body and sexuality, relations and

feelings, reproduction and pregnancy, STIs, boundaries, gender and sexual orientation, sex and the media, and sex and society. The knowledge, skills, attitudes and values will help to experience their sexuality in a safe and satisfactory way – physically and emotionally, individually and in relationships. (Väestöliitto 2020a)

According to WHO comprehensive sexuality education should start from the beginning of life. It should take into consideration persons age, the level of development, level of understanding, culture, social factors, gender and actualities. Sexuality education should be based on sexual and reproductive human rights and it should be considered as a part of holistic view of well-being that also includes health. Equality between genders, self-determination and acceptance of diversity are also important bases for sexuality education. Sexuality education should be a way to develop society into a fairer and compassionate direction by empowering individuals and communities. Comprehensive sexuality education should always be based on scientifically valid information. (THL 2014a, 38)

3 THE PURPOSE AND AIM OF THE THESIS

The purpose this thesis is to create material to help open discussions, share knowledge and educate young women on their sexual rights and to highlight the gaps in young women's sex education. With a hope to encourage young women to become aware of their sexual rights and hopefully empower them to explore and enjoy their own sexuality from informed, safe and reliable sources.

These are the development tasks that aim to be challenged and answered in this thesis.

What are the most common themes on compulsory school sex education and what are missing for young women aged 13-16?

What are different ways to educate young women age 13-16 on the importance of understanding their own sexuality and self-exploration?

According to the literature does teaching young women age 13-16 the importance of sexuality and self-exploration lead to positive sexual experiences later in life?

4 THESIS METHOD

4.1 Applied thesis and literature review

This thesis was executed as applied thesis. The contractor for this thesis was Turku University of Applied Sciences EDDIS-project (A Digital Program for Sexual Education in Secondary Schools). The aim of applied thesis is to produce or develop some new service, product or work practice. The development of a new product for applied thesis is based on previous knowledge. The theoretical framework has been made using a literature review. This literature review will create a comprehensive summary of previous research done in articles and materials concerning the topic of sexuality guidance for young women. The literature review will also be useful in understanding the main development tasks of the thesis. (Turku University of Applied Sciences 2017)

4.2 Theoretical framework

To make the theoretical framework reliable and current information has been searched for using databases such as PubMed, Google scholar, EBSCOhost and CINAHL. Releases made by reliable organizations for example WHO, BZgA, IPPF and Väestiliitto have also been used. Some materials used have been searched from the internet. With these materials the internet source criticism has been taken into consideration, meaning the reliability of the materials has been evaluated before use. To guarantee the information used in this thesis is topical materials made in the years between 2010-2020 have been used. Older materials were ensured to be reliable and the most current information available on the subject. Examples of keywords that were used during the research are “sexuality,” “sexuality education”, “youth”, “young women”, “sexual development” and “sexual rights”. For the thesis materials published in English and in Finnish have been used

For the EDDIS-project we were given the freedom to make sexuality education materials to be shared on the EDDIS digital platform. We decided to present our findings and create our educational material as a comic book strip that is about young women’s right to their own sexuality and right to education about their own sexuality. The images chosen to be drawn for the comic book have been made based on the research found in

the theoretical framework. They have been chosen to enhance the text and follow guidelines to help make sure that the information in the comic book is relatable to the target group.

5 COMMON THEMES IN COMPULSORY SCHOOL EDUCATION AND WHAT IS MISSING

WHO's Regional Office for Europe with BZgA (Federal Centre for Health Education) have defined standards for sexuality education in Europe in 2010. Since Finland has been using these standards as the basis for their sexuality education, this thesis will focus on Finland's curriculum.

