



DIDACTICS SOLUTIONS IN SEXUAL EDUCATION IN THE LIGHT OF THE CURRICULA (1960-2010), AND THE SOCIO-CULTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN POLAND

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Abstract

Research conducted by many specialists confirmed the necessity of working out of good sexual education model in polish school. Our research had two main aims. First was analysis of changes in sexual education tendencies in the years 1960-2010 in Poland, based on content and quantity of synopsis of the school lectures published in periodical "Biology at School". We made an attempt to identify used ways of teaching of issues concerning human sexuality in selected years. The second aim was an attempt to systematize of teachers and biology students interpretations of commercials having sexual innuendos, and recognize how do they notice medial announcements having opinion-forming character with reference to human sexuality. We carried out a diagnostic survey among students of biology and biology teachers. The results of the poll allowed to answer the question, how views of human body shaped by media affect students and teachers attitudes toward human sexuality in comparison with attitudes shaped by school and other sources. We also focused of attention on symbols used in advertisements as factors which have potential implications for sexual education of society. The connection of these two planes allow to determine the relationships between formal and non formal education in biology and human sexuality.

Keywords: teaching models, teaching programs, advertisement, medial announcements

INTRODUCTION

Consecutive decades of the 20th century were the time of deliberations ,discussions, and dilemmas over the sexual education in polish school. Young people do often not have fundamental knowledge of physiology and maturation, and sexual education's handbooks are sources of incompatible with actual science data content (Pezda, 2011). Many experts on sexology think, that children's sexual education should begin at nursery school (Obuchowska, Jaczewski, 2002; Lew-

Starowicz, Szczerba, 1995; Izdebski, 2003). Polish education system offers "Family Life Education" classes, but the subject is not obligatory. Gaps in children's school sexual education are supplemented by medicine doctors, social organizations and media activities.

Theoretical background

Through the centuries human body was understood as the result of evolutionary processes, and was long time not equated with culture and society. Relatively late was noticed that connection between human body and culture is inseparable, and its interpreting and conceptions are shaped by the culture simply. Culture also shaped notions about maleness and femininity (Melosik, 1996, 2010; Luciano, 2001; Giordan, 2010). Before "division" of human body into man and woman parts, when they obtained individual features – it had not any distinctive features. (Kurzępa, 2007; Buss, 2001; Raisky, 2003).

In the 1980s and 1990s sexual education subject was very touchy. The handbook "Family Life Education" turned on a lot emotion stirring (Płytycz, 1989). Many synopsis of the lessons concerning the sexual life's responsibility molding, and meaning of sexual culture in periodicals aimed at teachers appeared. It become important to obtain answers the many questions like, for example: Who is held responsible for under-ages pregnancy? Why child's father blames girl for pregnancy? What mistakes in upbringing are made by parents? Why school does not teach how to protect from unwanted pregnancy? (Dobrowolska, 1995). Many research confirmed that mass media plays an key part in molding of pupil's attitude to culture, and that TV commercials strongly suggest behavior models (Melosik, 2010; Czerwiec, 2011a). In Poland children monthly watch even 900 advertisement clips, many among them can negatively influence on psyche of young people, as they often promote patterns of behavior laced with eroticism and stereotype approach to the human sex (Łaciak, 1998). It is difficult to prevent from advertisement influence on young people, because their powers of persuasion is considerably bigger than teachers' and parents' powers (Prokosz, 2004).

METHOD

The cognitive aim of this study was to establish the relationships between formal and non-formal education of human biology, whereas practical aim was an examination of ways of knowledge about human body popularization by advertisement spots. We also collected and analyzed teachers' and students' opinions on these ways. Because of large amount of advertisement spots with sexual connotations emitted in polish TV (Melosik, 2010, Czerwiec 2011a,b) we checked how teachers and biology students interpret such media, and how do they construe medial announcements of a human sexuality.

We carried out a diagnostic survey among students and biology teachers. The scores allowed to answer the main question: how human body view portray by mass-media affects biology teachers and students attitudes? A survey was carried out on 101 respondents: 74 students (40 women, and 34 men), and 27 biology teachers (15 women, and 12 men). Each of the persons could comment just

once each of the commercial spots. In order to determine of determinants towards sexual education changes, identification of ways of approach to the biology teaching in the years 1960-2010, articles published in "Biologia w Szkole" were analyzed. In this quarterly only articles in accordance with binding curriculum were printed. Therefore these articles are reflection of trends and changes in curricula. 110 articles were analyzed under the angle of presence of issues concerning sexual education and human biology in it, with paying special attention to contents concerning the sexuality.

