
SEXUAL MESSAGES IN THE SHOW “SEX EDUCATION”

Andrea Millan

ABSTRACT

Sexual development is one of the challenges that teenagers encounter during adolescence (Tulloch & Kaufman, 2013). According to experts, it is extremely important to impart sexual education among young adults in order to prevent dangerous sexual behaviors which might result in unprotected sexual activity leading to unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases (Bell, 2009; Borawski, Tufts, Trapl, Hayman, Yoder & Lovegreen, 2015; Tulloch & Kaufman, 2013; UNESCO, 2018; E. Hebron and S. Hebron, 2017). In addition, given that media has been found to be a main source of sexual information among adolescents and increasing evidence reveals that sexual talk and behavior on the media contribute to sexual socialization among young adults (Collins, et al., 2004, Eyal & Kunkel, 2008; Ward, 2002), based on social learning theory that suggests that behaviors are learned through observation (Bandura, 2001; 2009), it is important to analyze the sexual messages to which adolescents are exposed to. The purpose of this content analysis is to examine sexual messages portrayals in the media, specifically in the first season of the show “Sex Education” that aired on Netflix on 2019. Results demonstrate that sexual messages are highly frequent in this show: 100% of the episodes depicted sexual talk, and 88% of the episodes depicted sexual behavior. Only eight scenes in all episodes included risks and responsibility messages. The content analysis findings are discussed in terms of their implications for audience effects.

Key Words: Ethics, Ethical Behavior, Misbehavior, Accounting students, College students.

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the challenges that teens encounter is the development of their sexuality. According to Tulloch and Kaufman (2013), adolescence is a temporary stage in which many physical, emotional, and cognitive developments happen. Curiosity about sexuality, as well as sexual orientation and sexual preferences are a common part of this period (Kar, Choudhury, & Singh, 2015; Tulloch & Kaufman, 2013). Papathanasiou and Lahana (n.d) suggested that topics such as sexual intercourse, masturbation, pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and birth control are topics that adolescents are very curious about. In addition, adolescents would also want to know how to create adequate and constructive relationships within their own structure of values regarding sex. However, most teenagers lack accurate information about sexual behavior (ibid.). In order to reduce sexual problems such as unintentional pregnancies, sexual transmitted diseases, and sexual abuse, health professionals should take responsibility in sexual education by promoting and organizing easy to access health education services to adolescents (ibid.). In addition, experts suggest that all areas, involving parents, schools, community associations,

religious organizations, media, business, health-care providers, and policy makers, are responsible of promoting healthy education regarding sexuality (Secor- Turner, et al., 2011; Tulloch & Kaufman, 2013; Walcott, Chenneville & Tarquini, 2011). Research by Tulloch and Kaufman (2013) suggests that systematic and detailed approaches to sex education that includes all aspects of sexuality such as: dating, romantic relationships, decision making process, communication, birth control methods, and sexual transmitted diseases, help teenagers not only to tolerate the pressure to have sex too soon, but also encourages adolescents to nurture healthy and mutually responsible relationships whenever they choose to become sexually active.

Research by Bleakley, Hennessy, Fishbein, and Jordan (2009) studied the sources from which adolescents acquired their sexual information. It was found that respondents reported learning about sex from different sources: 74.9% from peers, 62.2% from teachers, 60.9 % from mothers, 57% from media and 41.5% from doctors. Moreover, females used media as a source of sexual information more than males, as well as older adolescents more than younger teens. In addition, similar results were found in research by Secor-Turner, et al. (2011) in which 48.6% of 9th graders and 54.2% of 12th graders reported peers as their primary source of information about sexuality. Nevertheless, Brown, Wilson, and Klein (n.d) argued that media is a very important source of knowledge that might be serving as a “super peer” when it comes to adolescents seeking information about sex (as cited in Brown, et al., 2005). Research done by Brown, et al. (2005) found that media rank high among the sources from which adolescents get sexual information. A reason for this might be that media is easily accessible, and media characters will not laugh at uncomfortable questions that teens might have, consequently, many adolescents might turn to the media to learn about sexuality in a less embarrassing way.

Interest towards sexual content on television and its impact on viewers has increased broadly. Such interest is usually inspired by the effects of such content on viewers such as the psychological consequences that viewers might experience as a result of being exposed to sexual content on television, like regretting sexual choices, for example (Martino, Collins, Elliott, Kanouse, & Berry, 2009), and also by public health repercussions, such as percentages of unintentional pregnancies and the rise on sexually transmitted diseases, that might have arisen due to exposure to such content on television (Channel 2 News, 2010, as cited in Eyal, et al., 2014, p. 42). According to Eyal et al. (2014), sexual beliefs, attitudes towards sex, and behavioral mindsets are formed and developed during sexual socialization. When such socialization fosters risky sexual behaviors, such as early sexual initiation, mental health and physical consequences can develop. Such risks can be reduced if educational systems, as well as parents, disseminate responsible sexual behaviors (Eyal, et al., 2014). According to Rideout, Foehr, & Roberts (2010) television content still leads adolescents’ leisure time. For this reason, it is important to understand that television might be serving viewers’ sexual socialization, hence the media should be urged to deliver more healthy sexual content (Brown, et al., 2005). Evaluating sexual messages portrayed on media is important for understanding adolescence sexuality. Hence, this content analysis investigates sexual messages in the show “Sex Education”. This show was chosen given its popularity having 40 million viewers during its first month of release.

The present study compares three different aspects regarding sexual information and adolescents, while aiming to answer the following questions: First, the psychological aspect: How and what should adolescents learn about sex according to experts in the field? second, the sociological

aspect of sexual messages: How and what do adolescents learn about sex? and finally, the media aspect: What messages do adolescents get from the show “Sex Education”? This study’s purpose is to provide information about the discipline of media and sexuality and aims to analyze the content of the first season of the show “Sex Education” to find out the type of sexual messages that this show depicts, as well as to explore possible effects such content might have on its viewers.

Psychological aspect of sexual information among adolescents

According to the last International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education published by the UNESCO (2009), it is exceptionally important to impart sexual education among young people given that ignorance and misinformation could, in fact, be dangerous. When young people are not informed about sexuality, and open communication about sex is censored, silenced, and disapproved by adults, they reach adulthood with inconsistent messages about sexuality. Moreover, depriving young people of sexual education might encourage them to search for the information in unreliable sources such as pornography, specially nowadays in which sexually explicit material is easily accessed through the internet and other type of media (UNESCO, 2018). This misinformation could lead to several problems. Most young people around the world do not receive adequate information about sexuality. For this reason, young people are susceptible to abuse, coercion, exploitation, unplanned pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases (Bell, 2009; UNESCO, 2009, 2018). The main purpose of sexual education is to provide children and young people with accurate knowledge, tools, skills, and values that will help them make responsible choices about their sexual life, as well as making them aware of the risks and dangers around sexuality.