The standards for sexuality education include naming and expressing feelings and managing feelings whilst going through a breakup. Sexuality education should involve issues related to gender and sexuality and the diversity of relationships and lifestyles. It should discuss social and cultural issues and norms and values that define sexuality. Sexuality should be considered from the view of health and wellbeing and teach safety skills and communication and problem-solving skills. The standards also include the realization of sexual rights and discussing porn. Lastly the standards include the development of human body and its individuality and the responsibility related to fertility and procreation. (THL 2019)

Finland has a teacher's guide for sexuality and sexual health for young people that has been made by Duodemic. Duodemic Koulun terveyskirjasto (School health library) is a database that offers reliable and current information related to the young people's health and life skills. The information is meant to support teaching people aged 13-19. (Duodemic 2017) The guide has been made according to the standards set by WHO. The main topics in the guide are sexuality and sexual health of young people, young people and dating, sexual orientation and the diversity of gender, multiculturalism and sexuality and sexual wellbeing, sexual health behaviour and their threats. The guide discusses masturbation and the importance of feeling pleasure, but it lacks the female perspective and the complexity of female sexuality. (Duodemic 2018)

Although many countries offer comprehensive sexuality education it is not yet compulsory. According to the literature key concepts that are missing from compulsory education are the knowledge and information about how to explore one's body and the fact that sexuality should be enjoyed. There is very little information if any about the importance of pleasure and the positive side of sex and sexuality in many compulsory education programmes especially for young women. Masturbation, pleasure and desires

are not talked about in depth. Young women need to be better equipped with knowledge and skills to help them develop their sexual well-being. The topic needs to be discussed in more detail in an open and frank way. Young people disconnect from their SRE when the information is not implemented in a relatable and needs based way (Pound et al 2016)

The female anatomy is complicated and young women have the right to information that helps them understand and enjoy it. While it is extremely important not to feel ashamed for enjoying one's own body, it is also crucial to have the knowledge to do so. Female pleasure is often overlooked. Young women are taught to focus more on avoiding pregnancy, STI's and behaving in ways to ensure their safety. They may also learn from societal pressure that their partners pleasure is more important than their own. These issues should be addressed in the comprehensive sexuality education. The lack of information about pleasure, self-exploration and how and why the body reacts the way it does or doesn't could be resolved by using a compulsory comprehensive sexuality education. If young women don't understand their own anatomy and sexuality paired with little information from trusted sources their sexual rights are not being met. They have a right to learn all aspects of sex and sexuality. Young women should be taught that their pleasure is as equally as important as using contraceptives and being informed about STI's/STD's.

In one study "What do young people think about their school-based sex and relationship education? A qualitative synthesis of young people's views and experiences It was revealed not only was the sexuality education of low quality it was out of date. "Although sex and relationship education (SRE) represents a key strand in policies to safeguard young people and improve their sexual health, it currently lacks statutory status, government guidance is outdated and a third of UK schools has poor-quality SRE." (Pound et al,1) This study like others have highlighted the need for a more holistic, comprehensive education about sexuality and a higher standard of education. "Young people report that SRE can be negative, gendered and heterosexist.

The young people expressed dislike of their own teachers delivering SRE due to blurred boundaries, lack of anonymity, embarrassment and poor training." (Pound et al 2016, 1) The poor education and poor delivery of materials leaves young people feeling awkward and uncomfortable in classes infringing on the young people's sexual rights, the right to their own sexuality and the right to education about sexuality. In the same study the young people were asked what they wanted to learn from their compulsory sex and

relationship education. It was observed from the young people that SRE failed to deliver information for sexually active young people, discussions of different contraceptives, health care services and options in case of an accidental pregnancy or STI/STD. Another theme absent from the SRE was the emotions and feelings that accompany sexual activity, young people wanted to discuss this in more detail, particularly young women. Topics the young people wanted to learn were how to say no to sex and to discuss sexual abuse. It was also noted the lack of information about sexting and social media and online safety. The young people also expressed they would like to improve the skills needed to become more confident in sexual negotiations and discussions about sexuality. (Pound et al 2016)

Sex and relationship education are still not being implemented with a needs-based approach. The subject is dealing with sensitive topics which implemented poorly could potentially cause awkward and stressful learning experiences. "The delivery of SRE requires careful planning; it cannot simply be provided in the same way as other subjects... sex raises numerous individual and social anxieties about, for example, unregulated sexual desire, female sexuality, the consequences of non-procreative erotic practices and young people's sexuality." (Pound et al 2016, 11)

