



Research Report **ERIK*A**

Sex education can lead to a healthy and respectful understanding of sexuality and thus make an important contribution to individual and societal development. However, sex education in Bavarian schools rarely meets these requirements. Team ERIK*A attempted to give a status report of current sex education at Bavarian schools and to find out how holistic sex education should actually be designed to meet the demands of experts, teachers and students.

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Preface by the Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Doris Holzberger

Let's talk about sex! But how? Sex Education (SexEd) touches many important societal topics, such as health, the prevention of violence, equality and diversity. The ERIK*A project put Bavarian Sex Education to the test and entered a research field which has been underexplored, so far.

Sex Education is an integral part of general education in Bavaria. But does it meet the requirements of today's students? Do Bavarian schools provide young people with the necessary holistic approach regarding sex and all its related aspects? Looking at SexEd in Bavaria the ERIK*A Team discovered a more conservative approach than recommended in other German guidelines, particularly concerning gender identity and non-heteronormative lifestyles. Though Bavaria's official guidelines do advocate comprehensive, interdisciplinary SexEd – including biological aspects, gender roles and identity as well as communication and social circumstances – this is not adequately reflected in actual teaching practice. In addition, SexEd classes seem to rely a lot on the individual teachers as they select content according to their personal interests and knowledge rather than being specifically trained in SexEd. But what are the reasons for this disparity?

The ERIK*A project identified several factors which are crucial for a holistic SexEd in Bavaria that meets the needs of young people. They demonstrate that time, safe spaces, teacher expertise and the

curriculum itself are important elements for the success of SexEd within schools. However, that external conditions also come into play, such as parents, non-school educational influences, or societal taboos.

As SexEd covers more than just biology, ERIK*A shows how including relationships, gender identities, and emotions is crucial to providing young people with support, especially if students lack it at home. They also spotlight the fact that sexuality remains a societal taboo even in our modern society, causing insecurity and ignorance, particularly among girls, and complicating its discussion in schools. The students of the ERIK*A project hence call for a diverse and open approach to SexEd that respects varied human identities. To achieve effective SexEd they suggest providing more resources and suitable learning environments, and improving teacher training. ERIK*A's approach relies on the participation of students in the curriculum through their questions and interests, and suggests that creating an open, question-friendly atmosphere is important. Their goal is to foster sexually self-determined individuals who respect boundaries.

The students from ERIK*A were highly motivated and offer a new perspective on the topic of SexEd which is very important as children are increasingly confronted with sexualized topics at a younger age via social media. I was happy to support the project.



Supervisor Insights

What is your research interest or motivation for science?

I've always been drawn to science because it creates knowledge that can be practically applied. It has been important to me not to be a researcher apart from practical implications, but to engage with individuals in educational practice. I want to contribute to bringing innovative educational concepts to German schools.

What was your best TUMJA moment?

My best TUMJA moment was when we sat together as a team and collaboratively discussed the project's goals and all the elements involved. The ERIK*A members were very motivated and full of exciting ideas. Each member contributed their insights and perspectives. It was inspiring to see a well-developed plan evolve.

How did your work as a supervisor influence you individually?

I particularly enjoyed working with this highly engaged, motivated, and interdisciplinary group, as it allowed me to foster their understanding of empirical research. It was incredibly rewarding to see their growth and enthusiasm as they delved into complex topics. Additionally, I found it exciting to adapt specific methodologies to a research area that is related to, but not the core of, my current research. This process not only broadened my own expertise but also brought fresh perspectives to the project, making the work both challenging and enjoyable. ■

The age of Enlightenment?

A plea for holistic sex education in Bavarian schools

"Hush, please!," calls out the teacher at a commercial college in Munich. It's Wednesday afternoon, two days before the start of the Pentecost holidays, and not only is the room temperature running high, but so are the emotions. From everywhere, we hear giggles and whispers. A variety of emotions are reflected on faces: amusement, curiosity, discomfort, shame. The teacher tries more energetically to make herself heard and to bring the excited atmosphere in the classroom under control. She looks exhausted. In her hand, she holds a wooden penis, with which she now taps irritably on the table. "Quiet!"

In the double period of "People and the Environment," the 8th-grade students today have "Sex Education" instead of physics, chemistry, or biology. Originally, there were supposed to be two topics: STDs, which stands for sexually transmitted diseases, and contraception. It's a tight schedule, but more time is not allocated for sex education topics in the final year at this school. The excitement in the class stems from a student's question about abortion, but the teacher doesn't want to discuss it today. Instead, they continue with the application of condoms.

After the lesson, she tells us she doesn't have the necessary personal distance from the topic of abortion. "For me, it's an ethical-moral question and therefore an opinion. And my opinion is not wanted in class. I think the curriculum even prohibits that for us teachers. I wouldn't be objective on the topic of abortion. I simply don't know enough about it, and, in the end, I might even breach the legal framework."

"In class, my opinion is not wanted. I believe the curriculum prohibits that for us teachers."

Considering the extensive curriculum for sex education in Bavarian schools, this teacher's uncertainties seem not to be isolated, as a study by interdisciplinary scientists from the Technical University of Munich now shows. Through in-depth analysis and interviews with students, teachers, scientists, therapists, and ministry officials, the "ERIK*A Study" identified significant obstacles in the theory-practice transfer. According to the curriculum, students from the first to the final grade should learn about their relationship with themselves, others, and society, about their bodies and health, media and pornography, consent, and cis- and heteronormativity. But also, law and religion are on the agenda in the "Guidelines for Family and Sexual Education in Bavarian Schools" issued by the Bavarian State Ministry of Education and Culture, Science, and the Arts. In terms of content, the diverse topics of the curriculum in this field, for which early and comprehensive education is also advocated by the WHO, could probably fill an entire school subject program on their own. However, "Sex Education" is mostly located within the natural sciences subjects, such as biology classes, or subjects like nature and technology. The planning of the teaching units and the timeframe are the responsibility of individual schools and subject teachers. The practical implementation of the guidelines is thus automatically limited since teachers usually rely on their interests and abilities when selecting content and teaching methods instead of relying on thorough training and further education. And even if educational professionals attach great importance to sexual education,

implementation fails due to time constraints, as not everything can be adequately addressed. This gap between theory and practice means that despite positive developments, school-based sex education still does not meet the needs of students. The result: young adults who are not adequately, or not at all, informed about sexuality — a situation that can have far-reaching consequences, as a sex therapist is quoted as saying in the study: "A major issue is sexuality itself. Who am I, what do I like, what do I need, where are my boundaries? How do I talk about it with a partner, with friends? Because sexuality is still a highly tabooed topic, it's not socially acceptable. One's own body, sexual desires, orgasms are sometimes even associated with shame. Unfortunately, many young people come to my practice who have experienced negative things and sexualized violence and who have not dared to talk about it. Only when pathologies appear, especially depression, do some, and certainly not all, find their way to our practices."

"Who am I, what do I like, what do I need, where are my boundaries? Sexuality is still a highly tabooed topic, it's not socially acceptable. One's own body, sexual desires, orgasms are sometimes even associated with shame."

Comprehensive and early education could provide a remedy by destigmatizing, empowering, and encouraging, says the expert. The curriculum provides a good theoretical foundation for this, but practice shows that the curriculum is more of an ideal, the implementation of which has not worked so far. To overcome this gap, the study proposes a concrete solution: the successful practical

implementation of the curriculum in Bavarian schools depends to a large extent on the availability of two resources. On the one hand, it requires trained and sensitized staff, and on the other hand, it requires significantly more time to address the diverse and demanding topics of the curriculum. Also, it requires the ability of teachers to create a suitable learning environment, a safe space for both sides where topics can be discussed with the necessary seriousness and without shame. The applied teaching itself should then be continuously evaluated and adapted to the needs and interests of the students so that the school becomes the urgently needed point of contact for children and adolescents, especially if the parental home does not provide sufficient support.

The students of the 8th grade of the Munich commercial college can confirm this research result. "I don't want to feel intimidated or uncertain about asking a question without being looked at strangely or laughed at. And I wish the teacher simply knew what she's talking about so she can convey the information well." At the end of the fourth hour, we leave a classroom full of exhausted people, with dissatisfaction on both sides. Sex education in Bavarian schools fails to live up to the good intentions of the curriculum. In order to meet the high demands of the curriculum and also the societal responsibility that the school carries as a public institution, the lived practice of sexual education must be fundamentally rethought. A massive step that can hopefully be set in motion now through the insights of the "ERIK*A Study." ■

Research Report – ERIK*A

Qualitative Analysis of Success Conditions and Hurdles in Bavarian Sex Education

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Abstract

Building lasting habits takes on average 66 days until they become iHolistic sex education (SexEd) plays a crucial role in addressing the physical, emotional, and interpersonal dimensions of sexuality and relationships. While the World Health Organization (WHO) advocates for early, comprehensive SexEd, it often falls short in meeting the legitimate demands of children and adolescents amidst their personal growth, particularly within the predominantly conservative approach adopted by the Bavarian education system.

This report presents a comprehensive investigation into the theory-practice transfer of SexEd in Bavarian schools, exploring the conditions driving success and the hurdles in implementing guidelines from the Ministry of Education into teaching practice in schools.

Adopting the reflexive grounded theory methodology, guided interviews with diverse stakeholders were conducted to gather different perspectives on the topic based on personal experiences. Collected observations and dialogues were evaluated and systematically categorized according to their content and relationships. Interactive workshops conducted with associated students served as field observations as a way of understanding their viewpoints on current SexEd provision. Axial, selective, and iterative coding of all collected data governed the categorization of key themes addressing success and hurdles in current practices. Methodological reflexivity was maintained throughout the research process to acknowledge and mitigate researcher biases.

Findings reveal both opportunities and risks for meaningful SexEd theory-practice transfer, encompassing various dimensions. Despite limitations in data comprehensiveness due to practical constraints, the study provides valuable insights into the multifaceted landscape of SexEd in Bavarian schools. There is a consensus among experts on the importance of holistic SexEd that reflects contemporary issues and responds to changing social values, highlighting the implication that diversity, openness, and attentiveness are crucial in SexEd delivery.

1. Background

1.1 Holistic Sex Education and the Importance of its Implementation in Schools

The profound social changes of the 21st century, characterized by shifts in cultural norms and evolving attitudes toward diversity and gender equality, highlight the increasing demand for holistic sex education (SexEd) as an integral aspect of personal and social development.

SexEd can be understood as "the self-development of a person's sexual identity that goes beyond preventive competences and is supported by learning-promoting impulses with the aim of their individually satisfying and socially acceptable development at all levels of personality and at all ages" (Sielert, 2015, p. 12).

The World Health Organization's Regional Office for Europe (WHO), in collaboration with the German Federal Centre for Health Education (Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung, BZgA), advocates for early, holistic SexEd from birth (WHO & BZgA, 2011). According to them, holistic SexEd "encompasses not only physical, emotional, and interpersonal aspects of sexuality and sexual contact, but also a range of other aspects such as friendship or feelings of safety, security, and attraction" (p. 13). Holistic SexEd thus transcends biological, anatomical, and disease-related aspects, challenging socially widespread notions of fertilization and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) as the sole foundations of sexuality. Definitions of BZgA and WHO underline the importance of sexuality for personal identity and its significant interpersonal dimension.