According to the UNESCO’s international guidelines (2009, 2018), sexual education programs should have the following primary objectives: development of knowledge and comprehension regarding the body and sexual behaviors, clear explanation of feelings, values, and attitudes towards sex, and promotion of risk-reducing behaviors. The Ministry of Education of Israel (2019) agrees with these objectives and suggests that sexual education must be mandatory in schools and should include the following criteria: education for healthy sexuality, prevention of sexual risks, and prevention of sexual violence (The Israeli Center for Sexual Education, n.d). For the purposes of this study, I will be focusing on the Israeli curriculum regarding sexual education.

Education for healthy sexuality

According to the Ministry of Education curriculum in Israel, education for healthy sexuality consists in educating teenagers about their body and the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive changes that come with adolescence. These topics include teaching adolescents about the differences between every person’s body, emphasizing that such differences are normal, with the purpose of minimizing psychological insecurities regarding body image. The curriculum highlights anatomical knowledge for teenagers to become familiar and deeply understand puberty and the body changes that come with it. In addition, it is recommended to teach the reproduction system and its functions thoroughly, as well as genital function and the

characteristics of sexual pleasure for both men and women alongside the definition of orgasm, while at the same time, discussing the inaccuracy of the portrayal of bodies in the media (The Israeli Center for Sexual Education, n.d).

In addition, the Israeli curriculum advises that knowledge about romantic relationships and its characteristics should also be included within the topic of education for healthy sexuality. Information regarding the importance of communication in any kind of relationship, whether romantic or not, the definition of consent and approval, love, falling in love, sexual attraction within relationships and possible long term effects of sexual interaction, are important topics that should be taught to teenagers with the purpose of giving them the necessary tools that will allow them to make responsible choices about their sexuality in their lives. Moreover, knowledge regarding sexual fantasies, sexual orientation, and masturbation, should also be provided to young people with the purpose of increasing their awareness by normalizing all the emotional, physical, and psychological changes they are facing during adolescence. Furthermore, the curriculum emphasizes the importance of teaching young adults about the clitoris and the penis, and suggests short educational videos for adolescents that illustrate the function of these organs, their anatomical features, the differences of the clitoris and the penis among different bodies, and the correct way of stimulating them (ibid).

Prevention of sexual risks

According to the Israeli curriculum, it is very important to teach young adults about what to expect during their first time of sexual intercourse. It is important to notice that the curriculum includes specific information regarding the meaning of virginity, vaginal, anal, oral sex, and contraception methods. Regarding the first sexual encounter, the curriculum recommends teaching adolescents precise knowledge such as the possibility of the first time being awkward, funny, plus the chance of coming across with unknown sounds and smells. In addition, it emphasizes that there is no such thing as “first time”, but several first times or first attempts, given that having sex is a process that needs to be learned to maximize the pleasure of both parties, alongside the importance of doing it with someone they feel totally comfortable with. With regards to virginity, the curriculum describes it as being a myth. It explains the structure of the hymen and the possibility of bleeding a drop or two of blood during the first time, but it also specifies that this might not happen. Lastly, regarding prophylactic measures, the curriculum proposes the teaching of all sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, and all types of contraception for male and women such as birth control pills, vaginal rings, hormonal patches, and condoms. Furthermore, the curriculum proposes condom training through different videos for young adults to practice such important methods to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, and it highlights the importance of using condoms in every type of sexual encounter, either oral, vaginal, or anal sex, as well as the consequences that might occur if condoms are not properly used (ibid).

Prevention of sexual violence

The Israeli curriculum argues that the comprehension of privacy among adolescents is an essential step in preventing sexual violence. The curriculum highlights the importance of educating teenagers about their right to privacy such as having the right to undress and shower

privately, and even lock the door if they want to be alone. In addition, it emphasizes the understanding of nudity, sexual contact, and masturbation as being private matters that should not be photographed under any circumstance. Young adults need to learn that nudity or sexual contact of any kind, including french kissing, is private, and should be done in private. Furthermore, the curriculum suggests teaching adolescents about masturbation being a healthy and pleasant thing that some boys and girls choose to do or not to do, and just as nudity or sexual contact should not be photographed, neither should masturbation. It is important to mention that the curriculum suggests teaching young adults that photographs could easily reach everyone if uploaded to a social network which could result in bullying or cyberbullying of the photographed person. For these reasons, it is crucial to teach young adults that photographing or sharing photographs containing private matters, such as the previously mentioned, must not be done under any circumstance, even if it is something that everyone has posted and seen before (ibid). According to the Israeli curriculum provided by The Israeli Center for Sexual Education (n.d), once adolescents are taught about privacy, it is imperative to teach them specific tools to prevent sexual violence. Such tools are based on the importance of their feelings and include the following:

Ownership of their body: Your body belongs only to you and only you can decide who touches it and when. You can say "no" to everyone including relatives and loved ones.

Stomach feeling: If something in your stomach feels uncomfortable, or wrong you are right and are not imagining. Even if it is someone close or loved.

Do not undress someone else by force: It is important to explain to teenagers that undressing someone is not funny and is not a game. They need to understand that taking off someone's pants with a laugh, is not funny, it is violent. Others' people penis, vagina, breasts, nipples, or buttocks should not be touched.

Courtship: Adolescents need to learn that when courting someone, they should check that there is a response from the other side. If not, even if it is hard and painful, they should stop.

Persuasion and threats: Young adults should learn that coaxing, begging, or threatening someone to have sexual intercourse is sexual violence.

When not to have sexual intercourse: According to the curriculum, it is extremely important that young adults understand that having sexual intercourse of any kind with someone who is drunk, drugged, unconscious, asleep, with someone who is intellectually disabled or with someone who cannot understand the sexual situation or who wants to please you is sexual violence and it is prohibited under any circumstance.

Consent: Adolescents must be taught about the importance of consent. Teenagers need to learn that any sexual contact should be done only when there is consent of both parties. In addition, it is important to explain to them that consent might be given at the beginning, but then reconsidered. Everybody has the right to change their opinion and even if someone said yes, and then changed his/her mind and said no, it is allowed and must be respected.

Sexual abuse: It is not uncommon in our society for children and adolescents to experience an event in which their body was touched without their will. This unfortunately happens to both boys and girls. It is important to not be left with this alone and explain young adults that this is not their fault. It is advisable to encourage adolescents to talk to someone close or call the assistance centers immediately and ask for help.

Moral responsibility: Lastly, the curriculum suggests teaching adolescents about moral responsibility by encouraging them to help anyone who might need help, and to act and not be silent when someone, even if it is a friend, is behaving violently or sexually violent.