The Sexual Awareness for Europe (YSAFE) and the Youth Networks of International Planned Parenthood Federation European Network (IPPFEN) lead a study session in co-operation with the European Youth Centre of the council of Europe in Budapest- A young volunteer can do anything, strengthening youth activism on sexual and reproductive health rights. The participants were young volunteers and advocates working with the organisations. The aims of the study session were to; "Support young activists with knowledge, skills and tools to strengthen youth-led initiatives on sexual and reproductive health and rights and comprehensive sexuality education through human rights education and advocacy on national and regional level, Enable and empower youth activists to address comprehensive sexuality education through a human rights based approach, provide a safe and open space for mapping challenges related to comprehensive sexuality education and identifying possible approaches in European and Central Asia context, ensure space for networking between organizations engaged in comprehensive sexuality education for planning and implementing joint initiatives on national and regional level." (IPPF, YSAFE 2013, 9)

In the report written about the study session it was concluded that there are still many aspects of comprehensive sex education missing from compulsory education and why

that may be. “Common challenges regarding Comprehensive Sexuality Education are negative attitudes towards young people’s sexuality and established gender roles; lack of financial support, political will and experience by governments, institutions and educators; unclear or lacking implementation and monitoring strategies and no space for meaningful youth participation. These factors prevent young people from receiving comprehensive, exclusive and evidence-based information and at the same time isolate youth from the decision-making process on educational curricula, its contents and how it should be taught. The state of sexuality education in many countries is not only insufficient but the attitudes of educators, institutions and governments also perpetuate the existing stigma and discrimination and negative attitudes towards sexuality, especially when it comes to young people, women, LGBTI people and people living with HIV/AIDS.” (IPPF, YSAFE 2013, 24)

6 SEXUALITY EDUCATION DIRECTED TO YOUNG WOMEN

According to the literature the importance of teaching young women about sexuality and self-exploration can lead to positive sexual experiences later in life and suggests that self-exploration in sexual desires and needs may benefit not only the development of a young women's sexual identity but also her sexual well-being. (Parent et al 2015) Within the research it has also been highlighted that a comprehensive sexuality education focused on promoting positive sexual health can foster and teach young women and encourage them to make responsible sexual decision making. Ultimately empowering young women to take less risks in their sexual encounters. (Boislard et al 2016)

Findings found and discussed in the article I want your sex: the role of sexual exploration in fostering positive sexual self-concepts for heterosexuals and sexual minority women, indicate that greater sexual identity exploration is also beneficial to the psychosocial functioning of heterosexual individuals. The article also went on to explain that their research suggests there is a link between sexual identity status and sexual positivity, and it could be better understood through exploration of sexual desires and needs. (Parent et al, 2015) The study found a significant link that higher levels of sexual identity exploration could affect sexual positivity and sexuality. The findings support the idea that sexual exploration may be beneficial to the sexual self-concept of women. (Parent et al 2015)

According to the articles and research the main aim of sexuality education is to support and protect young people's sexual development. Empowering young people with the information needed to learn the skills and values that help them understand and enjoy their sexuality whilst having safe and fulfilling experiences and relationships. In the article Sexuality- What it is? The results of research including several European countries in which long term national sexuality education programs have been introduced showed that the programs not only reduced teenage pregnancy, abortion, HIV and sexually transmitted infection rates but also increased the capabilities of the young people to have stronger and more meaningful relationships. (BZga 2016)

7 DIFFERENT WAYS TO EDUCATE YOUNG WOMEN ABOUT SEXUALITY

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) has developed a comprehensive sexuality education framework. Through their evidenced based research, they have developed an effective way to lead comprehensive sexuality education together with young people, experts in the field and other international agencies. The framework aims to have a holistic approach to sexuality education. The objective is to not only focus on reproductive aspects of sexuality but also the emotional, mental, physical, and social impacts that can affect development. It also addresses power dynamics and the consequential influences this can have on sexual choices and behaviours.