Analysis of articles content was used to verification of hypothesis assumed that sexual education in the past years was mainly oriented to sexual transmitted diseases knowledge, and did not fulfill younger generation's needs.

FINDINGS

The object of our analysis were factual and methodic contents of 110 articles, and synopsis concerning the sexual education problems. Charts 1, and 2 illustrate number of articles and synopsis presented different issues of sexual education, published in five consecutive decades.

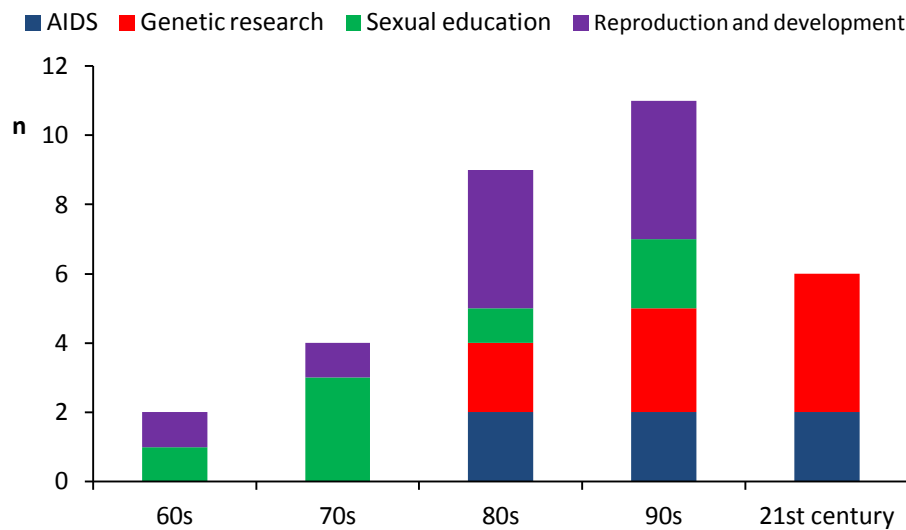


Figure 1. Number of articles presented issues of sexual education published in five consecutive decades in "Biologia w Szkole" journal.

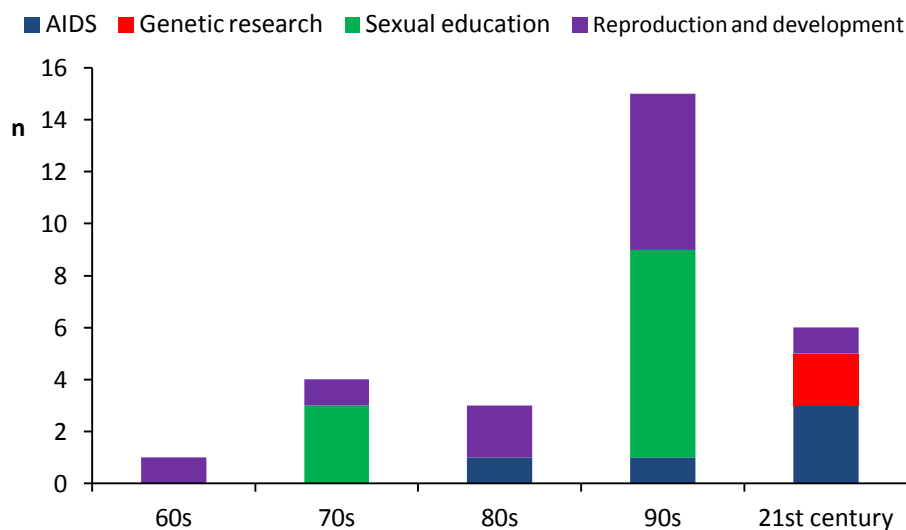


Figure 2. Number of synopsis presented issues of sexual education published in five consecutive decades in "Biologia w Szkole" journal.

Before 1960, for some time human biology – anatomy and physiology disappeared from teaching programs completely. Next consecutive years issues in personal hygiene were successively introduced into teaching programs, and with the passing of time more and more issues in human biology and social sciences, such as planned parenthood, fatherhood, personal hygiene and hygiene of reproduction, sexual disorders, and problems of adolescence appeared (Stawiński, 1963).

