

Factors promoting sex education among kindergarten educators

Márton Viktor Zala¹, Zsuzsa F. Lassú^{2*}, and Sándor Lénárd³

^{1,3} Institute of Education, ELTE Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary
Doctoral School of Education, ELTE Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary

² Faculty of Primary and Pre-school Education, ELTE Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary

Abstract

The aim of the research was to explore the factors that influence the effectiveness of sex education among kindergarten educators. With few exceptions, sex education in Hungary is hardly implemented. There are also shortcomings in regulation compared to the WHO recommendation across the education system, especially in kindergarten education. 320 kindergarten educators and teachers completed our questionnaire, in which we quantitatively assessed their views on sex education. Age and residence (urban vs. rural) typically influence people's attitudes towards sex education and acceptance. However, these factors did not appear as significant differences in the teacher sample. A large majority of them (80.3%) believe that it would be important to learn about this in an institutional setting, but this is only partially achieved. There was no significant difference in educators' attitudes towards sex education depending on where they learned about sex education, but in the extent to which they felt prepared to teach about sex education. Consequently, those who did not study sex education at university, they do not teach about it (e.g., underwear rule). Based on our research, it can be concluded that there is a great need and demand for the teaching of sex education in kindergarten educators' training. A significant number of teachers show interest in this area and inform themselves from a variety of sources. This is probably why there is no significant difference in attitudes and knowledge (did not learn about it, learned about it in basic training, learned about it in further training, self-learned about it, learned about it from several sources, cannot remember) between the groups. However, there is a significant difference in feelings of preparedness and willingness to organize a group activity for children on sexuality and sexual abuse prevention. Those who studied this subject in basic training, on their own or from several sources, are significantly more likely to have such activities.

Keywords: attitudes, effectiveness, sexual abuse prevention, teacher training, views on sexual education