

---

The Eurasia Proceedings of Educational & Social Sciences (EPESS), 2016

Volume 5, Pages 166-172

ICRES 2016: International Conference on Research in Education and Science

## INSPECTORS AND FUTURES INSPECTORS' CONCEPTIONS RELATING TO SEXUALITY EDUCATION

Sabah Selmaoui  
Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University

Taoufik El Abboudi  
Cadi Ayyad University

Abdelkader Ouhtit  
Académie Régionale d'Education et Formation

Boujemaa Agorram  
Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University

Salah-Eddine Khzami  
Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University

Anouar Alami  
Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University

**Abstract:** The sexuality education remains a controversial issue in Morocco. Generally, in our society, the topics related to sexuality are social taboo that people avoid approaching by decency, especially with young people. The implementation of this education in school curricula meets obstacles socio-cultural. In this present work, we are interested in the inspector's and future inspector's conceptions about sexual education because they are the main actors in the didactic transposition. They participate in development and revision of curricula and syllabuses and they participate in teacher's mentoring and supervision. The inspector's beliefs and values have an influence in this didactic transposition. In this topic of strong educational range, conception can be analyzed as interaction between three poles: scientific knowledge (K), values (V) in a very broad sense (opinions, convictions, social representations, beliefs, ideologies), and social practices (P) either professional, families, or citizen according to the model KVP offered by Clement (2004; 2006). We used a questionnaire prepared jointly within the European project Biohead-Citizen, sent to the inspectors and futures inspectors.

We present the results and we analyze and discuss the results concerning the age to which certain topic of sexual education should be taught for the first time in school. In this topic, the conception could be deeply rooted not only in scientific knowledge but also in value systems and social practices.

**Keywords:** Conception, sexuality education, inspectors and futures inspectors

### Introduction

#### Sexuality Education

While sexuality education is part of the curriculum in Western countries, it remains a controversial issue in several countries, including Morocco. Generally, in our society, the topics related to sexuality are social taboo that people avoid approaching by decency, especially with young people.

Sexuality education or sex education is the process of acquiring information and forming attitudes and beliefs about sexuality. It is also about developing young people's skills so that they make informed choices about their

---

- This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 Unported License, permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

- Selection and peer-review under responsibility of the Organizing Committee of the conference

\*Corresponding author: Sabah Selmaoui E-Mail: sselmaoui@gmail.com

behaviour, and feel confident and competent about acting on these choices. It is widely accepted that young people have a right to sex education, partly because it is a means by which they are helped to protect themselves against abuse, exploitation, unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS.

Sexuality education seeks both to reduce the risks of potentially negative outcomes from sexual behaviour like unwanted or unplanned pregnancies and infection with sexually transmitted diseases, and to enhance the quality of relationships. It is also about developing young people's ability to make decisions over their entire lifetime. The WHO texts insist on the necessity for implementing early sexuality education, particularly in primary schools (WHO, 1999; 2004). The young people are often exposed to situations of vulnerability for sexual health. Childhood and adolescence are periods when situations of risk emerge. It is the most convenient moment to initiate them with actions making it possible to preserve or improve their health condition. School, socialization spaces and citizenship practices, has a share of responsibility with regard to pupil's health and their preparation adulthood by helping them to adopt behaviours which preserve their health in the respect of themselves, of others and their environment. Sexuality education contributes in a specific way to this formation in its individual dimension as in its social inscription. The school remains, for the young people, the principal source of information on sexual health. It is the only place where the children and the teenagers can reach objective information. The school has thus a role to play by educating the young people by the knowledge.