In conclusion, imparting sexual education to young adults is crucial. Research shows that sexual education curricula can help adolescents to abstain from dangerous sexual behavior, decrease the frequency of unprotected sexual activity, reduce the number of sexual partners, and increase the use of protection against unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases during sexual intercourse (Bell, 2009; Borawski, Tufts, Trapl, Hayman, Yoder & Lovegreen, 2015; Tulloch & Kaufman, 2013; UNESCO, 2018; E. Hebron and S. Hebron, 2017). By reducing misinformation about sexuality, correct knowledge is increased, and positive values towards sexual behavior are strengthened. In addition, sexual education enhances skills in adolescents that help them make informed decisions and act upon them, while improving communication with parents and/or other trusted adults (UNESCO, 2009, 2018). Given the significance of sexual education, it is important to investigate how and what do adolescents learn about sex. The next section of this study will explore the sociological aspect of sexual information among young adults.

Sociological aspect of sexual information among adolescents

As previously mentioned, it is very important to teach sexual education to young adults. According to Tulloch and Kaufman (2013), “formal” sexual health education is supposed to be one of the main sources of information for adolescents and it usually takes place in a formal setting, such as school, church, or a youth center. Research by the Guttmacher Institute (2017) in the US between 2011 and 2013 found that only 50% of females and 58% of males aged 15 to 19 years old received formal education about how to use a condom. In addition, only 57% of females and 43% of males received formal education about the contraceptive pill before their first sexual encounter. Furthermore, only 46% of females and 31% of males received instruction about where to get prophylactic methods. In 2014, less than half of high schools, and only 20% of middle schools provided sexual health education in the U.S., 72% of U.S. public and private high schools taught pregnancy prevention programs, 76% taught that abstinence is the most effective method to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, 61% taught about contraceptive efficacy, and only 35% taught students about the correct use of a condom (Guttmacher Institute, 2017).

With regards to the sources of sexual health information for adolescents, parents, peers, and media were reported to be the most common resources for young adults (Frappier et al., 2008; Guttmacher Institute, 2017; Tulloch & Kaufman, 2013; UNESCO 2009, 2018). Research by the Guttmacher Institute (2017) found that, between 2011 and 2013, 78% of females and 70% of males aged 15 to 19 years old have talked with a parent about at least one of the following subjects: prophylactic methods, sexually transmitted diseases, how to say no to sex, where to get birth control, how to prevent HIV infection, and how to use a condom. Young females were more likely to talk about sexual health matters with their parents than males. Besides parents, research by Simon and Daneback (2013) suggests that 76.5% of adolescents use the internet for sex education, being sexual activity, contraception, and pregnancy the most common health topics searched through the internet by adolescents. It is important to mention, that digital media and the websites in which adolescents may find sexual health information often have inaccurate

information. According to research by the Guttmacher Institute (2017), 46% of 177 sexual health websites that were analyzed contained incorrect information regarding contraception, and 35% contained incorrect information regarding abortion. Additionally, the internet allows teenagers free and easy access to anonymous sexual information and smartphones give youth constant access to the internet. Given that 84% of teenagers aged 13 to 18 years old own a smartphone (Rideout & Robb, 2019), young adults are connected to the internet continuously. This availability may result in more exposure to sexual inaccurate content.

With regards to Israel, formal sexual education is provided by the ministry of education through schools. According to E. Hebron and S. Hebron (2017), sexual education is mandatory in Israeli schools since 1987. Since then, there is more openness about speaking on this subject and there is more usage of contraceptive methods, especially for Jewish secular. Formally, the ministry of education, through the schools, is responsible for sex education in the education system. For that cause, the “unit for sex education, relations and family life” of the psychological service, which is under the ministry of education, trains counselors and psychologists in schools to deal with the subject in the framework of “life skills” lessons for children at elementary and middle school. The ministry of education budgets 70 hours of “life skills” lessons. However, in high school, the lessons are not mandatory and only 32 hours are budgeted. Although this program exists it is only implemented in 60-70% of schools. In the religious sector it is implemented even less, if at all. Even when the program is implemented, not all aspects are taught due to the parents’ objection. This happens because, among other factors, there is a shortage of manpower and less supervision on the implementation of the program. Moreover, these programs view sexuality among youth as a risk factor. Therefore, it is hard to create a safe environment for discussion. It is possible that this is the reason why schools are not seen as a safe place by Israeli youth to speak about sexuality and contraceptive methods. This approach might also increase youth’s embarrassment (which naturally exists anyways during youth), that they feel at school (E. Hebron and S. Hebron, 2017). In addition to the ministry of education, there are other external bodies that offer education programs in subjects that are close to sex education and the reference to them is done by the school. However, they are not a substitute to the program at school since each one focuses on different issues and scope (ibid).

Besides schools, E. Hebron and S. Hebron (2017) agree with sex education at home being also essential. There is no substitute for sex education by parents. Parents have a special place within their child’s life and their ability to accompany educational processes could contribute to their ability to provide quality sex education. Research by Commendador (2010) and De Graff, et al. (2010) shows that when parents talk with their children about sexuality and when children share their sex experiences with their parents, the age of the children’s first sexual encounter goes up, the number of sexual partners goes down, they use more contraceptive methods, and experience more satisfying sex. The more the parents feel comfortable with the subject of sexuality and the more knowledge they have about the subject, the more they talk to their children about it (Jerman & Constantine, 2010; Miller, Kotchick, Dorsey, Forehand, & Ham, 1998) . However, according to Jerman & Constantine (2010) most parents experience fear and anxiety when it comes to sexual talks, hence, they do not talk to their kids about sex at all, especially when their kids have not reached adolescence. As a result, creating trust with their children becomes difficult which consequently harms communication between parents and young adults (Statland-Vaintraub, 2013 as cited in E. Hebron and S. Hebron, 2017). When they do speak with their child, it seems that

fathers will usually speak with their sons and not their daughters, and that mothers do it more than fathers. They will mostly focus on sexuality transmitted diseases, but also on contraceptive, reproduction, pressure to have sex and choosing a sexual partner (E. Hebron and S. Hebron, 2017).

In addition, other sources of knowledge for youth about sex, also in Israel, is the internet (ibid). Searching for information about sex online has many advantages: anonymity, privacy, accessibility, comparing types of sources, exposure to authentic stories of other youth, etc. (Kanuga & Rosenfeld, 2004). However, this overload of information on the internet can be confusing, it might not be accurate, the discourse about sex becomes less personal, and there is more chance of getting hurt over the internet. Also, the exposure to pornography and relying on it as a source of information is problematic (E. Hebron and S. Hebron, 2017; Nikkelen, 2020; Simon & Dandeback, 2013).

