

Abstract

Relation between body hair removal, body care and sexuality

Although hair removal has been described as a “new norm” during the past decades, only a little is known about body hair removal patterns of women in the Czech Republic. The purpose of this study was to assess leg, underarm and pubic hair removal behavior among women in the Czech Republic and to test the degree to which hair removal in various parts of the body is associated with body care as such, that is, to find out if it has become an integral part of women’s daily body care practices or whether it is regarded as a rather specific one, unrelated to one’s other body care habits. Furthermore, an association with sexual experience has been tested, along with attitudes towards sex and one’s genitals, which have been shown to be a significant intervening factor by some authors. Last but not least, the importance of various reasons mostly given for hair removal has been assessed as well. First, a total of 15 women aged 19 to 46 years were interviewed in a pilot qualitative study. Then a total of 111 women aged 20 to 30 years completed an Internet-based survey by means of which quantitative data were obtained on basic demographics, body care, body hair removal practices and reasons for doing so, attitudes to one’s genitals and to various sexual activities, and, finally, on sexual experience. The results revealed a positive correlation between the frequency of leg and pubic hair removal and the frequency of one’s „self-help“ body care. Regarding sexual experience, there was a negative correlation between the age at which the women had begun with pubic hair removal and the frequency of anal intercourse and mutual hand-anus contact. Thus, in some aspects our findings were in line with previous studies from abroad. The results suggest that body hair removal is only associated with some of the studied factors of body care and sexual experience.

Keywords: body hair removal, body care, sexual experience, sexual attitudes