The need for early and holistic SexEd is reflected in the development and interests of children and adolescents. At the age of two to three, children already recognize socially ascribed physical and behavioral differences between men and women while they begin to discover their own bodies at the same time (Berenbaum et al., 2008). Upon entering school, the WHO & BZgA (2011) assumed that children realize the prevalent taboo surrounding sexuality and associated body parts yet lack the knowledge to classify it appro-

priately. As they transition to secondary school, the onset of puberty emerges as a significant focus, initiating the development and consolidation of the children's identities (Habermas & de Silveira, 2008; McEwen, 2003). The perception of one's own body and its boundaries as well as those of others, along with the processing of emotions are crucial aspects for children long before their first actual sexual experiences (WHO & BZgA, 2011). Hence, early SexEd is essential so that they are not left alone to deal with the development of these aspects.

Similar to their physical development, the interests of children and adolescents evolve in relation to their SexEd. While 13-year-olds remain eager to learn about changes during puberty, older adolescents from the age of 15 are more interested in STIs and contraception (Gilbert et al., 2005). At the same time, topics such as sexual identity and orientation as well as answers about relationships or prevention prove to be consistently interesting, regardless of the age of the adolescents (McCarthy et al., 2012).

Children and adolescents seek answers to their questions from various sources. In addition to peers, parents, siblings and school, the media play a particularly important role in this regard. In their review, Simon and Daneback (2013) report that up to 77 % of the surveyed adolescents use the internet to inquire about SexEd-related topics. With the emergence of new social media platforms such as TikTok, this percentage is expected to have risen since 2013. Particularly for adolescents from families that strongly taboo sexuality and queer young individuals, online searches provide a safe space where they can find answers to questions they are unable to ask their parents or teachers (DeHaan et al., 2012; Holstrom, 2015).

However, the quality of information available on the internet is mixed. Many sites reproduce myths and sexist or discriminatory prejudices, or simply provide false information (Buhi, 2010; Döring, 2015; Yen, 2010). As educational institutions, schools therefore play an important role in providing a holistic SexEd to counteract this misinformation and serve as a trusted source of accurate information and scientific knowledge.

1.2 SexEd in Germany

In Germany, SexEd is mandated by legislation and is considered an integral part of general education. While in the 1970s SexEd was still seen as a transfer of knowledge, the depth and communication of which could be hindered to some extent by parents, in the 1990s it was stipulated by law that SexEd must go beyond the transfer of knowledge of physical and biological processes and cover social and emotional areas (Sielert, 2011). At present, SexEd is integrated into general education through the enforcement of BZgA, in cooperation with the authorities of the federal states, supported by German family counselling institutions (e.g., pro familia) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The development of curricula is guided by the Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe (WHO & BZgA, 2011) and is designed to be age-appropriate, with defined content for the first to thirteenth grades.

While the national curriculum provides a general framework for SexEd, each federal state has the autonomy to customize the federal curriculum (BZgA, 2018). Individual federal curricula vary in the duration and delivery of teaching, including integration into other subjects such as biology, religious education, social sciences, ethics, or as a stand-alone subject. Consequently, the coverage and depth of discussion on each topic vary among federal states and also among individual schools. For example, Weber (2023) found in her comparison between the curricula of Bavaria and North Rhine-Westphalia that the Bavarian guidelines are significantly more conservative regarding sexual diversity for example. According to the results of the “Youth Sexuality” representative repeat survey conducted by BZgA since 1980, the exposure to sexuality education lessons at school was 96% in the eastern states and 86% in the western states, as reported by adolescent respondents (Scharmanski & Hessling, 2022, p. 25). Additionally, the training of educators differs between federal states (BZgA, 2018). Teaching guidelines and mandatory educational materials are established by the Ministries of Education, while supplementary materials from BZgA, NGOs, and pro familia are also integrated.

Beyond the school setting, initiatives like NGOs aim to reach underserved youths at risk, employing various approaches such as multilingual information materials in diverse visualization formats along with professional training for youth workers (BZgA, 2018).

1.3 SexEd in Bavaria

The guidelines for family education and SexEd in Bavarian schools (Bavarian State Ministry of Education and Culture, Science and the Arts, 2016), which specify the content and teaching framework for SexEd in Bavarian schools, advocate comprehensive, interdisciplinary SexEd in the interests of a holistic approach. The aim here is to support "cognitive, social and communicative skills for dealing with sexuality as well as for partnerships and family life" (Bavarian State Ministry of Education and Culture, Science and the Arts, 2016, p. 3). The content is based on core topics such as human biology, gender roles and gender identity, self-concept and society, or the development of social and personal skills (State Institute for School Quality and Educational Research Munich, 2019, p. 18). In line with the demands of holistic SexEd, these subject areas go beyond anatomy and fertilization and emphasize the importance of sexuality as part of identity and interpersonal coexistence.

Nevertheless, these holistic guidelines do not appear to be taught to an adequate extent in everyday school life. National studies (Matthiesen et al., 2022) report that, despite positive developments, school-based SexEd still does not meet the needs of students. There are multiple reasons why (see Klein & Schweitzer, 2018 for an overview). For example, recent studies by the BZgA (Scharmanski & Mirza, 2023) show that although educational professionals attribute immense importance to SexEd, it is not addressed to a sufficient extent due to time constraints. Cooperation with parents can also hinder the appropriate implementation of holistic SexEd. Thus, the BZgA's findings indicate a mismatch between intended and implemented SexEd across Germany.

Looking specifically at the Bavarian guidelines and their practical implementation in Bavarian schools, two major things can be observed. On the one hand, the holistic approach in the Bavarian guidelines is handled more conservatively with an additional layer of organization (“Beauftragten für Familien und Sexualerziehung an der Schule”) than in other German guidelines, particularly concerning gender identity and lifestyles outside of heteronormativity (Weber, 2023). On the other hand, the practical implementation of the guidelines is limited, as teachers are usually reliant on their interests and skills when selecting content and teaching, rather than being prepared through in-depth training and further education (Hoffmann, 2016).

Although the Bavarian guidelines for SexEd do not fully meet the requirements of holistic SexEd, this more limited, conservative curriculum does not appear to be fully implemented in schools. Due to a lack of research on this discrepancy, in the attempt to investigate the gap between theory and practice, the following two-pronged research question was posed: What are the conditions for success and what are the hurdles in the theory-practice transfer of SexEd in Bavarian schools?

The research question was analyzed on two levels. Firstly, the Bavarian curriculum was analyzed, and the content was assigned to categories. Finally, a broad pool of experts from medical, scientific, therapeutic, and educational fields, as well as students and teachers, were asked about their assessments of the curriculum, their experiences, and their needs using semi-standardized interviews.

2. Methodological Approach to Analyzing the Theory-Practice Transfer in Bavarian SexEd-Lessons

2.1 Sample and Data

The sample consisted of two teachers, two students (both aged 15, one from a high school and one from a vocational school), one person from the State Institute for School Quality and Educational Research Munich, two scientists, two sex therapists, and one person who conducted SexEd workshops at schools as an external expert (see also. 2.4.1 Access to the research field and 5. Prospects for further research). All interviewees gave their written consent to the interview and processing of their data.

The interviews were conducted in person or virtually via the platform Zoom and recorded using a recording device or Zoom's recording function. All interviews were transcribed according to the semantic-content transcription system of Dresing and Pehl (2018, 20pp.). The transcripts were created manually in the transcription program f4 (v8; Dr. Dresing & Pehl GmbH, 2021). Semantic-content transcription rules were chosen to develop a "feeling" (Breuer, 2010, p. 68), i.e., predicting first directions and findings for the subsequent theory development. These rules ensured that the texts remained legible during the data analysis and that pauses or interruptions were also transcribed. Passages from the interviews are repeatedly quoted in this work. These have been adapted by the authors (without distorting the content) so that they fit into the flow of the text and do not impair readability (cf. Kowal & O'Connell, 2022).

All transcripts were pseudonymized (German Data Forum, 2020). To this end, each transcript received a code (e.g., s013), so that no conclusions can be drawn about the interviewees from the information in the references. A text reference looks as follows: (s010, pos. 35). Readers cannot recognize from the references which document the references come from, but only where they can be found in the text.

2.2 Methods and Analysis

2.2.1 Curriculum Analysis

In order to present the current status of theoretical SexEd in Bavarian schools and, in a second step, to work out possible advantages and disadvantages of the curriculum through selected experts, the official guidelines for family and SexEd in Bavarian schools (Bavarian State Ministry of Education and Culture, Science, and the Arts, 2016) were analyzed and divided into categories.

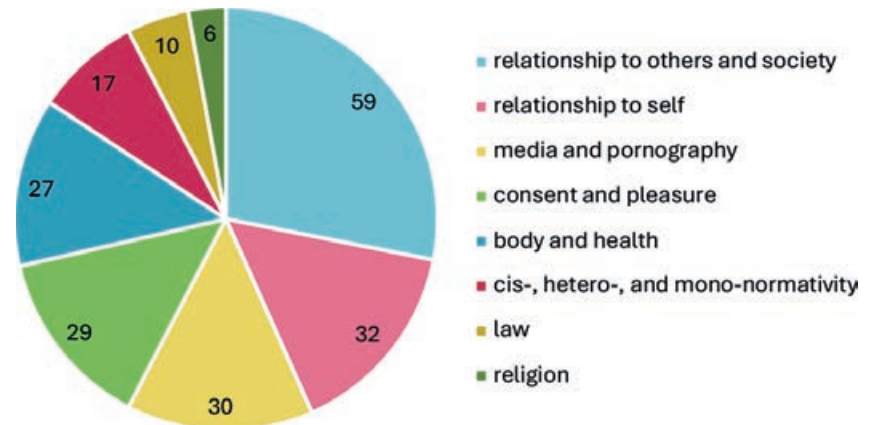
The categories, their descriptive statistics and the associated inter-rater reliability variables are shown in Table 1. The categories were formed inductively, i.e. categories were not defined in advance but emerged from the process (cf. Mayring, 2012). The categories were created by a first coder and the curriculum was then coded along these categories by the first coder and two other coders. In a first run, this resulted in 18 categories with the following foci: cis-normative, health, anatomic, biology, orgasm-gap, anti-abortion, monogamy, society and ethics, queer, sexual harassment, individual, relationship, pleasure, religion, equality, law, media, and consent. These categories were then further summarized, resulting in eight final categories: Relationship to others and society; relationship to self; media and pornography; consent and pleasure; body and health; religion; law; and cis-, hetero-, and mono-normativity (see Fig. 1).

2.2.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

In order to answer the research question appropriately, we applied the method of reflexive grounded theory. We deliberately opted for interviews as the main method, using both guided interviews and an interactive workshop with interested students for data collection. This scientific-methodological selection, supported by Breuer (2010, p. 58), enabled us to delve deep into the topic and ensure the necessary theory-practice transfer. The process follows an iterative structure: Collected observations and interviews were evaluated, then systematically categorized. The grounded theory methodolo-

Figure 1: Categorization of the Bavarian Curriculum

A content point of the curriculum (e.g., “students name, gender characteristics of boys and girls”, Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Bildung und Kultus, Wissenschaft und Kunst, p. 8) could take on several characteristics, i.e. several categories could be coded for one content point. The agreement of the coders fluctuated across all categories between small and excellent values ($\kappa = .39 - .96$). Overall, there was a moderate coder agreement of $\kappa = .68$.