The access to pornography is not limited and it might serve as sex education which might result in several problems among adolescents given that it represents unrealistic models of sexual interaction, and women are presented as a sexual object (Mattheisen & Schmidt, 2013; The Israeli Center for Sexual Education, n.d). Moreover, the sex presented in pornography is inaccurate, lacks intimacy, and many times includes violent and derogatory elements (ibid). Research done by E. Hebron and S. Hebron (2017) suggests that the use of pornography as sex education becomes very problematic, specially since 78% of boys and 47% of girls in Israel are exposed to pornography until the end of 7th grade, from which 80% are secular and 68% religious.

To conclude, formal sexual education should be taught in schools, in conjunction with parents' involvement in the delivery of such information. However, as previously mentioned, adolescents' main sources of information about sexual education are parents, peers, and media (Frappier et al., 2008; Guttmacher Institute, 2017; Tulloch & Kaufman, 2013; UNESCO 2009, 2018), being media a risky source of such information due to the kind of information presented that many times might be inaccurate, alongside the possibility of exposure to pornography, especially when media has the potential to reach viewers unlimitedly and influence their behaviors towards sexuality (Eyal & Kunkel, 2008; Eyal, et al., 2014). For these reasons, it is important to explore theoretical approaches dealing with media content and audience effects such as the Social cognitive theory which will be analyzed in the next section of this study.

Social cognitive theory: Theoretical angle connecting exposure to sexual television content and audience effects.

Social cognitive theory is an important perspective that has influenced the area of media and sexuality. For this reason, this theory will serve as background for this study.

Many theories have been proposed to explain human behavior and to understand the origins of people's actions. According to Myers (2007) people are not born with a hereditary blueprint for life like animals. Rather, much of what people do is learned through observation. Observational learning refers to learning from others' experiences and examples; we observe and imitate others. According to Meltzoff (1988), by watching television programs, children might learn, for example, that men are supposed to be tough and women gentle.

The proposition of social learning was theorized by Albert Bandura. This theory is based on the idea that people learn from observation. According to Bandura (1977, 2009), the ability to learn from observation allows people to obtain patterns of behavior without having to create them step by step by monotonous testing and mistake experimentations. Bandura also explained that some complex behavior can be created only through modeling which is an essential piece of learning given that the process of attainment can be greatly shortened through modeling (Bandura, 2001, 2009). Furthermore, Bandura explained that most people learn through modeling: from observing others, people create an idea of how new behaviors are carried out, and on future events this coded information serves as a guide for action (Bandura, 1977). According to social cognitive theory, there are four processes of observational learning: attention, retention, motor of reproduction, and motivation (Bandura, 1977, 2001).

In attentional processes, people need to pay attention to learn. Anything that diminishes people's attention is going to have a negative effect on observational learning. If the model is interesting, people are far more likely to devote their complete attention to it and learn (Bandura, 2001, 2009). On television for example, the models presented are often very effective in capturing attention, consequently, it holds people's attention for long periods of time and viewers learn a lot of what they see (Bandura, 1977, 2009).

Regarding retention processes, people should remember the modeled behavior they observed to be influenced by it. Response patterns must be represented in memory in a symbolic way. Through symbols, modeling experiences can be kept in memory for a long period of time and even permanently. In addition, human's ability for symbolization is what allows them to learn about their behavior through observation (Bandura, 1977, 2001, 2009). Another important aspect in the retention process is verbal coding of modeled events which facilitates observational learning. Observers who modeled events into words retain behavior better than those who just observed (Bandura, 1977).

Additionally, motor reproduction processes are about converting symbolic representations into actions. Once people have paid attention to the model and retained the information, it is time to execute the observed behavior. Additional practice of the learned behavior leads to improvement and skill advancement (Bandura, 1977, 2001).

Finally, for observational learning to be successful, people must be motivated to imitate the behavior that has been modeled. Reinforcement and punishment play an important role in motivation. People will be more likely to perform modeled behavior if it is self-satisfying than if it is punished (Bandura, 1977, 2001).

In conclusion, social cognitive theory highlights the psychological processes and personal differences through which the symbolic atmosphere influences viewers (Bandura, 2009). As previously mentioned, the theory claims that people acquire information and learn behaviors through observing models, also from television. Numerous aspects influence what information is obtained from models, how it is processed, and whether it is displayed in later behavior. The theory highlights the nature and contextual elements included in the depiction of sexual messages more than the number of sexual messages to which viewers are exposed on the media. Social cognitive theory believes that certain representations, such as violent content, are likely to be more prominent, and therefore more influential for viewers. Several studies have analyzed the effects of the media in different fields such as violence, pornography, body image, and prosocial

behaviors (Check & Malamuth, 1987), as well as sexual effects (Eyal & Kunkel, 2008; Eyal, et al., 2014).

With regards to sexual effects specifically, mainstream media, as an influence of sexual socialization in young adults, has been studied by several researchers (Collins, Martino, Elliot, & Miu, 2011). More permissive sexual views and behaviors, greater acceptance of the rape myth, increased approval of sexual stereotypes, and earlier sexual experience, has been associated with viewing sexual content (Aubrey, Harrison, Kramer & Yellin, 2003). In addition, according to Moye, Guse, Chung and Jain (2011), causal links have been found between the exposure to specific content and viewer sexuality. Attitudes toward sex, condom use, and willingness to communicate about sexual matters were found to be affected by portrayals on the media of safer sex topics, conversations about sexually transmitted diseases, and consequences associated with sex. These studies corroborate that sexual effects depend on the amount of media sexual portrayals, among other factors. Studies of sexual messages on the media have found an increase of such messages over the years. Eyal, et al. (2014) found that 80.48% of the 584 television shows that were analyzed for the study, presented at least one sexual scene. Among these, foreign shows involved more sexual content (93.31%) than Israeli shows (69.52%). Furthermore, of all shows in the sample, only 15.24% involved messages about sexual risks, only 2.34% portrayed sexual health and risks as a main theme, and only 0.20% (one show) addressed the theme of sexual patience, precaution, and nonconsensual behaviors.

Theoretically, the high frequency of sexual messages and the depiction of sexual behaviors on screen is of interest from a social cognitive theory perspective, which as previously mentioned, proposes that these might increase the probability of learning and imitating the actions (Bandura, 2009). According to social cognitive theory, noticeable and prominent depictions are likely to influence viewers. Shows that depict topics of sexual health and risks as important themes, increase the possibility for learning, given that the message is more strongly communicated. For these reasons, it is important to analyze the messages to which adolescents are exposed to, in order to determine possible effects on their behaviors towards sex.