### Analysis of conceptions; the KVP Model

Research in didactics of sciences was interested much in the pupil's conceptions from the point of constructivist standpoint (Tiberghien & Delacote 1976, Astolfi 1978, Giordan and De Vecchi, 1987, Clement 2006...). Many researchers (Astolfi, 1985; Giordan and De Vecchi, 1987; Clement, 1998) showed the importance of the taking into account of the individual conceptions about a subject in his training. We are mainly working on the conceptions of teachers of authors and publishers of school textbooks. To understand these conceptions and their origins and their analysis as social representations is an essential stage to be able to consider training like defining curricula. Scientific education must take into account the deep roots of individual's conceptions on scientific topics with strong educational range like health education, sexuality education or environment education. In these scientific topics, the conceptions could be strongly anchored not only in scientific knowledge but also in systems of values and social practices (Clement, 2006). In the present work, the conceptions of some actors of the educational system are analysed as being the emergences from interactions between the 3 poles K, V and P, as proposed by the model KVP (Clément 1998, 2004, 2006). The 3 poles are: the scientific knowledge (K), the systems of values (V) (The values are defined in a large sense, including opinions, beliefs and ideologies) and the social practices (P).

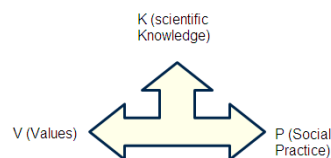


Figure 1. The KVP model

The Conceptions (C) Can Be Analysed As Interactions Between The 3 Poles Scientific Knowledge (K), Values (V) And Social Practices (P).

In this study we are interested in the inspector's and future inspector's conceptions about sexual education because they are the main actors in the didactic transposition (Fig 2). They participate in development and revision of curricula and syllabuses and they participate in teacher's mentoring and supervision. The inspector's beliefs and values have an influence on the didactic transposition. On the way of understanding and teaching a topic: the teaching practice. They frequently constitute true obstacles with the professional practice development and the improvement of the processes of teaching-training.