Category	Subcategories	M(SD)	κ		
			Coders 1 & 2	Coders 1 & 3	Coders 2 & 3
			κ (SD) 95 % CI [LL-UL]		
Body and health	- health				
	- anatomic	.18(.38)	.820(.61) [.70-.94]	.81 (.06) [.68-.93]	.83 (.06) [.72-.95]
	- biology				
Relationship to others and society	- relationship				
	- society and ethics	.35(.48)	.59 (.07) [.46-.72]	.76 (.06) [.64-.87]	.72 (.06) [.61-.83]
Relationship to self	- individual	.20(.40)	.60 (.08) [.44-.75]	.64 (.08) [.48-.80]	.72 (.07) [.59-.86]
Consent and pleasure	- consent				
	- pleasure	.21(.41)	.60 (.08) [.45-.75]	.71 (.07) [.57-.84]	.69 (.08) [.54-.84]
	- sexual harassment				
Religion	- religion				
	- anti-abortion	.04(.20)	.51 (.17) [.08-.73]	.49 (.22) [.05-.92]	.56 (.16) [.24-.87]
Law	- law	.06(.25)	.57 (.14) [.31-.84]	.83 (.10) [.65-.99]	.72 (.12) [.49-.95]
Cis-, hetero- and mono-normativity	- cis-normative				
	- orgasm-gap				
	- monogamy	.04(.18)	.55 (.16) [.23-.87]	.49 (.22) [.07-.91]	.39 (.19) [.01-.77]
	- queer				
	- equality				
Media and pornography	- media	.20(.40)	.94 (.04) [.86-.99]	.94 (.04) [.86-.99]	.96 (.03) [.90-.99]

Table 1: Categories of the Bavarian Curriculum, Descriptive Statistics, and Cohen's κ

gy (GTM) requires an open and adaptable attitude to react flexibly to new findings during data collection (Charmaz 2006, p. 178).

The guided interviews enabled us to enter into dialogues with experts from different fields and to understand different perspectives on the topic. The guidelines, with questions focused on our research interests, served as an orientation, whereby the focus was on the personal stories and experiences of the interviewees. This open and flexible approach allowed us to deviate from the pre-

pared questions and emphasized our methodological approach of meeting all interviewees with as little bias as possible. After each interview, the key questions of the superordinate categories were supplemented, reformulated or deleted based on the results. This process allowed us to ensure the quality of our data. Based on our methodological approach (Grounded Theory Method) we created our own questionnaire. It contained various sets of questions based on our initial research (s. Tab. 2) and made an important contribution to the further acquisition of knowledge.

Nr.	Topic	Explanation
1	Personal connection & education and training	We wanted to get to know the interviewees on a more personal level and find out how they came to the topic of SexEd. This set of questions explains why this person was selected for an interview. Example: – Can you briefly introduce yourself and your area of work? – To what extent were you familiarized with the topic during your training?
2	Status Quo Curriculum	With this set of questions, we want to find out about the current content of the curriculum. In particular, what the respondents think is missing, important or over-emphasized in the guidelines. Example: – What are important topics in the curriculum? – What do students use outside the curriculum for their education?
3	Implementation of SexEd lessons	The focus here is on everyday teaching practice in Bavarian schools and how this ministerial directive is applied in the classroom. How important is this topic in schools in general or in the teaching staff? Example: – How is the topic of SexEd generally placed in schools? – How are these topics taught
4	Hurdles in the implementation of SexEd lessons	In contrast to the previous block of questions, this one is intended to illustrate the difficulties with the topic in lessons or at schools in general Example: – Why does the implementation of the curriculum not work? – 'Is there a topic that you feel uncomfortable or unsure about addressing in class?
5	The personal vision	In the last block of questions, respondents are asked to describe their dream vision for the future of successful SexEd. As the vision and reality may still differ. Example: – What does the perfect SexEd look like in the future?

Table 2: Questions of the Semi-Structured Interview

2.2.3 Workshop on SexEd

The workshop that took place during the weekend seminar served as field observation, as field notes were taken and a research protocol maintained, which played a role in the classification of the

data. Additionally, the workshop highlighted how the most important target group - the students - currently perceive SexEd lessons and what changes they wish for. For the structure of the workshop, please refer to Table 3.

Nr.	Topic	Explanation
1	Introduce ERIK*A	As part of our engagement with TUMJA, we advocate for a renewal initiative focusing on contemporary SexEd, titled "sex education goes to school". We believe that the current SexEd curriculum may not adequately meet modern needs, despite its longstanding stability. Recognizing significant gaps within this stable framework, we aim to explore the reasons behind the stagnation in SexEd's development. To delve into this anomaly, we actively seek input from students, valuing their unique experiences and perspectives for effective teaching. In our discussions, confidentiality is paramount to foster open and genuine dialogue. We ensure participants' privacy by obtaining consent before any photographic documentation, omitting faces. Our goal is to cultivate a safe environment that encourages the free exchange of ideas and concerns.
2	Get-to-know-each-other	The participants are asked to answer the following questions in a short introductory round: Who am I? How am I doing today? One sentence, what have you already taken away from this weekend?
3	Curriculum analysis	In our research, we focused on four key areas of Bavarian SexEd: human biology; gender roles and identity; self-concept and social integration; and personal and social skills. These topics guide our approach. We segmented the content and distributed it among participants. Participants work in small groups to categorize and explain the content according to class levels. This method ensures thorough understanding and seamless integration into the curriculum.
4	Mutual exchange	After verifying the accuracy of class assignments, participants form groups of four, with each member responsible for a specific topic block. This structured approach fosters interdisciplinary exchange and in-depth discussion. During discussions, participants address specific questions: what aspects surprised or puzzled them, and whether they can relate the content to the existing curriculum. This structured reflection aids in understanding individual perspectives and evaluating the effectiveness of the teaching concept, identifying areas for improvement.
5	Experience exchange	In our research, we're collecting narratives from students about their experiences in SexEd classes. We specifically aim to gather their best, funniest, and worst anecdotes from school. This qualitative survey seeks to understand students' perspectives on SexEd lessons more deeply.
6	Collection of topics	Students independently select topics they believe are essential for an ideal SexEd class. These topics form the foundation for crafting a fictional curriculum that aligns with students' preferences and teaching methods. This participatory process ensures students' perspectives are fully integrated into the lesson planning, aiming to create a SexEd framework that meets their needs and expectations.
7	Poster Walk	In a participatory research initiative, students' chosen topics are transferred to flipcharts to visualize and structure the content systematically. Students then provide feedback on the posters, focusing on the requirements for including these topics in next year's SexEd lessons. Discussions cover aspects such as topic relevance, key questions, necessary conditions for implementation success, preferences for topic design, and required materials. This structured exploration provides practical insights into students' needs and expectations, aiding in identifying key factors for successful integration into SexEd lessons.

8	SexEd-Theatre	In our approach to creating a play centered on SexEd, we draw parallels with the diverse roles and responsibilities in theater. This comparison helps systematically identify the necessary roles for staging SexEd lessons. We carefully examine each role, focusing on assigned tasks and associated characteristics. We aim to determine relevant roles, individual participation opportunities they offer, and required character traits.
9	Fact sheets	Our research on advancing SexEd focuses on two key questions: renaming the subject and conceptualizing an ideal vision for its future development. Renaming SexEd requires careful consideration of its goals and content. We aim to create an innovative and inclusive term that encompasses both didactic and emotional aspects. Simultaneously, we outline a utopian vision for the future of SexEd, emphasizing progressive and inclusive teaching methods that reflect evolving social norms and needs. This vision includes gender-equitable content, participatory approaches, and extensive use of digital resources, serving as a model for optimal development within the evolving educational landscape.
10	Feedback	Everyone is allowed one sentence to say what they liked and what they took away from the workshop, and what they didn't like.
11	Interviews + email-list	We are still looking for interview partners for our qualitative data collection and are asking for the participants' emails so that we can contact them.

Table 3: Workshop Structure

2.3 The Process of Coding

The next step in data analysis and an essential component of the reflexive GTM is the coding of the collected data. In the reflexive GTM the researchers are in a constant interplay between their survey, the data and the coding (Strauss, 2004). Thus, this work step cannot be completed as a single work step. Initial coding findings affect the data collection through adapting the questionnaire or deepening a set of questions. The importance of the coding process and the development of essential categories has already been emphasized by Glaser and Strauss (1999, p. 23):

In the discovery of theory, conceptual categories or their properties are developed from evidence; then the evidence from which the category emerged is used to illustrate the concept. The evidence need not necessarily be unquestionably correct [...] but the concept is undoubtedly a relevant theoretical abstraction about what is going on in the domain under investigation. Moreover, the concept itself will not change, while even the most accurate facts will change. The meaning of concepts is only sometimes redefined because other theoretical and research purposes have evolved.

Many researchers who have followed this methodology have further developed the concept of the reflexive GTM; in their discussion of the reflexive GTM, they also emphasize coding as an es-

sential step in their interpretative procedure for theory formation and divide it into open, axial, and selective coding (Berg & Milmeister, 2011; Breuer, 2010; Muckel, 2011; Pflüger, 2013).

To ensure comprehensibility and contribute to the desired intersubjectivity, Table 4 provides a brief overview of the superordinate categories, flanked by further explanations that shed more light on the methodological approach.

2.4 Reflecting on the Research Process

Self-reflection is a crucial criterion in qualitative research (Unger, 2014). This reflection specifically pertains to methodological reflexivity, which involves the researcher's conscious attention to their own position and role in the process of knowledge acquisition (Breuer, 2010). This section serves for reflection on the scientific process, access to the research field, and our role as researchers.

2.4.1 Access to the Research Field

Team ERIK*A arrived at the research topic through shared experiences of inadequate SexEd during their own school time. This shared experience was the starting point for questioning how their own sexual development would have changed if SexEd in schools had not been one-dimensional and solely focused on biology. Regarding access to the research field, a personal bias of the researchers

Main category	Description	Total Number of Coded Segments
Success conditions for holistic SexEd	ERIK*A's main research interest was analyzing how to ensure a successful SexEd in schools. This involves analyzing the personal, emotional and material aspects that are necessary for a modern SexEd and can lead to a successful SexEd.	36
Hurdles for holistic SexEd	This code is partly complementary to the conditions for success and outlines the problems and hurdles for a good and successful SexEd.	73
Status Quo of Bavarian SexEd	This category was primarily concerned with taking stock of the current practice of SexEd and how it is dealt with in schools. This included the general framework conditions in which SexEd takes place. What content that can be found in the curriculum is taught and what is missing in the curriculum according to the interviewees? This stocktaking also included looking at the resources available for SexEd. These may be human (skills, training etc.), material (methods, materials, external outreach programmes etc.) or social (suitable age for SexEd or the history and development of SexEd).	306
Institutions involved in SexEd	SexEd is a specialist area within school education that is controlled and influenced by various institutions. Who is responsible for SexEd and what influence do these institutions currently have? This includes the schools themselves, but also political institutions such as ministries.	67
Individuals playing a key role in SexEd	Individuals or groups of people influence the organization and success of SexEd, primarily those within the school, such as teachers and students. However, peers, parents, external service providers and society also have an influence on SexEd outside the school context.	132
Visions for future holistic SexEd	In the interviews, the status quo also always indicated the possibility that there is still potential for improvement. This category summarizes all the codes that indicate a possible development of SexEd in the future.	56

Table 4: Description and Total Amount of Coded Categories

can be observed, as they had mostly insufficient experiences with school-based SexEd to varying degrees. Access was further motivated personally and driven by personal experiences, including from personal networks in families and acquaintances. Despite this subjective access to the research field, theoretical and empirical literature was consulted for deeper exploration of the topic and, naturally, for generating the research question. Although strong emphasis was placed on objectivity when reporting and interpreting the interview results, the personal bias of the researchers should be kept in mind.