Research conducted during 1971/1972 school year among 152 pupils of secondary school proved that they were interesting in human sexuality sphere. Pupils anonymously asked the questions most often about: the sex act (67%), sexual deviations (16%), masturbation (5%), sexually transmitted diseases (4%), morals in different countries (3%), anatomy and physiology of reproductive organs (1%) (Bobrzyńska, 1973).

Towards the end of 80s the twentieth century first information concerning AIDS appeared. Problem of proper teachers preparation for teaching of AIDS in moral and medical contexts became essential. As the most important were recognized the following problems: avoiding of accidental sexual contacts, fidelity, sexual culture education, mutual moral responsibility of healthy and sick persons molding, teaching of proper attitude to people from high-risk groups (Rowiński, Grzechnik, 1988). Both meetings with specialists in AIDS, drug abuse, prostitution, and free educational materials (such as propaganda and informational leaflets) were also found as very important and effective (Pytlak, 1990).

Synopsis of the lessons published in journal concerning issues as follows: planned parenthood (Janczewska, 1976); prevention of sexually transmitted diseases (Łach-Długolecka, 1998); correct vocabulary concerning erotic sphere of human life, and proper predisposition towards sexual activity and family planning (Łach-Długolecka, 1998). It was debated about fear of parents for sexual life of their foster child: safety, hygiene, and about behavior after using alcohol, cigarettes or

drugs (Łach-Długolecka, 1998). Along with the biology development articles concerning medical and moral aspects of stem cells obtaining were published (Adamsky, 2005).

Results of the diagnostic survey among students and biology teachers showed, that only one teacher out of 27 teachers would not undertake the teaching of sexology issues at school. About 71% of biology students is not prepared properly for human sexuality issues teaching at every teaching level. All respondents explicitly found, that sexual education is needed in all kinds of schools, but this knowledge must be transferred honestly, and adjusted to age of the pupil. Respondents were given the task to interpret six advertisement spots of different products. Their answers are presented in the table 1.

Table 1. Respondents comments concerning the interpretation of the advertisement spots in the context of selected issues of human sexuality. It was analyzed 606 comments. In total 101 persons participated in the research.

Commercial spot description: Calvin Klein jeans - man wearing jeans with naked torso embracing naked woman.	
Men's comments *(n=276)	Women's comments *(n=330)
man wearing this jeans became more attractive to women and more sure of oneself (n=13), sexual intercourse of occidental persons (n=8), physical attractiveness (n=19), pleasure (n=6)	poster for publication in adult magazine (n=10), attention is attracted by nudity, not by trousers (n=25), pornography (n=3), sheath's advertisement (n=15), night club's advertisement (n=2)
Commercial spot description: Jean Paul Gaultier perfume - naked woman, which eyes are not visible, sitting on a chair, wearing only red high heels and metal chains.	
lack of interest in woman's personality (n=20), it is only body, no facial expression (n=24), her personality is speculative (n=2)	impersonal body, treating woman like an object (n=36), woman became attractive to every Man (n=14), jealous of woman's beautiful figure (n=5)
Commercial spot description: Toilet paper - man sitting on a chair, his face have strongly emphasized eyes being on the watch for viewers. His figure is shaped perfectly.	
nice body (n=3), there is no connection with toilet paper (n=8), ideal body figure (n=1), product advertised by man is ideal (n=34)	man as a sexual object, but face is equally important as the rest of the body (n=35), creation of ideal model of man's body (n=4), an interesting man have to turn attention away from shoddy product (n=13), discouragement of purchase of advertised merchandise (n=3)
Commercial spot description: Tiles - beautiful woman say: "lay me down and you will see how good I am" (it is play on words).	
an inelegant woman's treating, treating woman like object (n=3), simulation of erotic imagination (n=3), ambiguity, and ridiculous – good points of the advertisement (n=17), a very intelligent advertisement spot (n=4), associations with intercourse (n=19)	woman as sexual object, her character is not important (n=3), erotic (n=50), advertisement directed to men with primitive instincts predominance (n=2)
Commercial spot description: Elizabeth Arden „Red Door” perfume - black dressed blond woman with red painted nails laying on white sofa with elevated legs. Next to her is an suggestive inscription alluded to perfume's name "Open it"	
sexual attractiveness (n=32), pornography (n=14)	perfumes like aphrodisiac – advertisement is effective (n=35), sexism (n=6), woman ready for having sex without strings (n=10), sexuality exposed excessively can cause, that young audience will treat sexual contacts with strangers as natural (n=4)
Commercial spot description: "Żywiec" beer - young, attractive woman flirting with man. Her sexual liberation and impairment of moral restrains were attained after beer consumption.	
unpleasant truth about drinking teenagers (n=1), after beer drinking people became more courage and have success with opposite sex (n=6), it is only beer	young people drink alcohol to be summon up their courage (n=12), accidental sexual intercourses (n=6), alcohol facilitates seduction (n=5), beer can be really dangerous (n=3), alcohol