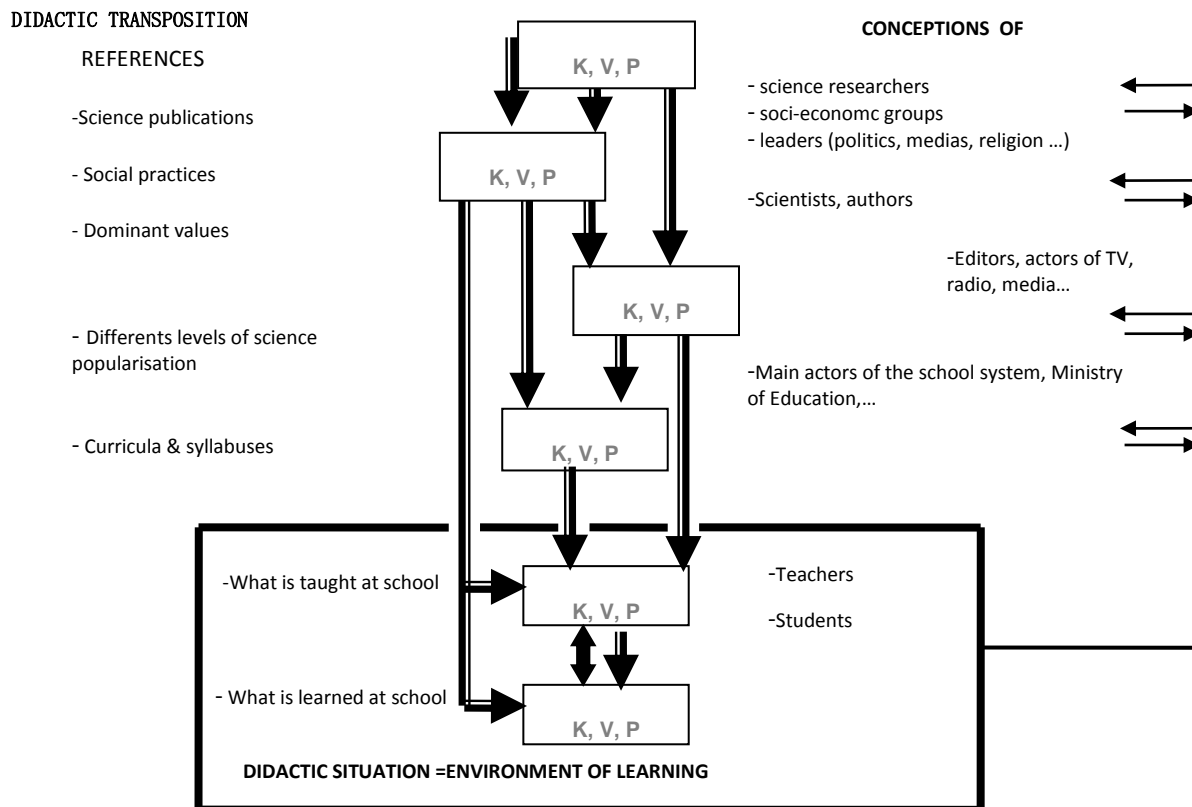


Figure 2 - Schema of the didactic transposition, linked to the analysis of the conceptions of the main actors of the transposition (Modified From Clément 2006).

Our objective in this work is to identify social conceptions and the personal opinions of the inspectors and future inspectors about a topic of strong educational range which is sexual health education. Our question: Age to which certain topics of sexual education should be first introduced at school by teachers and/or external specialists?

## Methodology

### Data Collection Instrument

To identify inspectors' and futures inspectors' conceptions, we chose as a tool of investigation a questionnaire elaborated in a common work with all the research teams in the European project Biohead-Citezen (Carvalho et al., 2004). Morocco is one of 19 countries participating in this European project (the Participant Group).

### Questionnaire and Coding

Our work concerns only the questions A85 to A90 and B37 to B40: questions carrying about the values and practices. Questions about age which inspectors think the following topics should be first introduced at school by teachers and/or external specialists. Responses are coded with a number scale from 1 "less than 6 years old" to 5 "never in school". Questions: Age to which certain topics of sexual education should be taught for the first time at school (A85) Organs of pleasure, (A86) contraception and birth control, (A87) sexually transmitted diseases, (A88) Abortion, (A89) homosexuality, (A90) paedophilia, (B37) pregnancy and childbirth, (B38) sexual intercourse, (B39) incest and sexual abuse, (B40) orgasm and sexual pleasure.

### Participants

Inspectors and futures inspectors of two school levels: primary school (elementary education) and secondary school (middle school and high school). The people involved in the research were all volunteers and the questionnaires were preserved anonymous.

2 data groups.

Group 1: 25 inspectors pre-service in primary

Group 2: 100 inspectors in secondary  
 40 in-service  
 60 pre-service

Table 1. Samples by groups of inspector's data group 2.

	SVT	Ma	PC	Fr	Ang	Ar	EI	Total
In-Service	10	6	6	7	1	6	4	40
Pre-service	8	9	9	6	7	13	8	60

SVT: Life and earth sciences. Ma: mathematics. PC: physic and chemistry sciences  
 Fr: French. Ang: English. Ar: Arab. EI: Islamic education  
 (80% men; 20% women)

The sample is heterogeneous formed by inspectors and future inspectors of scientific and literary disciplines.

### Results and Analysis

Our hypothesis is that inspectors' personal values influence their conceptions on sex education.