It was particularly important for the project team to include a diverse field of experts in the study. Scientists, therapists, teachers, political institutions, NGO workers, and especially students were intended to be part of the survey. We believe that the sample is diverse in terms of gender representation, age, professions, and access to SexEd. However, due to restricted availabilities and a

structural lack of diversity that is reflected in homogeneous education and job placements, the goal of a sample that is also diverse in culture and religious backgrounds was not achieved. Further, as SexEd is a heavily socially charged issue, the majority of the interviewees had a very positive attitude towards comprehensive SexEd and were (professionally) engaged with sexuality and related topics, which is why the sample predominantly had an open, positive opinion towards the further development of SexEd.

2.4.2 The Research Process

To turn the idea into a proper research project within the framework of the TUMJA scholarship, the first phase of research was initiated to identify different dimensions of successful SexEd.

Following this, the question arose of how feasible it was to realistically implement and carry out the project with limited time

resources. The limitations of this work were based on the federal school system in Germany, access to personal networks, and experiences regarding SexEd in Bavarian schools. Making this important decision at the outset allowed for a clear project goal to be established, and the initial analysis phase was conducted using the Bavarian curriculum for SexEd. For this analysis, the official guidelines for family and SexEd in Bavarian schools were coded and evaluated (Bavarian State Ministry of Education and Culture, Science and the Arts, 2016). Surprisingly, the team found that these guidelines were extensive, contrary to the researchers' expectations.

Thus, the question arose about a gap that exists between the official teaching materials and the practiced curriculum. With this assumption in mind, various in-depth qualitative questions were developed in numerous workshops and eventually reduced to the most relevant ones.

It was particularly important to have clear task and role allocation within the team. For major decisions regarding the overall project, weekly meetings were held within the team, allowing for discussion. For more specific tasks such as contacting interviewees, conducting interviews, transcribing, coding the interviews, or even collectively writing individual chapters in the project report, small groups were formed based on availability and experience. This division of labor worked very well within the team and ultimately led to the successful completion of the project.

2.4.3 The Researchers' Roles

During the 20-month research process, the team engaged extensively with the topic of SexEd. One of the most important aspects was that the personal level of the team members played a crucial role in the success of the project. Mutual understanding and close collaboration motivated the team to passionately and diligently bring the project to a successful conclusion despite the challenges and time constraints.

Another key factor for the success of the research project was the personal interest and willingness of the members to engage with the topic scientifically. The project members brought their personal stories and experiences in the field of SexEd and developed a strong determination to present this topic more visibly and transparently in a scientific context.

Despite the awareness that this research can only make a small contribution to the current status quo of SexEd in Bavarian schools, it was important for everyone in the team to provide a stimulus for future improvement.

Furthermore, reflecting on their own role in the research field yielded interesting insights. Through self-reflection, team members were able to maintain their neutrality and objectivity, thus enhancing the credibility of the research findings. It would be interesting to further deepen this self-reflection and examine its impact on the research more closely.

3. Outcome of our Data Analysis

As methodological approaches are explained in depth in the previous section, the outcome of our data analysis will be presented in the following. The subsections are structured according to the categories presented in Table 2.

3.1 Curriculum

3.1.1 Development and Background

Since the establishment of SexEd in the school curriculum in 1969 (Researcher 2, pos. 30), social values and practices have changed considerably (ibid.). This calls for new guidelines and curricula (Researcher 2, pos. 32) that take greater account of topics such as sexual diversity (Researcher 2, pos. 32; Researcher 1, pos. 42) in order to do justice to current social developments and the need for more openness, sex positivity and tolerance (Researcher 1, pos. 42, 54; Researcher 2, pos. 24, 50). The State Institute for School Quality and Educational Research Munich (ISB) tries to meet these needs when compiling the curriculum by deploying a diverse team of experienced teachers for this task (Teacher 1, pos. 51).

3.1.2 Bavarian Curriculum

Looking at the Bavarian curriculum, there are a few suggestions for improvement and criticisms, according to our experts.

Currently, the implementation of the curriculum focuses on the biological aspects of sexuality, such as the anatomy of the sexual organs, the menstrual cycle, reproduction and embryonic development (Student 1, pos. 10; Student 2, pos. 12; Teacher 2, pos. 12; Teacher 3, pos. 24, 26), which may lead to the challenge of sexuality being equated exclusively with the biological function of reproduction (Researcher 1, pos. 18, 20, 52).

The inclusion of religion in SexEd is also criticized (Counsellor 1, pos. 18; Researcher 2, pos. 22) and religion should either be excluded (ibid., Counsellor 1, pos. 20) or critically scrutinized (Counsellor 1, pos. 20; Researcher 1, pos. 36). Instead, experts wish for an increased engagement with social science content, such as the ongoing hierarchization of heteronormativity and gender law (Researcher 1, pos. 32, 36, 38; Student 2, pos. 29) as well as more transparent and comprehensive teaching about gender, sexual diversity, and tolerance (Counsellor 1, pos. 6, 8, 18, 20; Researcher 2, pos. 22, 52).

Although the topics of gender identity and relationships with oneself are present in the curriculum (Counsellor 1, pos. 4), experts criticize a lack of content on self-discovery and self-esteem (Counsellor 1, pos. 4, 6; Researcher 2, pos. 56) and recognizing and demonstrating one's own needs and boundaries, including masturbation, consent, and sexual harassment (Counsellor 1, pos. 6, 18, 20; Counsellor 2, pos. 10, 20, 32, 34; Researcher 2, pos. 56; External Expert, pos. 101; Student 2, pos. 29).

Relationships with others are also an important topic that receives too little attention in the curriculum (Counsellor 1, pos. 6; Researcher 2, pos. 14, 24). This should include the different relationship styles and the connection between healthy or toxic relationships and mental health (Counsellor 1, pos. 6, 12, 14). Finally, love, desire and friendship in all interpersonal relationships should be addressed (Researcher 2, pos. 14, 24).

3.1.3 Implementation of the Curriculum in Bavarian Schools

Safe Space as a Framework Condition for Teaching

The experts consider it important to organize lessons empathetically, i.e. tailored to the needs of the students (Counsellor 2, pos. 24, 28; Student 1, pos. 18, 43, 56; Teacher 2, pos. 32). This particularly includes the creation of a so-called safe space, i.e. a confidential and protected environment in which students feel safe to share their thoughts, questions, and experiences without fear of judgement or condemnation (Researcher 1, pos. 54; External Expert, pos. 58, 70, 81).

Teachers in particular play a decisive role in creating these spaces. This requires an open attitude for teachers so that students feel safe to ask questions and discuss free of prejudice and judgement (Counsellor 2, pos. 12, 28; External Expert, pos. 81; Student 1,

pos. 37; Teacher 2, pos. 24). In order to enable such a safe space, SexEd should already be dealt with in depth during teacher training to provide them with the necessary skills (Counsellor 2, pos. 12; Researcher 2, pos. 50, 52, Teacher 2, pos. 16).

In addition, a good relationship with the students is important in order to deal with topics in a more in-depth and comprehensive manner (External Expert, pos. 66) and to create a safe space for this exchange (ibid.; Student 1, pos. 59; Counsellor 2, pos. 10, 32; External Expert, pos. 58). Suggestions for improvement included teaching in small groups (Teacher 2, pos. 50) and a school forum with permanent contact with persons outside the classroom (Counsellor 2, pos. 36).

Methods and Implementation

In general, the student experts are dissatisfied with the current structure of SexEd, stating that the sustainable teaching of content that is important for students is heavily dependent on the individual teachers responsible for it (Student 1, pos. 35; Student 2, pos. 29).

Some experts favor gender-segregated courses as a teaching method (External Expert, pos. 8; Teacher 3, pos. 32, 39; Researcher 1, pos. 54), as SexEd can be used to specifically address the different genders (External Expert, pos. 8) and offer students a safe space for their questions and concerns (Researcher 1, pos. 54; Teacher 3, pos. 39). In order to prevent the reproduction of a gender binary, lessons should be open and designed with options for students (Researcher 1, pos. 54).

To support teachers, the ISB provides handouts with information and teaching examples (Teacher 2, pos. 12, 34; Teacher 1, pos. 5). However, there is uncertainty among teachers which materials may be used for legal and ethical reasons (Teacher 3, pos. 8).

External Access

While students might seek information on SexEd from their parents (Counsellor 1, pos. 20; Teacher 3, pos. 18; Student 2, pos. 21) or friends and older siblings (External Expert, pos. 36; Student 1, pos. 24; Teacher 2, pos. 14), the internet and social media act as the main access point for sexual topics outside of school (Counsellor 2, pos. 10, 22, 32; Researcher 2, pos. 54; External Expert, pos. 36; Student 2, pos. 21; Teacher 2, pos. 14). Students should be supported during SexEd lessons in dealing with various media;

in particular, pornography should be addressed in an educational way (Counsellor 1, pos. 20; Counsellor 2; pos. 34)

Age/Grade Level

The decisive factor for competent SexEd is a process-orientated approach to teaching, adapted to the respective age of the students (Counsellor 2, pos. 10; Researcher 1, pos. 48). It should be avoided that students are made aware of various topics too early or too late and they ought to be informed comprehensively (Counsellor 1, pos. 10; Counsellor 2, pos. 10; External Expert, pos. 6; Student 2, pos. 44; Teacher 3, pos. 26, 28, 30, 39). A start in kindergarten, at the latest during primary school, would be best (Counsellor 2, pos. 10).

People and Institutions Involved

SexEd plays an important role both institutionally and personally. The school as an educational institution (Counsellor 2, pos. 10) and place of identity formation (ibid., pos. 36, 40; Researcher 2, pos. 50; Student 2, pos. 53) plays a special role - however, SexEd does not play an equally important role in the school (Teacher 3, pos. 24). Although there is cooperation between school boards and students at some schools, for example when students want to push through their demands for more SexEd (Teacher 1, pos. 9) or free hygiene products in toilets (Teacher 1, pos. 87), the topic of SexEd is still stigmatized at other schools (Counsellor 1, pos. 24).