advertisement (n=39)

justifies any action (n=11), bad education by advertisement: alcohol gives freedom, happiness, sexual contacts, but this is rubbish (n=6), after alcohol women are ready for having sex, and do not think about consequences – the most important is feeling a prickle of excitement (n=12)

Most of respondents consider that advertisement clips are saturated with eroticism, corporality, lack sexual inhibitions. In respondents opinions advertisement spots transmitted on TV, or advertising in billboards being universally and easily available can have a negative influence on young generation development. Mass-media shape false view of human body, sexual behavior and confirm pupils in belief that the most important in their life is only care of appearance, and fulfill sexual needs. Respondents often emphasized that female and male models appearing in advertising have stirred up envy of audience bodies, arose complexes and dissatisfaction with their sexuality.

To sum up – results of our research allow to state that within the space of the last fifty years many new propositions of teaching programs reforms, both for primary and secondary schools appeared. Each consecutive reform of teaching programs led to expand range of the teaching material: from reproduction and prenatal development to sex drive, sexual deviations, effects of unplanned pregnancy, methods of family planning, and prevention HIV infection (Doboszyńska, 1966; Instytut Programów Szkolnych, 1976; Instytut Programów Szkolnych, 1984; Cichy, 1997). Problems with human reproduction and development teaching in primary schools were reported by Piotrowicz (1982).

DISCUSSION

Femininity and masculinity is creation came into existence as a result of collision of nature and culture (Melosik, 2010; Gałaś, 2001). Biological rules are often disturbed by cultural activity impact. Advertisement spots often are addressed to lowest instincts, such as desire, sexuality, corporality, to erotic associations. Contemporary advertising creates notions about the role, and appearance of women. Woman must be beautiful, with ideal body, always young, and always successful. Such a femininity view is strengthened in social awareness like only one true, and contemporary woman aspires to reach it, paying no heed to the consequences (Jeziński, 2009).

Medial information can be dangerous to molding sexuality of young people particularly. Medial pictures persuade into abandon moral rules, emphasize erotic behavior, make use of ambiguous comments, treat body like an object (Kurzępa, 2007). Modern society is functioning in so called „instant culture”. One of their features is rule “fast sex” – immediate sexual satisfaction, with no obligations, and emotional commitment what can bring HIV in consequence AIDS and death (Melosik, 1996, 2010). In this context we can also indicate the possibly positive advertisement function. It can help in young people education and critical thinking (Mitasa, 2003). In present time, media and advertisement have an enormous influence on young generation education. School cannot stay on the sidelines, although there is the question: does school have any influence on processes and phenomena generated by advertisement? Research results allow to undertake activities against the negative influence of mass-media to young people.

CONCLUSION

It is worth noting, that in the past issues concerning sexual contacts were automatically associated with hazards. There was not brought to pupils attention, that despite sexual intercourse needn't to attain to health risk. It seems that sexual education at school is essential, because this subject is part of human biology, and should be taken into consideration in programs for learning biology, under the same rules as anatomy and physiology.

Orientation of most sexual education teaching programs' authors based on belief that the most important is convincing the young people that becoming sexually active should be deliberate choice. Such the opinions were very popular mainly in 90s of past century. Today we can observe distinct changes both in subject matter and approach to the education. These tendencies seems to be very positive. But now – most of the published materials concern AIDS, maturation and genetic research. A thorough correction of the education programs, taking into consideration teenagers needs, pace of the social changes and culture development have to be implemented.

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