Research Questions

As previously stated, it is very important to impart sexual education to young adults. Research has shown that formal sexual education programs can help adolescents avoid dangerous sexual behavior, reduce the frequency of unprotected sexual activity as well as the number of sexual partners, and increase the use of protection against unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (Bell, 2009; Borawski, Tufts, Trapl, Hayman, Yoder & Lovegreen, 2015; Tulloch & Kaufman, 2013; UNESCO, 2018; E. Hebron and S. Hebron, 2017). In addition, research has found that media is one of the main sources of information about sexuality for adolescents (Frappier et al., 2008; Guttmacher Institute, 2017; Tulloch & Kaufman, 2013; UNESCO 2009, 2018). However, several researchers have studied the effects that media, as a source of sexual information, has on young adults, finding media to be a risky source of such information given that the kind of information presented might be inaccurate, (Eyal & Kunkel, 2008; Eyal, et al., 2014), and also due to the media's potential to influence sexual socialization in young adults (Collins, Martino, Elliot, & Miu, 2011). Furthermore, viewing sexual content has been associated with more permissive sexual behaviors (Aubrey, Harrison, Kramer & Yellin,

2003), and causal links between the exposure to specific sexual content and sexual behaviors of viewers has been found (Moye, Guse, Chung & Jain, 2011).

Derived from the idea of social cognitive theory that suggests that people acquire information and learn behaviors through observing models, and proposes the idea that the high frequency of sexual messages and the depiction of sexual behaviors on screen might increase the probability of learning and imitating such actions (Bandura, 2009), this study aims to analyze the types of sexual messages that adolescents are exposed to in the show “Sex Education” by asking the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the sexual messages that the show “Sex Education” portrays?

RQ2: To what extent are risk and responsibility messages included in the sexual messages portrayed in the show “Sex Education”?

2. METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this project requires gathering and examining relevant content from specified television programs. Therefore, the research method of this study is a qualitative content analysis of such programs that will serve to evaluate the messages and be able to arrive at a more complete understanding of the portrayal of sexual messages in the media.

Sample

For this content analysis, all episodes of the first season of the teen comedy drama “Sex Education” were analyzed. The definition of teen drama used for the purposes of this study was the one designed by Kelly (2010). This definition characterizes teen dramas as hour-long television programs in which most of the storylines depict teenage characters.

“Sex Education” is a British comedy-drama web television series aired on Netflix. The first season premiered in January 2019. This show was chosen for this study due to its commercial success with more than 40 million viewers after its first appearance. The show focuses in a 16-year-old boy named Otis living with his mom Jean, a sexual therapist, who is very open about all aspects of sexuality. Otis is portrayed as an awkward and not popular kid who opens a secret sexual clinic in his school to help his classmates with their sexual problems.

Content measures and procedures

In order to collect the data for this study, a qualitative content analysis of the show “Sex Education” was conducted. The author of this research served as the coder of this project. Within the show, variables were analyzed at two levels: scene level and overall episode.

During the initial period of the coding, all eight episodes of the first season were watched by the coder in order to be able to choose relevant episodes involving sexual content. This study defines sexual content as any portrayal of sexual activity, sexually suggestive behavior, including physical flirting that intends to arouse sexual interest, passionate kissing that communicates a feeling of sexual intimacy, intimate touching, conversations about sexual topics, including remarks about sexual actions, interests, or behaviors. In addition, the analysis included the pursuing and delivering of assistance from an authoritative/expert figure with regards to sexual information, as well as sexual talk about risks and responsibilities, such as sexual safety,

including conversations of protective procedures to reduce the risks involved in sexual activity, and the portrayal of negative consequences of sexual behavior (Kunkel, et al., 2007).

The episodes that included sexual content were watched twice to deeply evaluate the portrayed messages and be able to reach a better understanding of the representations of sexuality in the show.

The coding of each episode was divided into the variables described below based on research by Kunkel et al. (2005) about the effects that exposure to sexual content has on viewers. In addition, coding for most variables was done with an additional measure of sexual risks and responsibilities.

Talk about Sex

Conversations about sex were labeled by the following categories: remarks about own or others' sexual actions or interests; talks intended to promote sexual activity; conversations about sex that happened in the past; conversations about virginity loss, talk about sexual crimes; and conversations with a sexual health expert or authority figure.

Sexual Behavior

Sexual actions were labeled by the following categories: physical flirtation, passionate and intimate kissing, intimate touching of another's private body parts, implied sexual intercourse, explicitly depicted sexual intercourse, oral sex (implied or depicted), and masturbation. For scenes that portrayed talk and/or sexual behavior the coder evaluated seriousness as the attitude to sexuality being generally serious, generally frivolous, or mixed. According to Eyal et al. (2014), a serious attitude to sex includes a literal and sincere attitude to the topic that is usually related to a concern about sexuality and is occasionally portrayed in a grave or severe tone. A frivolous attitude portrays sexuality with humor, satire, exaggeration, and disregard minimizing the significance of sexuality or its consequences as if they should be taken irresponsibly or casually.

Sexual Health Risks and Responsibilities

For scenes including sexual talk and/or sexual behavior, the coder evaluated any mention or depiction of sexual health, risks, safer sex vocabulary or contraception methods, physical results such as pregnancy, abortion, contraction or fear of contraction of sexually transmitted diseases, and sexual abstinence. To supplement the scene level variables, an evaluation was conducted at the overall episode level showing if episodes containing sexual content, place strong emphasis on sexual responsibility. This was done by analyzing if this topic represented a main theme within the episode conveying a message about the importance of considering sexuality and its consequences.

3. RESULTS

The first research goal of this study was to examine the sexual messages that the first season of the show "Sex Education" portrays. Of the eight episodes that were watched, 100% of the episodes included sexual messages.

Talk about sex

All episodes of season one contained sexual talk. Conversations about sex were labeled by different categories: remarks about own or others' sexual actions or interests; talks intended to promote sexual activity; conversations about sex that happened in the past; conversations

about virginity loss, talk about sexual crimes; and conversations with a sexual health expert or authority figure. Some examples within the show portraying sexual talk are the following:

a) Conversation between Otis, the protagonist, and his friend Eric about Otis' inability to masturbate in which Eric asks Otis if he was able to finally masturbate "So, did you do it? You did not even try. I mean, what exactly is the problem here? I mean, can you even get a hard-on?" (episode 1)

b) When Eric tells Otis that everyone in their school has had sex "I keep telling you man, everyone has had sex over the summer, except you" Otis replies by stating that Eric has not had sex either, to which Eric replies "Excuse me, I gave two and a half hand jobs". (episode 1)

c) Amy sharing her sexual problems with her friend Maeve "My boyfriend can't come.