The experts place particular responsibility on the teachers. In order to realize sustainable SexEd, they must show openness, commitment and initiative (Counsellor 1, pos. 24; Counsellor 2, pos. 24, 34; Researcher 1, pos. 46, 48; Researcher 2, pos. 50; External Expert, pos. 62; Student 1, pos. 18). The competence and interest of the teacher strongly influence the framework conditions, trust and well-being of the students: "I think [no teacher] somehow tried to convey this seriousness [of the topic] in a comprehensible way." (Student 1, pos. 47). Some experts, including teachers, therefore also doubt whether teachers are even suitable to teach SexEd due to their relationship with the students and the associated lack of anonymity (Counsellor 1, pos. 16), their own shame (Counsellor 2, pos. 12), excessive demands (Teacher 2, pos. 40), or insecurities when teaching difficult topics (Teacher 2, pos. 10). Instead, schools should rely on external specialists such as licensed sex therapists or social workers (Counsellor 1, pos. 16, 18, 24; Counsellor 2, pos. 34; Researcher 1, pos. 46, 54; Researcher 2, pos. 32; External Ex-

pert, pos. 2, 4, 50; Student 1, pos. 30, Teacher 3, Pos. 39; Teacher 2, Pos. 50). It would provide "a safe space if you have other people there than the person who always grades" (Researcher 1, pos. 54, 56) and enables unbiased exchange with and between the students (Counsellor 1, pos. 16). Collaboration would not only make it easier for less trained teachers (Teacher 2, pos. 22; Teacher 3, pos. 39) but is also demanded in part by the students (Teacher 1, pos. 87).

However, teachers are not solely responsible for teaching SexEd. According to the Basic Constitutional Law, the right to educate is shared between schools and parents (Teacher 1, pos. 49). Some experts believe that such cooperation is essential (Counsellor 2, pos. 20; Teacher 2, pos. 50) and all experts agree that parents act as models that can either stigmatize SexEd (Counsellor 1, pos. 18, 20, 24), for example through religious beliefs (Counsellor 1, pos. 20; Teacher 1, pos. 49; Teacher 2, pos. 12; Teacher 3, pos. 37), fears (Researcher 1, pos. 48) or fear of losing control (Researcher 2, pos. 72), or can contribute to a dissolution of the taboo (Counsellor 2, pos. 32; External Expert, pos. 34; Student 1, pos. 20, 28; Student 2, pos. 21, 23). Accordingly, some experts report that students are increasingly being informed by their parents (Counsellor 2, pos. 10; External Expert, pos. 34; Student 2, pos. 21; Teacher 2, pos. 12), albeit to varying degrees: "Almost half [...] talk very, very, very, very openly [...] with their parents about it, but I think that a lot of them have simply never heard anything like that" (Teacher 3, pos. 18). Such varying degrees of SexEd are not only due to the divergent attitudes of parents towards SexEd but also to the individual development of the students (Counsellor 1, pos. 10; Researcher 1, pos. 48). The experts emphasize sexuality as a part of students' identity (Researcher 2, pos. 24, 30, 54, 56), which is also reflected in the great interest and "surprisingly well-founded questions" (Teacher 2, pos. 24) of the students.

Both inside and outside of school, students would discuss and experience SexEd with their peers (Counsellor 2, pos. 18; Teacher 2, pos. 14). However, this experience can also be negative and people are bullied for topics such as menstruation or their sexuality (Student 2, pos. 51). This is due to the prevailing social stigmatization of SexEd, which needs to be revalued (Researcher 2, pos. 24, 30, 54, 56; Student 2, pos. 51).

However, such a valorization is difficult given the political and social situation. Scientific experts report an instrumentalization of SexEd

(Researcher 2, pos. 32, 54) and repression of school SexEd due to a strong link between "a government that is very much about representing conservative values" (Researcher 2, pos. 54) and the Christian church (Researcher 1, pos. 48; Researcher 2, pos. 54). There would be a "politicization of the topics of gender, sexuality and family" (Researcher 2, pos. 54), because children could be used well as a moral resource (Researcher 2, pos. 32).

The experts therefore see the school, external specialists, teachers, and parents as responsible for teaching a holistic SexEd approach but complain about the excessive influence of social stigmatization based on conservative and religiously influenced government policies.

3.2 Conditions for Success and Hurdles

The main conditions for success and the hurdles the interviewees reported are described in the following and visualized in Figure 2.

3.2.1 Conditions for Success

The experts identified key aspects that can contribute to the success of a holistic SexEd (see Fig. 2). In particular, the aspect of time that is planned for it plays a central role in successful SexEd (Student 1, pos. 18; Student 2, pos. 16; Teacher 1, pos. 87; Teacher 2,

pos. 18; External Expert, pos. 58, 115). The main issue here would be to allow sufficient time (Student 1, pos. 18; Student 2, pos. 16) or significantly more time for SexEd in the school year (Teacher 1, pos. 87; Teacher 2, pos. 18; External Expert, pos. 58), but also to offer SexEd at regular intervals, continuously over the entire school career (External Expert, pos. 58, 115).

Furthermore, teachers need to be open and sensitized to the issues to successfully implement SexEd in schools (Counsellor 2, pos. 12; Researcher 2, pos. 54; Student 1, pos. 18; Teacher 2, pos. 12, 42). Additional intrinsic motivation also contributes to a suitable learning environment (Counsellor 2, pos. 12; Teacher 2, pos. 12).

Scientific and external experts also called for the biology-based focus in SexEd to be expanded to include relevant topics from science (Researcher 1, pos. 36; Researcher 2, pos. 50) and life practice (Researcher 2, pos. 56; External Expert, pos. 16). The lessons should also cover sociological aspects (Researcher 1, pos. 36) and deal with current scientific findings (Researcher 2, pos. 50). Supplementing SexEd with a presentation of sexuality as "a positive, pleasurable topic" (Researcher 2, pos. 56) and making the prevention of sexualized violence and abuse (Researcher 2, pos. 56; External Expert, pos. 16) part of the teaching content is also essential (ibid.).

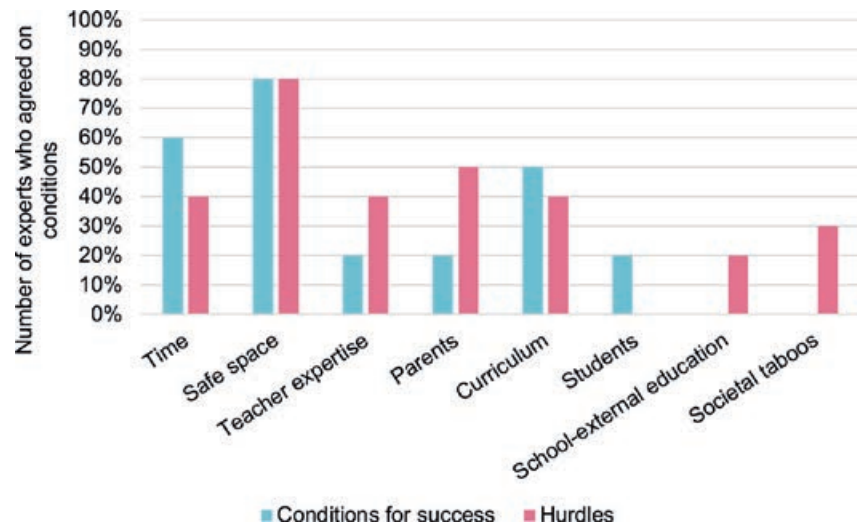


Figure 2: Conditions for Success and Hurdles According to Interviewees

Note. Safe space = attentive, open attitude of teacher. Curriculum = topics in the curriculum and support by the State Institute for School Quality and Educational Research Munich (ISB) that creates the curriculum.

Overall, lessons must be designed in such a way that SexEd units generate a safe space for teachers and students (Counsellor 2, pos. 28; External Expert, pos. 8, 10; Teacher 2, pos. 26, 32) which requires a relationship of trust between students and teachers (Teacher 2, pos. 26, 32). Cooperation with parents can also have a positive influence on SexEd (Counsellor 2, pos. 20; Teacher 1, pos. 49), as they could set an example of an open approach to SexEd-related topics in the family (Counsellor 2, pos. 20) and thus complement the work of the school. The direct involvement of students and their needs in the organization of lessons (External Expert, pos. 115) and the adaptation to the concrete reality of students' lives (External Expert, pos. 32) are also of great importance. Teachers need a comprehensive range of resources (Teacher 1, pos. 51), especially well-founded teaching examples (Teacher 2, pos. 12).

3.2.2 Hurdles

However, the experts also cited points that could complicate the implementation of SexEd in schools and manifest themselves as obstacles to the transfer of theory into practice (see Fig. 2). Scientific and teacher experts saw the parents of the students as a potential hurdle (Researcher 1, pos. 42, 44, 48; Researcher 2, pos. 72; Teacher 1, pos. 49; Teacher 2, pos. 34; Teacher 3, pos. 37). One reason for this is the personal (Teacher 1, pos. 49; Teacher 3, pos. 37), i.e. religious and political (Teacher 1, pos. 49) background of the parents, which influences the planned lessons (Teacher 3, pos. 37). Another reason is the rejection of specific teaching content by the parents (Teacher 2, pos. 34; Researcher 1, pos. 44). Parents' fear of the effects of SexEd (Researcher 1, pos. 48) and of a loss of control (Researcher 2, pos. 72) also has a negative impact on the implementation of theoretical content in practical lessons.

Most of the experts, including teachers, also saw the teachers as a potential obstacle (Counsellor 1, pos. 18; Counsellor 2, pos. 10, 12; Researcher 2, pos. 32, 50, 54; External Expert, pos. 10; Student 1, pos. 45; Teacher 2, pos. 6, 10; Teacher 3, pos. 16, 26, 37). On the one hand, teachers lack the necessary objectivity and distance to the teaching content (Counsellor 1, pos. 18; Teacher 3, pos. 16), which also makes it difficult to select the content (Researcher 2, pos. 50, 54). On the other hand, they lack an objective attitude towards and personal distance from the students (Researcher 2, pos. 32). This is because it is questionable whether "you want to talk about your own sexual fears and desires in front of the maths

teacher, who also grades you" (Researcher 2, pos. 32), or, conversely, whether you want to hear about a teacher's "messed-up sex life" (Counsellor 1, pos. 18). Teachers handling certain topics shamefully due to personal circumstances also plays a role here (Counsellor 2, pos. 10, 12) and contradicts the teacher's objective handling of these topics (ibid.). Finally, the personal attitude of the teacher also influences objectivity (Counsellor 1, pos. 18; Teacher 3, pos. 16). For example, the topic of abortion is "also more of an ethical and moral question" (Teacher 3, pos. 16), which could not be answered without the inclusion of personal opinions (ibid.).

The teachers' lack of expertise also has an impact on the quality of SexEd (External Expert, pos. 10; Student 1, pos. 45; Teacher 2, pos. 6, 10; Teacher 3, pos. 26, 37). This leads to uncertainty on the part of teachers regarding legal issues, what is permitted in the classroom (Teacher 3, pos. 26, 37), or to stigmatization (Student 1, pos. 45) or even avoidance of certain teaching content (External Expert, pos. 10). The existence of necessary prior knowledge when assigning a SexEd teaching task is also generally not checked in advance (Teacher 2, pos. 6).

The experts also saw potential hurdles in terms of the curriculum and the associated institutional support (Researcher 1, pos. 16, 20, 48, 56; External Expert, pos. 10, 12; Student 2, pos. 12; Teacher 1, pos. 9, 35, 47, 51). Mainly, the political orientation of the issuing authority already influences the selection and proportion of topics in the curriculum, since due to the "politics, which [...] in Bavaria is characterized by Christian conservatism, [...] certain topics [...] are given a lot of space compared to others" (Researcher 1, pos. 48). Biological aspects of SexEd could also be included in biology lessons (Researcher 1, pos. 20) and thus create space for non-biological topics (Student 2, pos. 12). In contrast, SexEd should be completely kept out of other subjects, such as religious education (Researcher 1, pos. 56).