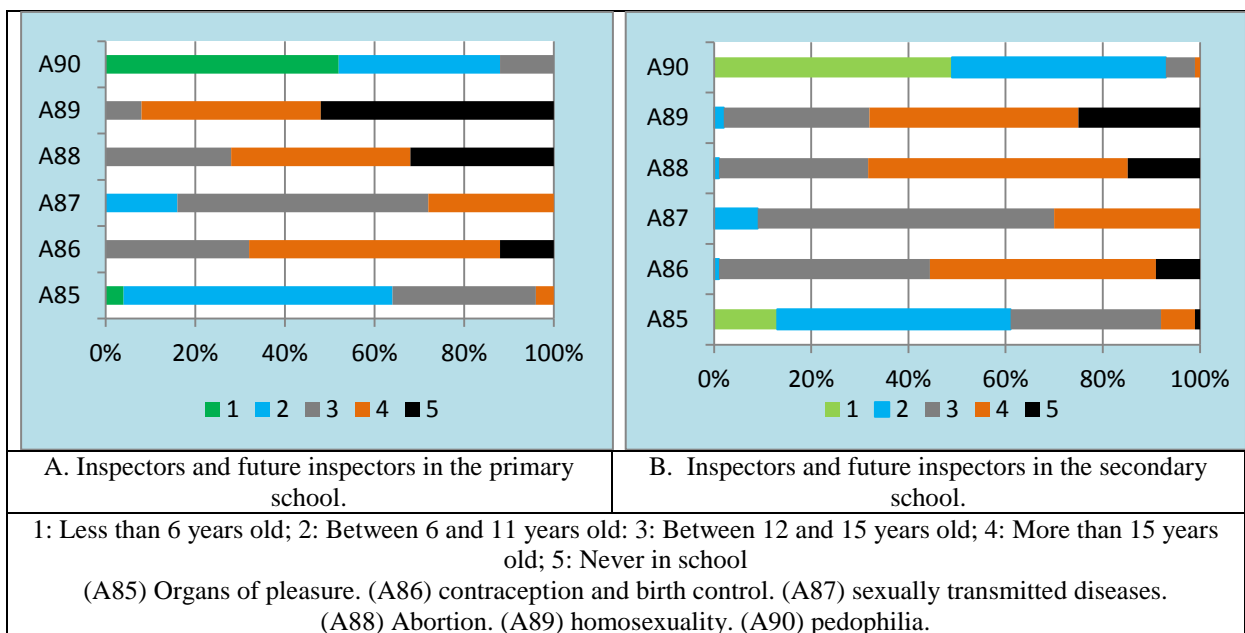
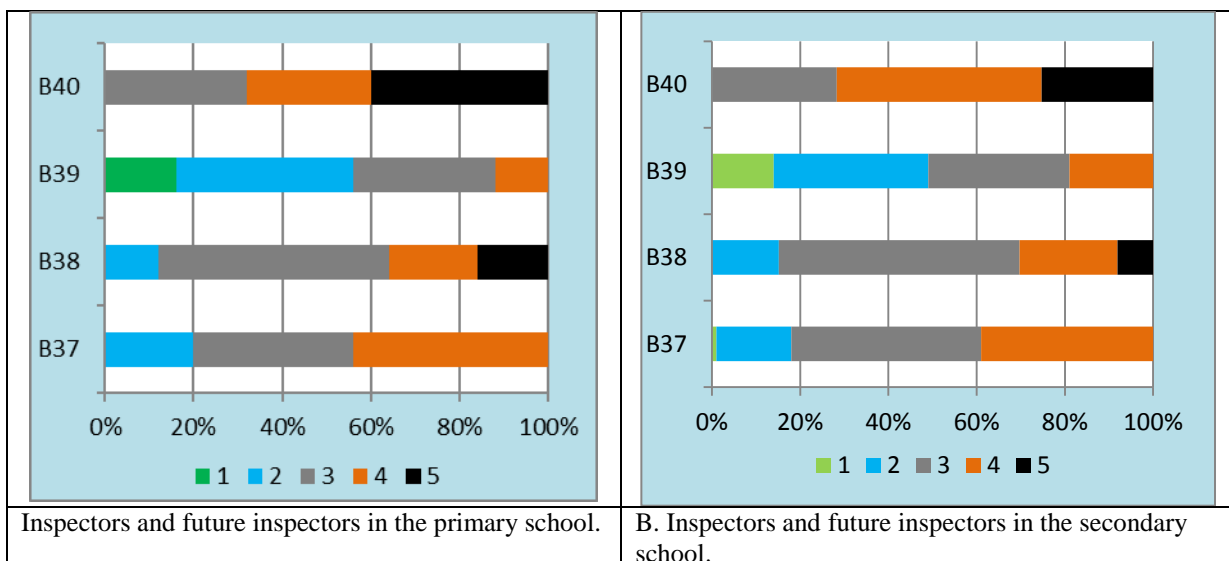