The other night we were like going and going, and I'm losing my shit and reached the summit, but he like, he faked it". (episode 1).

d) Otis telling Eric about having a wet dream and Eric answering "You jizzed your pants, what happened in this dream?" (episode 3)

e) Lily's thoughts about the erotic comic she is drawing "She eyed his pulsating purple penis, inching towards it. She felt her abdominal sex cavity quiver". (episode 3)

f) Lily asking Otis to have sex with her to both lose their virginity "I heard a thing that concerns your virginal status and your cherry remains unpoped, let's skip the faux modesty, I'm down if you are, deflowering the maiden, your dick in my vagina, what do you say?" (episode 4)

g) Lesbian couple who are having problems in sex asking Otis for advice "We can't get in synch or find a rhythm. When we are having sex, I feel like I've never seen a vagina before" (episode 4).

h) Ruby talking to Maeve about a picture of her vagina getting released: "It's my vagina, I need help, I only sent a photo to one guy, I can't believe I was stupid enough to leave my face in it, but I was. I need you to find out who it was. If this picture gets released, it will be over the internet for the rest of my life". (episode 5)

i) Otis giving advice to Amy about getting to know her own body and masturbate to be able to know what she likes "You should probably think about, you know, things that you enjoy when it's just you" Amy answers that she has never done it and is disgusting, to which Otis says "women do tend to feel more shame surrounding masturbation than men. Feeling that it's sort of a taboo, or dirty. Which it isn't. And of course, some men also feel this way about areas. What I'm saying is, before you talk to Steve, you should probably figure out what works for you and your body". (episode 6).

j) Maeve telling Ola (Otis' girlfriend) that he is virgin "Just between you and me, he is really inexperienced. He hasn't had sex or anything yet. He's a bit confused about all that stuff, so don't be surprised if he doesn't seem keen". (episode 7).

k) Lily telling Otis about her vagina being too small and couldn't have sex "My vagina has betrayed me. I finally find someone who's DTF (down to fuck) and he can't get his average-sized dick in my stupid vagina". (episode 8).

With regards to the assessment of seriousness within the first season of the show, it was found that the show treated the topic of sex in a serious way and uses many times a tone that is amusing and humorous. Overall, it treats the themes seriously, and it talks about sexuality very openly. However, it is important to mention that given the nature of the show being a comedy- drama, it sometimes approaches sexuality in a frivolous way.

Sexual Behavior Of all watched episodes of season one, 88% (7 episodes) contained sexual behavior.

Physical flirtation was found in all episodes; passionate and intimate kissing was found in four episodes; intimate touching of another's private body parts was found in five episodes; implied sexual intercourse was found in five episodes; explicitly depicted sexual intercourse was found in five episodes; oral sex was found in five episodes; and masturbation was found in four episodes.

In sum, across the whole first season of the show, sexual behavior was prevalent. It is important to mention that portrayals of sexual behavior have an effect in young viewers patterns of behavior (Kunkel, et al., 2007). Contextual factors of sexual representations such as the age of the depicted characters and their relationship status are important aspects likely to influence adolescent behavior. In the show "Sex Education" all characters were teenagers, and sexual behavior mostly happened between characters within an established relationship. These factors might influence young viewers, specially if they find similarities between their own life and the portrayed characters (Bandura, 2009; Kunkel, et al., 2007).

The second research goal of this study was to examine whether risk and responsibility messages were included in the sexual messages portrayed in the first season of the show "Sex Education". In analyzing the episodes for this study, each scene involving sexual content was evaluated for any mention or depiction of sexual risk or responsibility themes such as condom use. As previously mentioned, evidence suggests that the exposure to such messages contributes to behaviors and attitudes that are likely to decrease the risk of involvement in risky sexual activity, along side unwanted pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases.

Among all episodes of season one, only eight scenes included risk and responsibility messages. It is important to mention that only one scene portrayed a mom speaking with her son about sex. All other messages were delivered by Otis, the protagonist of the show, who is an adolescent. The scenes within the show portraying risk and responsibility messages are the following:

a) A SRE (Sex and relationship education) class in which the teacher is supposed to teach students how to use a condom given that there is an outbreak of pubic lice in the campus. It is important to mention that the teacher does not actually teach the students, and the names he uses to refer to private body parts is not anatomical. Instead of saying penis and testicles, he calls them "cock and balls". In addition, he refers to the whole lesson as being awkward implying he is uncomfortable teaching these topics. Students are given also a worksheet in which they must write the names of the female external genital organs. The teacher is not portrayed teaching the

students the names. However, Otis, the protagonist, knows the names and he teaches them to Maeve who is sitting next to him. (episode 1).

b) Mention of impotence. Otis' mom, who is a sexual therapist, tells Adam, Otis' classmate, that smoking marihuana could lead to impotence and inability to ejaculate. She uses accurate names and speaks openly about the topic. (episode 1)

c) Use of Viagra. Adam cannot ejaculate and takes Viagra pills. It is implied in the show that using Viagra is risky and should not be used for this purpose. (episode 1)

d) Abortion. Maeve finds out she is pregnant. She goes to an abortion clinic by herself.

The nurse asks her if she uses contraception and Maeve answers that she uses condoms. The nurse explains that condoms are not a hundred percent effective and suggests using the contraceptive pill or a hormonal implant. She does not explain how these methods work. Later in the episode Maeve goes to abort by herself and after the procedure Otis picks her up. The whole procedure is depicted as easy and normal and Maeve is portrayed as if nothing had happened. No mention of possible physical or psychological consequences are mentioned or portrayed. (episode 3).

e) Explanation of sex. Flashback of when Otis was a little boy in which his moms explains him what is sex "Do you know what sex is Otis? Sex is when a man puts his penis inside of a woman's vagina. It can hurt, but intercourse can be wonderful" (episode 6).

f) Virginity loss. Otis tells his father he is worried about not having lost his virginity since he is way behind his peers. His father tells him "There is nothing wrong in being a virgin. The first time you do it, it will probably be bad. The good stuff comes later. You have to ask yourself: Why am I waiting? At some point, you've just gotta chuck yourself out of the plane". (episode 6).

g) Consent. Otis gives advice to a kid who has been rejected by the girl he likes "I know it's hard, but if you've asked her and she said no, then I think you have your answer. It is inappropriate to continue making grand gestures to a girl who made it clear she wasn't interested. No means no". (episode 7).

h) Vaginismus. Lily tells Otis that she could not have sex because her partner penis could not enter her vagina. Otis explains that she might have vaginismus "I think you have something called vaginismus, which is the body's automatic reaction to a fear of vaginal penetration" (episode 8).