Scientific and teacher experts also stated that the curriculum is not suitable for practical use (Researcher 1, pos. 16), as it does not contain any information for teachers about responsibilities and specific procedures (External Expert, pos. 12; Teacher 1, pos. 9). As the curriculum can only be updated every 13 years on average (equals one school career from the first to the final grade in high school), current SexEd topics cannot be covered promptly (Teacher 1, pos. 51). A special feature of the curriculum that stands in the

way of a smooth transfer of theory to practice is a clause in the guidelines that makes it compulsory to provide information and a right of co-determination for SexEd lessons, which does not exist in any other school subject (Teacher 1, pos. 35, 47).

In addition to the points mentioned, the time factor was also seen as an obstacle by student and teacher experts (External Expert, pos. 8; Student 2, pos. 35; Teacher 1, pos. 35, Teacher 2, pos. 24, 35). On the one hand, too little time is set aside for SexEd in the overall curriculum across different subjects (Teacher 3, pos. 24, 35), but teachers also actively allow themselves too little or no time for SexEd (Teacher 1, pos. 35; Student 2, pos. 35). A lack of time, in turn, means that the needs of the students cannot be addressed and that it is not possible to establish the contact necessary for the lessons (External Expert, pos. 8). However, this establishment of contact is necessary to create a safe space (Teacher 2, pos. 26, 36). Even if teachers did not actively regulate the climate in the classroom during SexEd, there would be no safe space (Student 2, pos. 44), bullying would occur (Student 2, pos. 51) and students would not feel taken seriously (Student 1, pos. 43). The absence of a safe space could also become a hurdle in practice (Counsellor 2, pos. 28).

The way society as a whole deals with SexEd-related topics can also have a negative impact on the transfer from theory to practice (Researcher 1, pos. 42, 46; Researcher 2, pos. 54; Student 2, pos. 25). For example, the social taboo on sexuality also influences the students' circles of friends: Sexuality becomes a topic that "people don't like to talk about [...] and if [...] then [they] immediately get kind of funny looks" (Student 2, pos. 25). If SexEd topics are discussed among peers, with siblings and friends or in the school playground, this often leads to premature and misguided SexEd among children and adolescents (Counsellor 1, pos. 18; Teacher 2, pos. 12, 14, 16, 34). The sometimes unsupervised use of the internet, social media and pornography also contributes significantly to this (Counsellor 2, pos. 10, 18; Teacher 2, pos. 14, 16). Parenting with varying degrees of openness also leads to diverse educational levels among children in the same age group (Teacher 2, pos. 34), but the curriculum does not provide any room for maneuver in this regard (Teacher 2, pos. 12), as it is not based on the needs and the level of education of children and young people, but only on grade levels (Teacher 2, pos. 12).

3.3 Visions

It is emphasized that SexEd is essential and should take up a larger part of the curriculum in order to enable destigmatizing and diverse SexEd (Counsellor 1, pos. 6, 8, 14, 18; Counsellor 2, pos. 14, 16, 22; Researcher 1, pos. 66, 68). The need for early and continuous SexEd (Counsellor 2, pos. 32; Teacher 3, pos. 39) is emphasized in order to promote open communication and better understanding (Counsellor 1, pos. 8, 24; Counsellor 2, pos. 34; Researcher 1, pos. 54; External Expert, pos. 111). There is a desire for a broader and more inclusive approach to SexEd that considers not only biological aspects (Researcher 1, pos. 18; Teacher 1, pos. 93) but also social science perspectives (Counsellor 1, pos. 18; Researcher 1, pos. 36; Student 2, pos. 29, 31). The necessity of upgrading the topic of SexEd is emphasized, both through better training of teachers and through stronger anchoring in teacher training (Researcher 2, pos. 50, 52, 56). It is noted that structural obstacles such as a lack of financial and personnel support as well as a lack of male specialists in this area must be overcome (External Expert, pos. 111; Teacher 1, pos. 93; Teacher 3, pos. 39). Students express the desire for a safe space for open discussions and questions (Counsellor 2, pos. 28; Researcher 1, pos. 54; Student 1, pos. 54) that is free from discrimination and shame (Counsellor 2, pos. 32; Student 1, pos. 56; Student 2, pos. 55). External professionals who are not tied to a specific subject could play a positive role in SexEd (Counsellor 1, pos. 18; Researcher 1, pos. 54; Teacher 2, pos. 50). Greater involvement of parents and improved infrastructural support in order to be able to work in small groups is considered desirable (Counsellor 2, pos. 32; Teacher 2, pos. 50).

4. Discussion

From these findings, clear opportunities and risks can be derived for a meaningful and beneficial SexEd for the students. All the factors identified have the potential to tip the scales in one direction or another and to act either as an obstacle or a prerequisite for the successful transfer of theory to practice. One of the main sticking points seems to be the existence or non-existence of the safe space. This is congruent with previous findings on the appeal of the internet for adolescents' SexEd-related questions, as it grants exactly the safe space they miss in school (DeHaan et al., 2012; Holstrom, 2015; Simon & Daneback, 2013). The extent to which it is actually possible to generate a "safe space" in the school must

be questioned at this point. Despite far-reaching changes in the system, it will probably only be possible to create a "safer space" at best, i.e. an environment that cannot guarantee openness and respect, but can at least reinforce them.

To contribute to the creation of such safer spaces, the framework conditions in which SexEd is carried out can be used as an example. The experts are in favor of both gender-segregated and mixed lessons but tend to favor the gender-segregated approach due to the better classroom climate. This is mirrored in international research that claims gender-segregated SexEd-classes to be slightly more advantageous when compared to mixed SexEd lessons (Jackson & Smith, 2000; Strange et al., 2010). The dilemma of choosing between segregation and mixing could be resolved by giving SexEd more time in general and thus providing the opportunity for both segregated and mixed lessons. In order to prevent the reproduction of a gender binary, the choice of "group" should be up to the students.

Furthermore, consideration should be given to not having the SexEd conducted by the (grading) teacher, but rather outsourcing it to external experts with the necessary prior training and pedagogical expertise. In case teachers lack the personal distance and objectivity to SexEd topics, certain topics may be avoided or selected subjectively. This is one of the reasons why SexEd varies from school to school.

A lack of openness and attentiveness also leads to a lack of the necessary safer space in lessons. If teaching cannot or should not be outsourced, teachers must be adequately trained in this area. Making SexEd part of the teacher training program and also training teachers' pedagogical skills with regard to the sometimes very sensitive topics of SexEd seems essential in this context (cp. Hoffmann, 2016). There should also be regular opportunities and obligations for further professional development. In this context, the ISB can also provide support. Teachers could be supported by a generous range of teaching materials and examples.

In addition, the time factor, which is (not) provided for SexEd, also plays a key role in its success. Prior research supports this by showing that even if teachers do show the necessary interest in

teaching holistic SexEd, their efforts are constrained by the inefficient time that is made up for SexEd in the curriculum (Schwarzmanski & Mirza, 2023). Allowing sufficient time for SexEd in the school year and ensuring that lessons are continuous, starting in Grade 1 and continuing until the end of the school biography, can ensure that students receive well-founded SexEd.

On the other hand, a lack of time means that important topics are not covered and the safe space that is so important for everyone involved cannot be created. It is better to plan more time than to cut back on the range of topics. SexEd in schools, which in practice is usually limited to biological aspects, should urgently be supplemented with sociological aspects and the latest scientific findings. However, this is not possible on the curriculum side due to the lengthy development process of 13 years on average. Consideration should therefore be given to giving teachers more room for maneuver to incorporate current aspects into lessons independently and thus react more flexibly to a rapidly developing cultural and media landscape.

SexEd tailored to the needs of students would also be made possible by giving them more freedom in the organization of teaching units. To make this possible, consideration must be given to whether parents' right of co-determination on the topics covered in lessons could be abolished. This is because the personal socialization of parents can have an impact not only on how their own children deal with sexuality, but also on entire classes or year groups by restricting the topics taught. This is in stark contrast to the right of children and young people to information and, in the worst case, leads to a persistent or intensified stigmatization of sexuality. Yet it is precisely the destigmatization and positive linking of SexEd-related topics that should encourage young people to come to terms with their own sexuality and all aspects associated with it, thus making schools a place for social change. In conclusion, it should be noted that there are two categories of factors in relation to successful SexEd: on the one hand, hurdles to or conditions for success, which are transformed into one form or another by those involved (students, teachers, parents, etc.) and can thus be directly influenced, and, on the other, genuine weaknesses, both in theory and practice, which can only be resolved from the institutional and societal side.

5. Prospects for Further Research

This scientific project builds a great foundation for further research based on our data. In the future several other experts from different backgrounds should be integrated into a follow-up study due to their insights and perspectives. In the future several perspectives should be integrated into a following study due to their insights and perspectives. At one point of the project, we had to raise the question of theoretical saturation (see Breuer, 2010; Kiener & Schanne, 2001). When is a sufficient “optimum” of data reached? The more data are collected, the more new aspects or even fields can be opened up. After explicitly weighing up the benefit (time) cost factor within the project team, the decision was made that the existing data would lead to a representative and valid result to build further research on. In order to complete the data set, it would have been advantageous to speak with students and teachers of all types of schools (like vocational schools, grammar schools, Waldorf schools, comprehensive schools, etc.), parents, institutional decision-makers, and representatives of church institutions.

6. Summary

The following statements sum up the most important aspects of the presented findings of SexEd in Bavarian schools and highlight possible implications for practice.

1. *Diversity of content and contact persons:* SexEd exceeds biological aspects. Topics such as relationships, gender identities and emotions are important. There is a need for contact persons and contact points for students, especially if the parental home does not provide sufficient support.
2. *Taboo and stigmatization:* Sexuality is still highly taboo and associated with insecurity and ignorance, especially for girls. Shame and insecurity make it difficult to deal with the topic in a school context.

3. *Need for a more open approach:* Professionals and students argue for a more diverse and open approach to SexEd that recognizes and respects the diversity of human identities and experiences.
4. *School implementation and resources:* The implementation of SexEd in schools depends on several factors, including the availability of resources, teacher training and the creation of appropriate learning environments.
5. *Involvement of the students:* Students play an active role in the design of lessons. Their questions and interests influence the topics and the course of the lesson. An open atmosphere in which students can ask questions is important.
6. *Focus on self-determination and respect:* A central aspect of SexEd is educating students to become sexually self-determined people who respect their own and others' boundaries.
7. *Challenges and needs:* Teachers face challenges such as limited resources and the difficulty of doing justice to sensitive issues. There is a need for better support and resources for teachers to deliver lessons effectively.
8. *Critical reflection and adaptation:* Lessons need to be continually evaluated and adapted to meet the needs and interests of students. A flexible and process-oriented approach is emphasized. ■

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Self-Reflection ERIK*A

How does one come up with the idea of dealing with sex education? That was relatively simple. To summarize briefly, it was a shared interest on the one hand and we had the framework and the opportunity to tackle it in a research project on the other.

Our ERIK*A research project began as a very small team of two people. Our personal memories and bad experiences in the field of sex education during our own school days motivated us to do something on the subject during our scholarship at TUMJA.