The framework is made up of five features, that are essential for effective comprehensive sexuality education. Following this framework all comprehensive sexuality education programmes should be based on sexual rights. The core values, laws and principles that create our rights should be upheld to ensure human dignity and equal opportunity and participation. An understanding of these rights is important when educating young people to achieve sexual health and well-being. Young people should be empowered to claim their rights and take action to utilise them. As is their right to do. It is not enough to simply state sexual rights, young people should be given knowledge, skills and tools to be able to enhance their sexual health and well-being.

The framework should also be gender sensitive. Young people need to be aware of how gender roles can affect their behaviours and decision making. How different discriminations, prejudices and inequalities impact their sexual health and well-being. There needs to be access to materials and knowledge which help them understand the importance of gender equality and social context.

Another key feature of comprehensive sexuality education is citizen orientated. The goal of this is to guarantee comprehension of how relationships and institutions work in society. This feature should emphasise on critical thinking skills that promote responsible behaviour and action skills that encourage social conditions for sexual health and well-being.

The final concept of the framework is sex positive. Materials should convey the significance of sexual pleasure. It should clarify the importance of sexual enjoyment and

how it effects our personal well-being. Young people should also be taught to embrace thier sexuality in a positive way. This can foster acceptance and help challenge discriminations related to sexual orientations, illnesses and disabilities. Being educated in a sex positive manner can also challenge notions of unacceptance and shame.

The IPPF states it is crucial that the learning materials and discussions should be implemented in an interactive way. This empowers the young people to form their own values and beliefs and ask questions that will develop their sexual health and well-being in their own way, specific to their needs. It also helps to maintain relevant and up to date learning materials. Learning in this manner is inclusive despite ability or experience. It also fosters the value of compassion and understanding for others and thier views. The young people's interests should also be used in teaching such as music, art, videos, drama, debates, writing and discussion when the material is delivered in an interesting manner it is more beneficial. The aim of using these learning activities is to help ease and increase the understanding of sexuality through observation and reflection. (IPPF 2009)

The United Nations' Specialized agency for Education (UNESCO), revised edition of International technical guidance in sexuality- An evidence- informed approach guidelines can be a beneficial and an effective way to educate young women age 13 to 16 on the importance of understanding their own sexuality and self-exploration. The guide is made up of eight comprehensive topics. These topics include, Relationships, Values, Rights, culture and sexuality, understanding gender, Violence and staying safe, Skills for health and wellbeing, The human body and development, Sexuality and sexual behaviour and Sexual and reproductive health.

This comprehensive guide has been created to educate children and young people from the age of five to the age of eighteen. Each topic has key concepts appropriate for the age group it is being delivered to. This thesis will focus on the key learning concepts that the guide suggests a young person by the age of fifteen should be able to learn and understand. Topic number seven, Sexuality and sexual behaviour consist of Key topics such as, It is natural for humans to enjoy their bodies and being close to others throughout their lives, Human beings are born with the capacity to enjoy their sexuality throughout their life, Sexual feelings, fantasies and desires are natural and occur throughout life although people do not always choose to act on these feelings and It's natural to be curious about sexuality and important to ask a trusted adult questions. The

guide then goes on to explain how the learning objectives of each key topic can be met by the learners.

This guide is comprehensive with up to date information from a reliable recognised source and so would be beneficial to consider when teaching young women, the importance of their sexuality and self-exploration. Following this guide will ensure young people are receiving a comprehensive sex education. It is inclusive of all ages and abilities and can be easily modified to suite the individual needs of the young person. It is important to implement it in such a way that applies to young people. (UNESCO 2019)

In Finland RFSU, which is a politically, professionally and religiously independent nonpartisan organization, has made comprehensive sexuality education materials for teachers and other professionals who discuss sexuality with young people. (RFSU 2019b) The materials are made to support the sexuality education given in schools and are aimed at young people aged 13-22. There are different materials for young people aged 13-16 and 16-22. In the materials for the younger group there is a section where changes of puberty and genitalia are being explored through art. The task is to look through some pictures of female and male genitalia and then make either realistic or abstract artistic interpretations. The aim is to make the body feel familiar as a whole and reduce the feeling of embarrassment and break taboos related to genitalia. Approaching the subject through art gives young people an emotional and experiential way to process their own bodies and the changes that are happening during puberty and gives a broader view than just biological. (RFSU 2019a)