Figure 2. Distribution the answers of the questions (A85 To A90) which relate to the contents of sexual education to be taught and at what age these topics must be taught for the first time in school, by the teachers and/or outside contributors



1: Less than 6 years old; 2: Between 6 and 11 years old; 3: Between 12 and 15 years old; 4: More than 15 years old; 5: Never in school  
(B37) pregnancy and childbirth. (B38) sexual intercourse. (B39) incest and sexual abuse. (B40) orgasm and sexual pleasure.

Figure 3. Distribution the answers of the questions (B37 To B40) which relate to the contents of sexual education to be taught and at what age these topics must be taught for the first time in school, by the teachers and/or outside contributors

The graphs show that the inspectors and futures inspectors think that the majority of these topics couldn't be taught in primary level and in the first years in secondary level, they think that it must be taught early after the age of 12 or 15 years or never except the paedophilia (A90). They think that it must be taught early before 15 years (90%, 80%) in primary level and in the first years of the secondary level. They think it could be taught before the age 12 (88%, 93 %). The majority of primary (49%) and secondary Inspectors (52%) are for teaching this topic less than 6 years. A small proportion of inspectors and future Inspectors agreed to teach contraception, abortion and homosexuality to students under 12, however the future inspectors primary refuse the teaching of these subjects for that age group.

Also, secondary inspectors and future inspectors show less resistance than primary future inspectors to teach certain topics: contraception (9% against 12%), homosexuality (25% against 52%) and abortion (15% against 32%). The tendency never to approach dimension intimates sexuality education (orgasm and sexual pleasure, sexual intercourse...) except the incest and the sexual abuse. They think that it must be taught early before 12 years or before 15 years (90%, 80%) in primary level and in the first years of the secondary level.

The results show that the majority of inspectors and futures inspectors think it is possible to teach some social components of sexuality education to young pupils. Moreover they don't agree to teach in school to pupils before 12 years old and for certain topics not before the age of 15 or never. The results obtained show a difference regarding the age at which these issues could be taught in the first time. Thus, its show that the secondary inspectors and future inspectors are agreed to teach these topics at an earlier age than primary future inspectors.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The results presented in this research relate to the views of 125 Moroccans inspectors and future inspectors about sexuality education. Inspectors and future inspectors don't accept to teach certain biological and social aspects of sexuality in primary level or in first years of secondary level below the age of 15. The tendency never to approach dimension intimates sexuality education (sexual pleasure, orgasm, sexual intercourse...) except the paedophilia, the incest and the sexual abuse. They think that it must be taught early before 12 years or before 15 years in primary level and in the first years of the secondary level. With pupils below the age of 12 is due to the fact that this category of children are more vulnerable and that thus they should be sensitized on the matter so that they would be prevented from being sexually abuse. For these opponents, it is advisable to include these contents early in the curriculum.

These results agree well with those obtained in the European Biohead-Citizen project on Moroccans teachers' and future teachers' conceptions (Selmaoui & Al, 2010). In Morocco curricula, the scientific activity courses in the primary level don't approach any more the general aspects of the human reproduction since the charter of 1999. With the technological change and globalisation has impossible to control information which young people have access to on these topics, especially in the absence of the school and the family's supervision. Therefore, pupils are informed (no objective information) on all these topics in their daily life with their peers, in the streets or in the mass media (Internet, TV ...) (Selmaoui & al., 2008; Selmaoui et al., 2010).

These answers could be interpreted that, generally, the topics related to sexuality are social taboo that people avoid approaching in our conservative society, especially with young people. If it is necessary to speak about it, owing to the fact that after all, the children will have a sexual activity later; it should be done with children beyond the age of 12 because it is generally the age of sexual maturity and consequently, children are able to grasps these various matters.