Between the kick-off weekend and the second seminar at the Schlierseealm, the team grew to five members who joined forces to conduct qualitative research on the topic of sex education in Bavarian schools. This qualitative approach to the study was a novelty within TUMJA, as it was the first of its kind in its history. As a result, we were repeatedly confronted with hurdles and challenges that did not immediately find an answer within TUMJA.

As I said, the decision to deal with the topic of sex education was influenced by the similar stories from the team members' own sex education lessons, despite the different school backgrounds and the age difference within the team. The first realization was that everyone's own SexEd at school was largely inadequate and insufficient – at most levels.

This shared experience formed the starting point for the question of how our own sexual development would have changed if sex education in schools had not been one-dimensional and focused exclusively on biology. Another decisive factor for the success of the research project was therefore, among other things, the personal interest and willingness of the members to deal with the topic scientifically. We wanted to make this topic more visible and transparent in a scientific context.

In order to turn the idea into an appropriate research project within the framework of the TUMJA scholarship, the first phase of the scientific process was initiated to identify various dimensions of successful SexEd. The first question that then arose was what realistic standards we needed to set in order to realize a

well-rounded and completed project within 20 months. We therefore first defined our research area precisely. We focused on Bavarian schools, as the federal school system in Germany meant that local access seemed the easiest to achieve. In addition, we had numerous networks in this area that we could use for our research work due to our careers and degree programs. The decision to determine our resources and limitations from the outset made it possible to define a clear project objective. Our first phase of analysis then followed and we focused on the Bavarian curriculum for SexEd. For this analysis, we coded and analyzed the official guidelines for families and sex education in Bavarian schools. Surprisingly, we found that these guidelines were more comprehensive and detailed, contrary to the researchers' expectations.

Thus, we had to ask ourselves how our experiences could deviate so much from the possible theory. There must have been a gap between the official teaching materials and the practiced curriculum. With the assumption of a gap between theoretical specifications and practical implementation in mind, various qualitative question categories for different target groups were developed in several workshops and constantly developed, supplemented or modified in an iterative process. For us as a team, it was particularly important to have a clear division of tasks and roles within ERIK*A right from the start. For important decisions within the overall project, weekly team meetings were held to facilitate discussions. For more specific tasks such as contacting interview partners, conducting interviews, transcribing, coding the interviews or even writing individual chapters in the project report together, small groups were formed based on availability and experience. This division of labor worked very well within the team and ultimately led to the successful completion of the project.

Another important concern for us was to involve as diverse a group of experts as possible in the study. Scientists, therapists, teachers, political institutions, employees of non-governmental organizations and, in particular, pupils were to take part in the survey. We believe that the sample was successful in terms of gender representation, age, professions and access to sex education. However, we would have liked to have reached a wider range of different groups of

people. Our sample lacks perspectives from religious representatives and parents. In addition, most interviewees had a very positive attitude towards comprehensive sex education and were (professionally) involved in sexuality and related topics, which is why the sample predominantly had an open, positive opinion on the further development of sex education. We are aware of this bias and suggest that in a future follow-up study, these perspectives will provide a valuable addition that we were unable to capture in our research project.

Another hurdle that materialized during the course of the project was the complexity of the topic of SexEd and the different perspectives of the participants made the analysis and interpretation of the data challenging. Despite these difficulties, it was important to maintain the objectivity and neutrality of the research process in order to ensure the credibility of the results. Recognizing and reflecting on these challenges and limitations were crucial for the further development of the research project and the identification of potential improvements for future studies.

During the research process, important insights were gained that provide an outlook for future developments. A key finding was the need for more comprehensive and contemporary SexEd that goes beyond a purely biological perspective. It also became clear that a variety of experts and stakeholders should be involved in the design of SexEd programs in order to take different perspectives and needs into account. Despite the positive attitude of many interviewees towards comprehensive SexEd, there was also a need for critical reflection on existing programs and practices. The findings from the study suggest that greater integration of topics such as gender equality, diversity and consent into the SexEd curriculum is needed. Furthermore, it became clear that active participation of students in the design of the teaching process plays an important role in order to adequately address their needs and interests. An outlook on future developments shows that further research and practical work is needed to continuously improve the quality and effectiveness of SexEd programs. There is an opportunity to explore innovative approaches and share best practice to promote the sexual health and wellbeing of young people in a sustainable way.



Despite the dedication and passion of the team, we realized that our study commitments, PhDs, degrees and also our full-time jobs, hugely limited the time and resources available for the project. Nevertheless, we were determined to make a contribution to improving SexEd in Bavarian schools and to make the relevance of this topic transparent. To a certain extent, self-reflection was a constant companion during the research process, as the chosen 'Reflexive Grounded Theory Methodology' constantly scrutinizes and questions the role of the researcher, the approach to the field and the course of the research process. In this way, our method made it possible to question our personal motivations and insights again and again and to adapt them if necessary.

We are fully aware that this research can only make a small contribution to the current status quo of SexEd in Bavarian schools. Nevertheless, it was important to us as a team to provide an impetus for future improvements. ■

ERIK*A

Aufklärung macht Schule: ERneuerungs-Initiative für Kompetente Aufklärung

WHY ERIK*A?

Why is competent education needed in schools?

In our view, good and all-inclusive sex education is needed for several important reasons:

- Health Education:** SexEd can help promote awareness of sexual health and the prevention of sexually transmitted infections. The importance of protective measures such as contraceptives can also be taught.
- Prevention of Abuse and Violence:** SexEd can help raise awareness of sexual abuse and violence and teach strategies for prevention.
- Promotion of Equality:** SexEd can help to promote awareness of gender equality and break stereotypes.
- Acceptance of Diversity:** comprehensive sex education can help promote awareness of the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities and break down prejudices.

Overall, better sex education can help promote a healthy and respectful understanding of sexuality and thus make an important contribution to individual and societal development.

OUR MISSION

ERIK*A wants to **renew sex education** in Bavarian schools. Based on our previous research, there seems to be a crucial discrepancy between the given curriculum and the actual teaching.

Therefore we want to bring **sex education** from the back bench more **into the focus of diverse teaching units**. Because it is not just about biological education, but also about historical, social or even artistic aspects. In our eyes, a healthy and open approach to one's sexuality is the **best basis for educating young people** in a broad spectrum. We think that schools must always be attuned to relevant, modern issues, because the education of young people and thus **the generation of tomorrow depends on it**.

Sex education is a good example when it comes to schools not living up to their social mandate. Juveniles educate themselves at some point, if not through own experiences, then through all online media. In doing so, they run the risk of misinforming themselves, which could have been avoided through **competent and educational guidance**.

In order to avoid this, we want to **close the gap between the curriculum and the actual teaching** and in the end approach the schools with a **handout** so that in future pupils in Bavaria will receive appropriate and adequate sex education in the course of their sex education lessons.

PROJECT STRUCTURE

Presentation for the symposium
Layout for the final report
Prepare a final essay
Structure our findings

Send the handout to the schools and other stakeholders
Promote handout
Proofreading handout
Design infographics
Structure results

evaluating the results

interpreting the data
release the survey for students
contacting schools in Munich
design a questionnaire

PROJECT TIMELINE



Cartellone, Stephanie. Creating a Culturally Adaptable Comprehensive Sexuality Education Teacher's Manual (2023). Student Works. 333.
Bauer, Max, Hämmerli, Susan, Leisner, Brigitte. Unmet Needs in Sex Education—What Adolescents Aim to Understand About Sexuality of the Other Sex. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, Volume 67, Issue 3, 2020, Pages 245-252. ISSN 1054-1398. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2020.02.015>
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Technische Universität München
Junge Akademie Class 2023

POSTER 1:

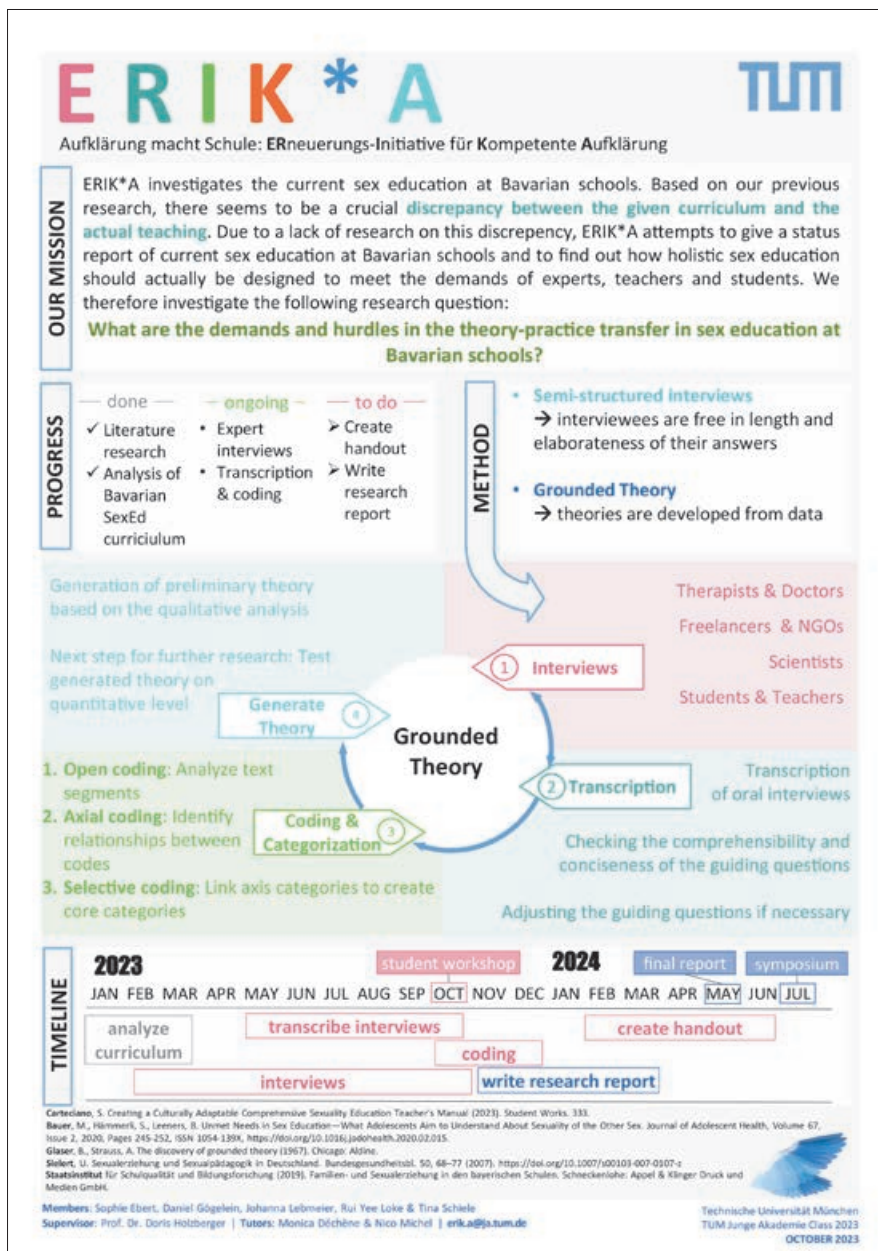
Drawing on previous personal experiences and on detailed research, our project has identified a significant gap between existing curriculum specifications and actual teaching. With the vision of bringing sex education to the forefront of diverse teaching units, we would like to emphasize that sex education goes beyond the biological aspects and should also embrace historical, social, and even artistic dimensions.