8 MAKING THE MATERIALS – COMIC STRIP

Some of the young people within the project had created their own comic book strips at a workshop. Here the young people actively and enthusiastically shared their thoughts on sexual rights. Each young person identified a sexual right and created their comic book strip according to their interpretation of that right. This seemed to be an effective way for the young people to express their understanding. Therefore, we decided to present our findings and create our educational material in the same manner. A comic book strip about young women's right to their own sexuality and right to education about their own sexuality.

The aim of the comic book was to encourage young women to become aware of their sexual rights and hopefully empower them to explore and enjoy their own sexuality from informed, safe and reliable sources. To ensure the comic book was based on sexual rights and met the aim the UNESCO, International technical guidance on sexuality and education, the revised edition 2018 was used in the creation of the comic book. Focused closely on the key concepts, topics and learning objectives for young people in the age group 13 to 16-year olds. From here it can be determined what the young women should be capable of learning and what information they required to meet the learning objectives. The information in the comic book has been concentrated on guidelines given from sections six and seven of the guide. These are, The human body and development and Sexuality and sexual behavior. The images were selected to enhance the text and provoke discussion and critical thinking. A local artist Tuija Jyrkkiö was contacted to make the artwork. Her artistic representations of the images are bright, and eye catching they aim to catch the attention of young women hopefully in a relatable and up to date way. A Comic book strip is an international way of implementing the information as young people from different countries can understand the message of the images even if they do not understand English.

The cover of our comic book is a superhero. This image was chosen to depict a strong and brave young woman in hopes of empowering other young women to boldly confront their sexuality and the fact that their pleasures and desires are important. This superhero is hopefully a symbol of encouragement. The next image is that of a young woman thinking about her sexuality, her desires and pleasures. This image was chosen to show the different things people may think about and to try and show acceptance and normality

to this. To help this image be relatable to young people emojis have also been featured here. It is important young women can think about and list their desires and fantasies

The third image in the comic book is that of a young woman exploring her vulva with a hand mirror. This image was drawn to help instruct young women of how they can look at their vulva's in comfortable way. The image shows the reality and importance knowing what your own body looks like. Then there is an image of a labeled vulva. This was selected to help give clarity to the young women. Hopefully helping them locate the different parts of their vulva. The final image is a collage of different vulva's. The idea here was to create inclusion and this image was chosen to help enhance the fact that everyone is different, special and unique.

9 ETHICS AND RELIABILITY OF THESIS

When approaching the topic of sexuality and young women, it is important to note it is perceived differently in every country, culture and religion. It is important to have an approach that is sensitive to these differences. The aim of this thesis and comic book stirp is to be based on scientific findings and not cultural or religious beliefs. The material is directed to underage young women, it is important the work reflects this and is age appropriate. When dealing with sexuality it is important to remember there is no right or wrong way to approach it, but it is essential to direct young people to contemplate all aspects of their sexuality with an open mind whilst taking diversities into consideration to support every individual. (Oinonen and Susineva 2019)

Current and credible articles and materials have been used during the research stage to create a functional thesis and produce new information in developing the learning material. An emphasis has been put into reviewing and critiquing established research and sources to ensure the reliability of the final product. Sources specifically designed to create awareness and guide young women during their sexual development have been used. When selecting the research, it has been taken into consideration the challenges and diversities of sexuality education. To ensure the research upholds and respects the foundations of human rights. Whilst creating the thesis it was important to identify our own values on sexuality and gender roles to allow us to objectively analyse the research and materials.

The theses and materials created are aimed at European youth from an educational point of view. The final product will be delivered through the EDDIS platform, as the digital platform will be used by sexual health experts and teachers this ensures our product will be delivered in the correct manner. The images used to make the comic book have been drawn specifically for the comic book with the knowledge and permission granted that they can be shared and used on the EDDIS learning platform. They have been drawn to enhance the text and give a visual implementation of evidence-based information. This will help to ensure the finished work is appropriate and a reliable material for the EDDIS project.