In conclusion, sexual messages including risk and responsibility information was almost not present in the first season of show. The only contraception method that was mentioned three times was condoms. Pregnancy was portrayed as a physical result of sexual intercourse, alongside abortion, which was represented as something easy and normal. There was no mention of any sexually transmitted diseases, besides the whole school having pubic lice. In addition, it is important to notice that the only two scenes that portrayed a teacher talking about sexual topics (condoms, and menstruation), depicted the teachers as being uncomfortable with the topic. The subject of sexual risks and responsibilities was not represented as a main theme within the first season of the show, and messages about the importance of considering sexuality and its consequences were not included.

4. DISCUSSION

At the beginning of this study, it was recognized that providing young adults with formal sexual education is extremely important. Sexual education has been found to help adolescents to avoid dangerous sexual behavior, reduce the number of sexual partners, reduce unprotected sexual activity minimizing the risks of unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (Bell, 2009; Borawski, Tufts, Trapl, Hayman, Yoder & Lovegreen, 2015; Tulloch & Kaufman, 2013; UNESCO, 2018; E. Hebron and S. Hebron, 2017). In addition, sexual education provides adolescents with the necessary skills that help them make informed decisions and act upon them, while improving communication with parents and/or other trusted adults (UNESCO, 2009, 2018). Social learning theory suggests that people learn from observation (Bandura, 2001; 2009), and increasing evidence reveals that sexual talk and behavior on the media contribute to sexual socialization among young adults (Collins, et al., 2004, Eyal & Kunkel, 2008; Ward, 2002). This study was motivated by the idea that adolescents might learn about sexuality through media content given that sexual patterns depicted on the media, give young adults behavioral learning opportunities (Kunkel, 2007; Eyal, et al., 2014).

This study provides an analysis of sexual messages found in the first season of the show “Sex Education”. The first research question asked: What are the sexual messages that the show portrays? It was found that sexual messages were present in all episodes either through sexual talk, sexual behavior, or both. Moreover, these messages appeared with high frequency in most scenes of each episode, being sexual talk more frequent than sexual behavior. That is, sex and sexual topics create a constant and repetitive aspect of this show. As a result, the overall volume of exposure to sexual messages in this show might have considerable implications for audience effects.

The second research question asked if risk and responsibility messages were included in the sexual messages portrayed in the show. It was found that the show did not contain much of this content and it did not place a strong emphasis on sexual health topics. The implications of this might be exposure to high levels of sexual content with little mention of sexual health topics. Social learning theory suggests that prominent portrayals are likely to be influential for viewers. When shows place a strong emphasis on sexual health and risks topics, the message is more strongly communicated increasing the potential for learning. However, only eight scenes among all episodes of the show included topics of sexual health.

Limitations and future directions

There were some limitations to the present study. First, content analytic methods do not enable drawing conclusions about audience effects. To do this, it is necessary to directly examine viewers who may understand the same sexual content differently according to their own culture and values. Second, the coding was limited to the show “Sex Education”. Future research could benefit from examining additional programming to determine if such sexual messages are prevalent among different shows to which adolescents are exposed to. Third, this study is missing inter-coder reliability given that the coding of the show was done just by the author of this study which might have led to some biased conclusions.

To conclude, the fact that “Sex Education” included a high number of sexual messages, future research should be done on the types of sexual messages that are present in the media that

adolescents consume. Analyzing other teen shows as well as other genres might provide awareness regarding the ways in which sexuality is depicted on the media. Finally, although it is important to be as objective as possible when analyzing the portrayals on the media, it is equally important to understand that viewers might come away with a different understanding from what researchers perceive. Thus, it is important to conduct studies in which participants are asked about their perception of what these messages are.

REFERENCES

- בני של מיני הינוך תכניות לבניית מנחים עקרונות: מיני בחינוך ומי מתי מה (2017). ש. הברון, א. הברון, עברית פסיכולוגיה. נוערבישראל.
<https://www.hebpsy.net/articles.asp?t=0&id=3570>
מידע 18? עד 12 מגיל ת/מתבגר מיני בחינוך ללמד להורים כדאי מה (תאריך חסר). מיני לחינוך הישראלי המרכז
מין על מין <https://www.minamin.org/gilaim12-18>
- Aubrey, J. S., Harrison, K., Kramer, L., & Yellin, J. (2003). Variety versus timing: Gender differences in college students' sexual expectations as predicted by exposure to sexually oriented television. *Communication Research*, 30, 432–460. Retrieved from <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezprimo1.idc.ac.il/doi/pdf/10.1177/0093650203253365>
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hill.
- Bandura, A. (2001). Social cognitive theory of mass communication. *Media Psychology*, 3, 265–299.
- Bandura, A. (2009). Social cognitive theory of mass communication. In J. Bryant & M. B. Oliver (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research* (3rd ed., pp. 94–124). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Bell, K. J. (2009). Wake up and smell the condoms: An analysis of sex education programs in the United States, the Netherlands, Sweden, Australia, France, and Germany. *Inquiries Journal*, 1(11), 1–3. Retrieved from <http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/articles/40/3/wake-up-and-smell-the-condoms-an-analysis-of-sex-education-programs-in-the-united-states-the-netherlands-sweden-australia-france-and-germany>
- Bleakley, A., Hennessy, M., Fishbein, M., & Jordan, A. (2009). How Sources of Sexual Information Relate to Adolescents' Beliefs about Sex. *American Journal of Health Behavior*, 33(1), 37–48. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2860278/>
- Borawski, E. A., Tufts, K. A., Trapl, E. S., Hayman, L. L., Yoder, L. D., & Lovegreen, L. D. (2015). Effectiveness of health education teachers and school nurses teaching sexually transmitted infections/human immunodeficiency virus prevention knowledge and skills in high school. *Journal of School Health*, 85(3), 189–196. Retrieved from <https://doi-org.ezprimo1.idc.ac.il/10.1111/josh.12234>
- Brown, J. D., Halpern, C. T., & L'Eingle, K. L. (2005). Mass media as a sexual super peer for early maturing girls. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 36, 420–427. doi: 10.1016/j.jadohealth.2004.06.003
- Check, J. V. P., & Malamuth, N. M. (1986) Pornography and Sexual Aggression: A Social Learning Theory Analysis, *Annals of the International Communication Association*, 9 (1), 181–213, DOI: 10.1080/23808985.1986.11678607