These entire hypotheses on the interpretation of sexuality conceptions could help the inspectors and the curricula makers as well as programs and school textbooks, to implement teaching situations which combine contribution of knowledge to taking into account of social dimensions and psychological, in the respect of the religious and cultural convictions. To be effective, sexuality education needs to include opportunities for young people to develop skills, only having information is not sufficient.

## References

- Astolfi, J.P., (1978). Les représentations des enfants. *Revue française de Pédagogie*, 45. Paris
- Astolfi J.P., (1985). *Procédures d'apprentissage en sciences expérimentales*. INRP, Paris.
- Carvalho G., Clément P., Bogner F. (2004). *Biology, Health and Environmental Education for better Citizenship*. STREP CIT2-CT-2004-506015, E.C., Brussels, FP6, Priority 7. <http://www.biohead-citizen.net>
- Clément, P. 1998. La Biologie et sa Didactique. Dix ans de recherches. *Aster*, 27, 57-93
- Clément, P., 2004. *Science et idéologie : exemples en didactique et épistémologie de la biologie*. Actes du Colloque Sciences, médias et société. ENS-LSH, pp.53-69 <http://sciences-medias.ens-lsh.fr>
- Clément, P., 2006. *Didactic Transposition and the KVP Model: Conceptions as Interactions Between Scientific Knowledge, Values and Social Practices*. In ESERA Summer School. Universidade do Minho, IEC, Braga (Portugal), pp.9-18.
- Giordan, A., de Vecchi, G., 1987. *Les origines du savoir : des conceptions des apprenants aux concepts scientifiques*. Paris : Delachaux Niestlé.
- Selmaoui S., Khzami S., Agorram B. (2008). *Les attentes des jeunes marocains concernant la reproduction humaine et la sexualité*. Communication orale dans le colloque sur l'éducation à la santé. 15ème congrès de l'association Mondiale des Sciences de l'Education (AMSE), tenu à l'Université Cadi Ayyad, Marrakech du 2 au 6 Juin 2008 sous le thème : « Mondialisation et Education : Vers une société de la connaissance ».
- Selmaoui, S. ; Agorram, B. ; Khzami, S. ; Elabboudi, T. & Berger, D. (2010). Sexuality education: analysis of Moroccan teachers' and future teachers' conceptions. *US-China Education Review* in issue *Journal of US-China education review*; Vol.7, No.8, 2010. ISSN1548-6613 USA.
- Tiberghien, A., Delacote, G., (1976). Manipulation et représentations de circuit électrique simple par des enfants de 7 à 12 ans. *Revue Française de Pédagogie* N° 34. INRP.
- WHO(1999). *Preventing HIV/AIDS/STI and related discrimination: an important responsibility of health promoting schools*. WHO information series on school health. WHO Editor Geneva.
- WHO (2004). *World Health Organization. The world health report 2004 - changing history*. <http://www.who.int/whr/2004/en/>

**Annex: Questions**

At what age do you think the following topics should be first introduced at school by teachers and/or external specialists? (Tick only one box in EACH line):

Topic	Less than 6 years old	Between 6 and 11 years old	Between 12 and 15 years old	More than 15 years old	Never in school
<b>A85.</b> Organs of pleasure: clitoris, penis...					
<b>A86.</b> Contraception and birth control					
<b>A87.</b> Sexually transmitted diseases					
<b>A88.</b> Abortion					
<b>A89.</b> Homosexuality					
<b>A90.</b> Paedophilia					

When do you think the following topics should be first introduced at school by teachers and/or external specialists? (Tick only ONE box per line):

Topic	Less than 6 years old	Between 6 and 11 years old	Between 12 and 15 years old	More than 15 years old	Never in school
B37. Pregnancy and childbirth					
B38. Sexual intercourse					
B39. Incest and sexual abuse					
B40. Orgasm and sexual pleasure.					