10 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

During the research discussions were opened on the different ways to educate young women about their sexuality and sexual rights it was concluded the best way to educate young women is with a comprehensive sexuality education framework. Also identified were the missing themes from compulsory school education and what themes are available. A link between the importance of sexuality education and sexual health and well-being in later life was drawn.

This thesis concentrated on young women and concluded that education for young women about self-exploration and sexuality education would strengthen their understanding of themselves. It also concluded that compulsory sex education should be implemented through comprehensive sexuality programs that are based on sexual rights. Comprehensive education should have a holistic approach and be specific to everyone. It is important young women learn the skills and tools needed to understand what they expect and want from their sexuality.

When young women are supported to explore their rights and sexuality without shame and in a positive manner, it is possible they can better question and accept themselves in their future relationships and sexual experiences. Young women would benefit from more information to allow them to make informed decisions and more importantly enjoy their sexuality. Sexuality and self-exploration education could foster ideas of acceptance. Young women could gain confidence when they can better understand their desires, needs and thoughts improving their overall sexual well-being. Education can eliminate the fear of the unknown. Without fear and shame young women are free to enjoy and understand how their minds and bodies affect their sexuality creating positive experiences in the future.

Upon completing the materials for the EDDIS project it was concluded the comic book was based on sexual rights and scientific knowledge hopefully ensuring its credibility for use by the EDDIS project. We are satisfied with the outcome and feel this implementation of information is useful and relatable to young women however it is difficult to fully evaluate the efficiency and functionality of the comic as a learning resource as it will be published on the EDDIS learning platform at a later time.

When the research parameters were originally set, the aim was to keep the sources relevant no older than five years. However, on beginning the research it was quickly highlighted there is a lack of up to date credible sources. We then moved the perimeters of our search to include research from 2010 to 2020. Further research is needed on young people's sexuality in particular that of young women. We found a lack of research about female sexuality and its complicity. There is a need for more materials that allow young women to explore their sexuality in a positive manner. There is also a need for more detailed information about how a comprehensive sexuality education positively affects young women's sexual development.

In this thesis gaps in research and resources about young women's sexuality have been highlighted. The lack of knowledge into certain aspects of sexuality education for young women needs addressing in future research. Further research into young women's sexuality education is needed. Empirical research into young women's opinions and views of the materials created for the EDDIS platform would be useful. This would ensure the validity of the learning materials. The young women could express their opinions on the implementation of information as a comic book strip. They could share how well information was received and did the comic book fulfil its aim and purpose. This kind of research would help create a further understanding of what young women have access to and what they would like more information on by allowing the young women to share their experiences. Further research could also help explore the importance of young people working together with sexual health care professional to create functional and engaging materials, programs and platforms to learn about sexuality. Future research into young women's sexuality education should aim to establish an understanding of the complexities of young women's sexuality and the benefits of projects such as the EDDIS platform.