Good and inclusive sex education serves several critical purposes:

1. **Health Education:** SexEd raises awareness about sexual health, educating individuals about preventing sexually transmitted infections and emphasizing the importance of contraceptives.
2. **Prevention of Abuse and Violence:** SexEd educates individuals about sexual abuse and violence, teaching strategies to prevent such occurrences.
3. **Promotion of Equality:** SexEd promotes awareness of gender equality and works to challenge stereotypes associated with gender roles.
4. **Acceptance of Diversity:** Comprehensive sex education raises awareness of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, combating prejudice and promoting acceptance.

Schools often fall short of their social mandate when it comes to sex education, leaving adolescents to educate themselves through personal experiences or on-line media, risking misinformation. A comprehensive approach, incorporating various aspects of sexuality, is essential for fostering a healthy and open-minded attitude towards understanding sexuality, thereby contributing to individual and societal development.

To counter this, ERIK*A seeks to identify and bridge the gap between curriculum and practices in lessons. We set off with a key objective to provide Bavarian schools with a comprehensive handout, highlighting the essentials for appropriate and adequate sex education for pupils.



POSTER 2:

A thorough examination of the literature highlights a significant dearth in research regarding the discrepancy between the prescribed curriculum and actual classroom teachings. This discovery fuels our drive to provide a comprehensive status report on sex education in Bavarian schools and to explore how holistic sex education could be achieved to better meet the needs of experts, teachers, and students. Our central research question to address is: What are the demands and hurdles in the theory-practice transfer in sex education at Bavarian schools?

To tackle this question, we've adopted the Reflexive Grounded Theory Approach, developing theories directly from the data we gather. This ensures that our conclusions are firmly grounded in the evidence we've collected.

Data collection is primarily through semi-structured interviews, where interviewees have the freedom to elaborate in depth on their views. Structured questions tailored to their expertise guide the conversation. We've reached out to a diverse array of professionals for these interviews, including therapists, doctors, freelancers, NGOs, scientists, students, and teachers.

Throughout the interviews, we continually assess the clarity and conciseness of our guiding questions, allowing for adjustments if necessary. Concurrent with the ongoing interviews, we transcribe each interview word-for-word to ensure accuracy and preserve every detail for analysis. ■

ERIK*A TUM

Aufklärung macht Schule: ERneuerungs-Initiative für Kompetente Aufklärung

OUR APPROACH

Sex education can lead to a healthy and respectful understanding of sexuality and thus make an important contribution to individual and societal development:

- Health Education:** SexEd can help promote awareness of sexual health and the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases. The importance of protective measures such as contraceptives can be taught as well.
- Promotion of Equality:** SexEd can help to promote awareness of gender equality and break stereotypes.
- Prevention of Abuse and Violence:** SexEd can help raise awareness of sexual abuse and violence and teach strategies for prevention.
- Acceptance of Diversity:** comprehensive sex education can help promote awareness of the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities and break down prejudices.

However, sex education in Bavarian schools rarely meets these requirements. Based on our previous research, there seems to be a crucial discrepancy between the given curriculum and the actual teaching. Due to a lack of research on this discrepancy, ERIK*A attempts to give a status report of current sex education at Bavarian schools and to find out how holistic sex education should actually be designed to meet the demands of experts, teachers and students. We therefore investigate the following research question:

"What requirements and hurdles need to be considered when transferring theory into practice in sex education at Bavarian schools?"

The study behind ERIK*A pursues a qualitative research approach based on the Reflexive Grounded Theory. Data is collected through semi-structured interviews and workshops with experts: students, teachers, scientists, doctors, sex therapists and counselling institutions. This ensures a deep immersion into the topic and creates a content-related reference to the theory-practice transfer. The process follows an iterative structure: collected observations and interviews are rigorously evaluated, systematically categorised and transformed into empirical data.

MILESTONES AND FIRST RESULTS

The valid Bavarian curriculum was analyzed and coded

Expert groups were identified and representatives contacted

Semi-structured interview guidelines based on the curriculum for each expert group were prepared

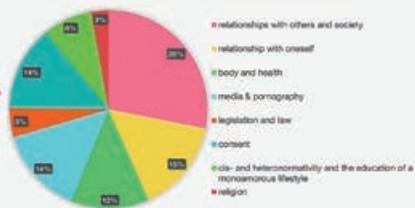
Expert interviews were conducted

Interviews were transcribed

A workshop was developed on the basis of the interviews and conducted with students



Coding interviews and drawing conclusion



- Teachers struggle with insecurities
- SexEd is often outsourced to experts (counselling institutions, freelancers)
- Parents can be a hurdle
- SexEd is not an essential part of teacher training
- Topics missing in the curriculum: friendship, pleasure, diversity, autonomy
- ...

Your new name for SexEd	What is your personal aim for SexEd in the future
BLAU (Berufs, Lebens, Aufklärung, Gefühle, Gesundheit)	Safe Space - Educate, Therapeutic
SEX	Listening to evidence-based science
Do get SexEd	Sexual education that can teach consent, romance and the fun of sex
Individual development - you and me	- self setting - competent open learning support - Exchange (Gefühle)
Physical intimacy in theory and practice	Dedicated workshop leader + safe space
Body practices (in a social context)	Being self-determined and self-consciously sexually attractive so that my sex makes me happy
SEX-OS (Berufs, Erziehung, Gefühle und Selbst)	Sexual education: feelings and self if it's a weekly seminar
SEX-OS (Berufs, Erziehung, Gefühle und Selbst)	Open space where you can have fun talking about sex, gender, identity, etc.
Together in your sex life	Feasibility to be 100% open / honest / no judgement if to be able to ask all questions
Personal development with regard to sexual, health and social diversity	Everything is so automatically understood that in 10 years there won't be a whole movement left to talk about same possibility or only heterosexuality / Gender no longer have to play the education bears
KIS - Körper / Identität / Sexualität	Participatory development with participants

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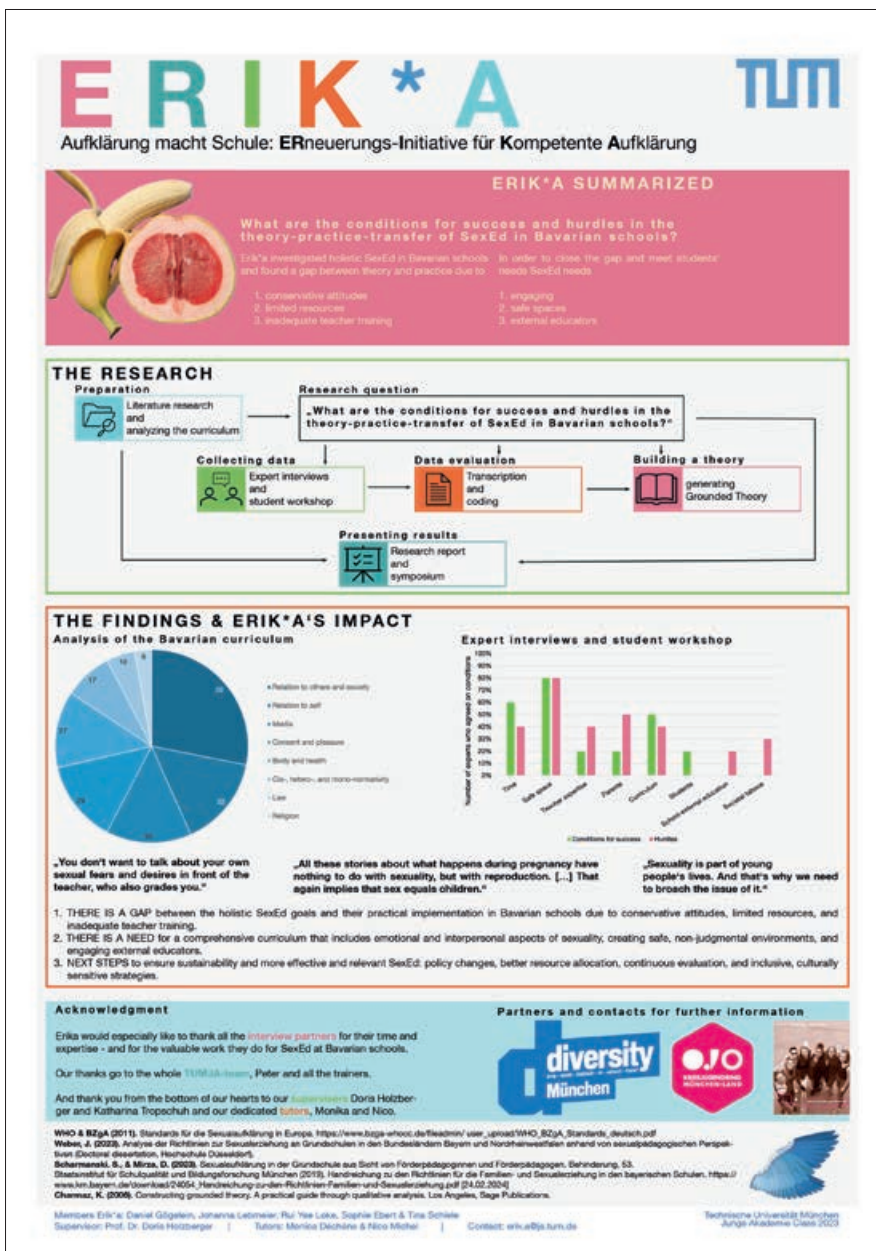
POSTER 3:

Following the completion of expert interviews, we made a comprehensive analysis of all transcriptions using an open, axial, and selective coding approach.

In this process, we closely examined text segments and categorized them by assigning codes to selected sections. Additionally, a workshop conducted during a weekend seminar provided valuable field observations, with field notes and a research protocol aiding in data classification.

From there, we identified relationships between the codes, linking axial categories together to create core categories that outline the key perspectives of holistic sex education in schools.

The key findings are compiled into a thorough status report, exploring the requirements and hurdles involved in translating theory into practice in sex education at Bavarian schools. Moreover, this report puts forward a theory on the optimal design of holistic sex education programs.



POSTER 4:

After completing our data analysis and evaluation, we synthesized the results and placed them within a broader societal context. Our primary goal was to identify the conditions for success and the hurdles in the theory-practice transfer of sex education in Bavarian schools. To explain our complex mixed-methods approach, we detailed our thorough procedures within a research life cycle figure.

We highlighted key findings from the diverse Bavarian curriculum, which extends beyond male and female anatomy and includes relationships, self-awareness, consent, and pleasure. Our research revealed a significant gap between the objectives of sex education and the current state of teacher training. Furthermore, there is a pressing need for a more comprehensive (implementation of the) curriculum. We outlined the necessary next steps to achieve a more sustainable and effective SexEd program in Bavaria. These steps include enhancing teacher training and curriculum development to better align with the goals of sex education.

In conclusion, we extend our heartfelt thanks to all participants in our interviews and workshops, and to every member of TUMJA, especially our tutors and supervisors, for their support and collaboration. We encourage everyone to sexuate themselves because we need more sexperts, not just in schools but in life in general!