- Collins, R. L., Elliott, M. N., Berry, S. H., Kanouse, D. E., Kunkel, D., Hunter, S. B., & Miu, A. (2004). Watching sex on television predicts adolescent initiation of sexual behavior. *Pediatrics*, 114(3), 280–289. Retrieved from <https://doi-org.ezprimo1.idc.ac.il/10.1542/peds.2003-1065-L>
- Collins, R. L., Martino, S. C., Elliott, M. N., & Miu, A. (2011). Relationships Between Adolescent Sexual Outcomes and Exposure to Sex in Media: Robustness to Propensity-Based Analysis. *Developmental psychology*, 47(2), 585–591. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4019965/>
- Commendador K. A. (2010). Parental influences on adolescent decision-making and contraceptive use. *Pediatric nursing*, 36(3), 147-170. Retrieved from <https://search-proquest-com.ezprimo1.idc.ac.il/docview/577353840/fulltextPDF/73092D0BB4E4B64PQ/1?accountid=38867>
- De Graff H., Vanwesenbeeck I., Woertman L., Keijsers L., Meijer S. & Meeus W. (2010). Parental support and knowledge and adolescents' sexual health: Testing two mediational models in a national Dutch sample. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 39, 189-198. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/41057128_Parental_Support_and_Knowledge_and_Adolescents'_Sexual_Health_Testing_Two_Mediational_Models_in_a_National_Dutch_Sample
- Eyal, K., & Kunkel, D. (2008). The effects of television drama shows on emerging adults' sexual attitudes and moral judgments. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 52, 161–181. doi: 10.1080/08838150801991757
- Eyal, K., Raz, Y., & Levi, M. (2014). Messages About Sex on Israeli Television: Comparing Local and Foreign Programming. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 58 (1), 42-58. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2013.875021>
- Frappier, J.Y., Kaufman, M., Baltzer, F., Elliot, A., Lane, M., Pinzon, J., McDuff, P. (2008). Sex and sexual health: a survey of Canadian youth and mothers. *Paediatrics & Child Health*, 13(1), 25–30. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2528827/#>
- Jerman, P. & Constantine, N. A. (2010). Demographic and psychological predictors of parent-adolescent communication about sex: A representative statewide analysis. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 39, 1164-1174. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2917005/>
- Kanuga, M. & Rosenfeld, W. D. (2004). Adolescent sexuality and the internet: The good, the bad and the URL. *Journal of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology*, 17(2), 117-124. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpag.2004.01.015>
- Kar, S. K., Choudhury, A., Singh, A. P. (2015). Understanding normal development of adolescent sexuality: a bumpy ride. *Journal of Human Reproductive Science*, 8 (6), 70- 74. doi: 10.4103/0974-1208.158594
- Kelly, M. (2010). Virginity loss narratives in teen drama television programs. *Journal of Sex Research*, 47 (5), 479-489. <https://doi.org.mgs.smkb.ac.il/10.1080/00224490903132044>
- Kunkel, D., Eyal, K., Biely, E., Finnerty, K., & Donnerstein, E. (2005). Sex on TV 4: A biennial report to the Kaiser Family Foundation. Menlo Park, CA: Kaiser Family Foundation.

- Kunkel, D., Farrar, K.M., Eyal K., Biely, E., Donnerstein, E. & Rideout, V. (2007) Sexual Socialization Messages on Entertainment Television: Comparing Content Trends 1997–2002, *Media Psychology*, 9 (3), 595-622. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15213260701283210>
- Martino, S. C., Collins, R. L., Elliott, M. N., Kanouse, D. E., & Berry, S. H. (2009). It's better on TV: Does television set teens up for regret following sexual initiation? *Perspectives on Sexual & Reproductive Health*, 41, 92–100. doi: 10.1363/4109209
- Matthiesen, S., & Schmidt, G. (2013). What do young people do with pornography? In Matthiesen, S. (Ed.), *Youth sexuality in the internet age: A qualitative study of the social and sexual relationships of young people* [eBook edition] (pp. 132-181). Budeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung. Retrieved from: <https://publikationen.sexualaufklaerung.de/fileadmin/redakteur/publikationen/dokumente/13300737.pdf>
- Miller, K., Kotchick, B., Dorsey, S., Forehand, R., & Ham, A. (1998). Family Communication About Sex: What are Parents Saying and Are Their Adolescents Listening? *Family Planning Perspectives*, 30(5), 218-235. doi:10.2307/2991607
- Moyer-Guse, E., Chung, A. H., & Jain, P. (2011). Identification with characters and discussions of taboo topics after exposure to an entertainment narrative about sexual health. *Journal of Communication*, 61, 387–406. doi: 10.1111/j.1460- 2466.2011.01551.x. Retrieved from <https://doi-org.ezprimo1.idc.ac.il/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2011.01551.x>
- Nikkelen, S. W. C., Van Oosten, J. M. F. & Van den Borne, M. J. J. (2020) Sexuality Education in the Digital Era: Intrinsic and Extrinsic Predictors of Online Sexual Information Seeking Among Youth. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 57(2), 189-199. Retrieved from <https://doi-org.ezprimo1.idc.ac.il/10.1080/00224499.2019.1612830>
- Papathanasiou, I., & Lahana, E., (n.d). Adolescence, sexuality, and sexual education. *Health Science Journal*, (1), 1-8. Retrieved from: <https://www.hsj.gr/medicine/adolescence-sexuality-and-sexual-education.php?aid=3698>
- Rideout, V., Foehr, U. G., & Roberts, D. F. (2010). *Generation M2: Media in the lives of 8- to 18-year-olds. A Kaiser Family Foundation Study*. Menlo Park, CA: Kaiser Family Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.kff.org/entmedia/upload/8010.pdf>
- Rideout, V., Robb, M. B. (2019). *The Common Sense census: Media use by teens and tweens, 2019*. San Francisco, CA: Common Sense Media.
- Secor-Turner, M., Sieving, R.E., Eisenberg, M.E., & Skay, C. (2011) Associations between sexually experienced adolescents' sources of information about sex and sexual risk outcomes. *Sex Education*, 11 (4), 489-500. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681811.2011.601137>
- Simon, L., & Daneback, K. (2013). Adolescents' use of the internet for sex education: a thematic and critical review of the literature. *International Journal of Sexual Health* 25 (4), 305-319. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19317611.2013.823899>
- Tulloch, T., & Kaufman, M., (2013). Adolescent Sexuality. *Pediatrics in Review*, 34(1), 29- 38. DOI: 10.1542/pir.34-1-29
- UNESCO. (2009). *International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education*. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000183281>

- UNESCO. (2018). International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education: An Evidence-Informed Approach. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000260770?posInSet=4&queryId=bc89c197-790b-47ec-9184-9da864228067>
- Walcott, C. M., Chenneville, T., & Tarquini, S. (2011). Relationship between recall of sex education and college students' sexual attitudes and behavior. *Psychology in the Schools*, 48 (8), 828-842. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.20592>
- Ward, L. M. (2002). Does television exposure affect emerging adults' attitudes and assumptions about sexual relationships? Correlational and experimental confirmation. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence*, 31(1), 1–15. Retrieved from <https://doi-org.ezprimo1.idc.ac.il/10.1023/A:1014068031532>