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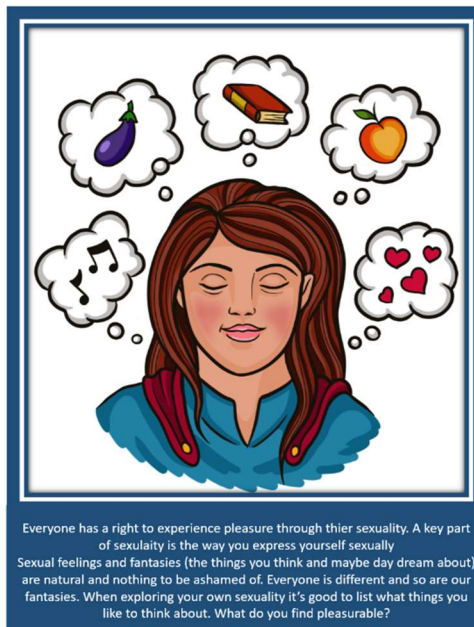
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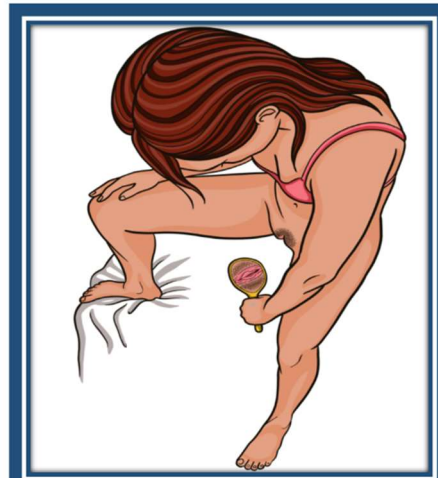
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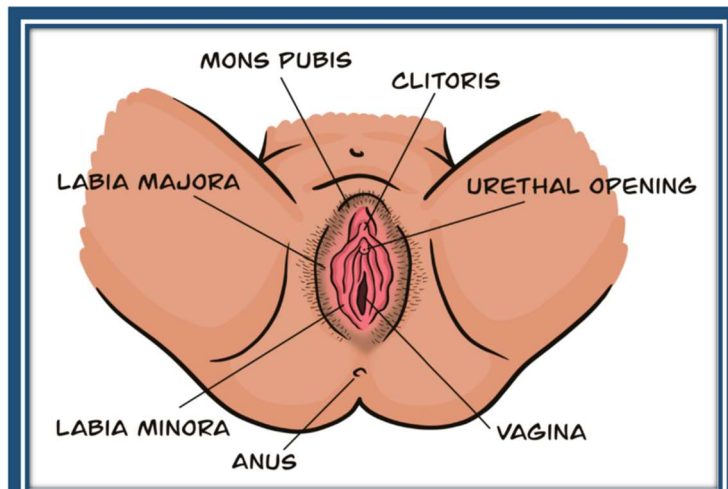
Comic books strip for EDDIS digital learning platform



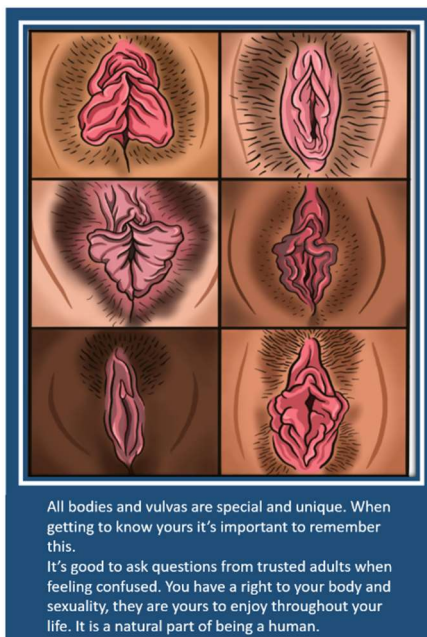
Everyone has a right to experience pleasure through their sexuality. A key part of sexuality is the way you express yourself sexually. Sexual feelings and fantasies (the things you think and maybe day dream about) are natural and nothing to be ashamed of. Everyone is different and so are our fantasies. When exploring your own sexuality it's good to list what things you like to think about. What do you find pleasurable?



You are allowed to enjoy your body. Getting to know your body is important and can be pleasurable. Looking at your genitals is natural. In a private and safe place you can explore what your vulva looks like. A hand mirror can help to make your viewing experience easier.



When you look at yourself in the mirror can you identify the different parts of your vulva? Can you find your clitoris, this part of your body is very sensitive but also very important. The only job of your clitoris is to give you pleasure. Exploring what feels good to you is a great way to enjoy your sexuality



Written permission to use artwork

I Tuija Jyrkkö give my permission to the EDDIS project and TUAS to use my original artwork drawn for the comic book Your pleasure is important. Which is to be uploaded to the EDDIS learning platform

18.5.2020 TURKU

Date, Place

T. Jyrkkö

Signature

TUIJA JYRKKÖ

Printed Name