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## Sexuality education in Uganda

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*Document Version*

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

*Publication date:*

2017

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

*Citation for published version (APA):*

de Haas, B. (2017). *Sexuality education in Uganda: Teachers' reasoning in a 'morally upright' context*. University of Groningen.

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# **SEXUALITY EDUCATION IN UGANDA**

## **Teachers' and Students' Reasoning in an Abstinence-only Context**

By Billie de Haas

1. Sexuality education programmes in Uganda may be more effective if they support students to challenge and negotiate the structural factors underlying their current perceptions, such as gender roles and sociocultural norms, which influence students' sexual practices and increase both vulnerability and risk (*this dissertation*).
2. Both Ugandan teachers' and human rights-based definitions of sexuality education may pursue the goal of enhancing young people's sexual and reproductive well-being. However, their interpretations of what young people's sexual and reproductive well-being entails, and the strategies necessary to achieving these goals, may differ (*this dissertation*).
3. Despite the challenges posed by Uganda's restrictive school environment, teachers play an important role in the development of students' sexual agency and their sexual and reproductive wellbeing, whether teachers are formally assigned to teach sexuality education or not (*this dissertation*).
4. To enhance young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights in Uganda, the priority should not be to increase the level of evidence- and human rights-based information in Ugandan sexuality education curricula, but, rather, to adopt a pragmatic approach to improve the implementation fidelity of sexuality education programmes (*this dissertation*).
5. Although progressive definitions and agreements of sexuality education are essential for lobbying and advocating for young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights at the international policy level, their interpretations by conservative forces can actually counteract efforts at the local, implementation, level (*this dissertation*).
6. Paradoxically, the narrow positioning of sexuality education research in the human rights discourse restricts the development of innovative and pragmatic insights that can improve young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights (*this dissertation*).
7. The use of reasoned action approach, as developed by psychologists, and cultural schema theory, as developed by cognitive anthropologists, in health evaluation research both provide added value: their different objectives enable the formulation of complementary types of recommendations to improve interventions (*this dissertation*).
8. Especially in culturally-sensitive research, the findings and insights from both local and foreign researchers can be complementary and thus essential.
9. To achieve social change, disseminating research findings to policy and practice after completion of the research can be insufficient. Instead, it can be more effective to adopt participatory action approaches, which allow for the various stakeholders to be involved from the very start of the research project.
10. Working on a PhD research at an NGO office provides many advantages, especially the daily interactions and dialogues that enable a better understanding of the research topic, findings and feasibility of different recommendations for policy and practice (*this dissertation*).
11. The need for interdisciplinary research is increasingly recognised; yet, it can be difficult to publish interdisciplinary research in international, peer-reviewed journals that are often situated in particular disciplines or paradigms.
12. It is a mistake to narrowly translate the need for more societal relevant research into funding for short-term research studies only; this dissertation shows that policy and practice also need long-term, in-depth, academic research using a variety of academic theories and methodologies to obtain new insights for improving interventions.