



## The urgency of sexual education in early childhood: A portrait of children's curiosity towards their authority

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### Abstract

This study aims to explore the urgency of sexual education in early childhood that arises from children's curiosity about their authority. The informants in this qualitative research are five teachers and five parents from 5 different early childhood education units in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, Indonesia. The data were purposively selected based on the criteria of parents with girls or boys aged 5-6 years, heterogeneous background cluster, and integrated Islamic preschool. Data analysis using Miles and Huberman includes the process of data reduction, display, and verification with Jean Piaget's cognitive development theory and its relevance to Sigmund Freud's psychosexual. The results showed that sexual education for early childhood is urgent because children have a high curiosity about their authority. Children are formed from various stages in their psychosexual process, which corresponds to the level of their thinking ability. The sexual knowledge will determine the direction of the child's personality and behavior in the future. Parents and teachers can establish partnerships to create a basic sexual education program for children while developing socialization skills, independence, self-confidence, and positive self-concept and fostering children's religious and moral values. Although this study is still limited to a small scale, it can be an initial illustration for other regions in designing sexual education programs for children, and further program evaluation can be carried out.

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**Keywords:** Children's Curiosity; Children's Authority; Early Childhood Education; Sexual Education

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## A. INTRODUCTION

Sexual violence case reports based on data from Protection of Women and Children Rights in 2022; there are 16,106 cases of violence against children, which include emotional, physical, and sexual violence (contact non-contact). Throughout 2023, 2 out of 3 girls and boys in Indonesia experienced violence, as illustrated by the prevalence increasing significantly by 30 percent (Suhasmi dan Ismet, 2021). These three types of violence have different traumatic impacts on children as victims. Incidents of sexual violence against children include activities like harassment, physical contact such as holding or touching the genitals, exposure to pornographic content/ sexual scenes, obscene acts, catcalling, and other similar activities, which are still a volcanic phenomenon and have not been widely exposed (Oktora et al., 2023). Various reports on social media/television are generally known to the public after children are being victims of sexual violence, such as incest, rape, sexual abuse, and pedophilia (Magta et al., 2022). Unfortunately, most of the perpetrators are people closest to the child, such as older brothers, fathers, uncles, and even grandfathers (Hasiana, 2020). The incident that occurred is part of the concern and emergency of sexual education and could be guaranteed in the future prevention and primary education for every child without exception. The child's position was that of a vulnerable group and must be protected for the child's best interests.

However, the low level of literacy, awareness, parental participation and the dilemmatic situation faced by teachers in schools have caused the incidence of sexual violence in early childhood to not be fully discussed. Parents's literacy awareness regarding access to information obtained, whether through books, magazines, radio, television and social media (Pradikto et al., 2023). Some people think that knowledge, education, and information regarding sex education issues is something taboo/embarrassing to deliver to children [Click or tap here to enter text.](#) (Nafisah et al., 2023; Nisa, 2021). Adults are reluctant to tell what children need to know and understand, resulting in a lack of clarity in children's sources regarding their protection from the first references, namely parents and teachers. Sexual violence is a crime of opportunity, which means that the cause of the incident is not solely due to lack of religious practice, lack of family protection function, low social cohesion, poverty, unemployment, lifestyle, globalization, and promiscuity. However, these actions can also be taken (Ritonga, 2023). When young children are not equipped with basic knowledge about getting to know sexual education starting themselves, skills to protect themselves, and ways to talk about every incident, then it will suppose problems might happen. Early childhood is in a critical development phase. They are curious about various questions about themselves and the behavior they see outside themselves. According to Montessori (1900), this period is known as a sensitive period because the child's ability to receive knowledge from the environment is followed by a high level of curiosity (Anggraini & Sofia, 2017). Some people are still trapped in the assumption that a basic introduction to sexual education for children is considered too early and not appropriate yet to construct a dialogue. Therefore, there is a lack of integrated educational and promotive programs in schools.

Before this curiosity arises, parents and teachers might discuss sexual education issues with their children. So that children can understand gradually according to their level of thinking ability. Children may have and show curiosity, but it may not be conveyed clearly.

Parents and teachers should also be sensitive in capturing children's expressions rather than forbidding them to ask questions and limiting discussions (Roqib, 2008). Facts in the field illustrate the opposite, that parents, as the first reference in the family, seem to engage each other in sexual education in early childhood, such as not answering children's questions, changing the topic of conversation, reprimanding and cutting off discussions about sexuality to the point of not being actively involved in participating in planning proposals for sexual education in school programs. They hand over more responsibility to the teacher, and instead, the teacher often needs clarification about conveying it appropriately to the child. Teachers have concerns and fears about false delivery, which becomes problematic in schools. Likewise, the limited presence and role of male early childhood teachers is a challenge in dealing with problems such as defecation in boys.

An open sexual education between all elements and related parties will encourage children to behave following normative demands in society. Children learn to understand the rules and values that touching other people's private areas (such as breasts and genitals) is behavior that is not suited to the good morals of our noble society's culture. Children must be introduced to which body parts they can and cannot touch themselves and others. Sexual education from an early age becomes the foundation for the next phase of a child's development (Mahmud et al., 2023). Quoting Abdullah Nashih Ulwan in his book entitled *Tarbiyah al-Aulad Fi al-Islam in al-Tarbiyah al-Jinsiyyah* chapter that sexual education cannot be separated from religion and is even wholly built on a religious basis. Thus, it is hoped that children will become individuals who are responsible and morally ethical (Yusuf, 2020).

The importance of efforts to provide sex education for early childhood has become an urgency to support a healthy emotional attitude towards the issue of sexuality as innate to humans and not as something that must be avoided, covered up, and disgusting to discuss with children both in the family and school environment. Children's curiosity, summarized in portraits of everyday questions, is essential to pay attention. So that parents and teachers can see and determine what needs to be formulated in a sexual education introduction program for young children at school and the factors that hinder the progress of this education. The portrait that the author summarizes differs from existing research because exploring events, questions and statements from children through parents and teachers at school can be a reflection. Lamb (1997) explains the need for integration between moral education and sexual education in the school curriculum, which includes fundamental values, objectives of sexual education, socialization of gender differences and other important aspects of sexual education.

Parents' disconnection in communication aspects of crucial issues such as sexual education can be helped through media that is in line with children's thinking abilities. Adaptation of digital media and technology can bridge the thinking abilities of children still in the pre-operational stage (Ndari et al., 2021). Parental assistance through digital content on gadgets becomes a positive filter for children to access correct information. Even though sexual education is a preference for every parent/teacher to introduce to their children, the urgency of this education will not be achieved if the dissemination of good practice policies does not support it.

Research related to the importance of sexual education in early childhood has been carried out by several researchers, such as Yusuf et al. (2023), who argued the importance of the contribution of government policy through the Ministry of Women and Child Protection in designing the realization of programs in each school curriculum. Then, a literature study by Suhasmi & Ismet (2021) suggests the importance of sexual education materials for early childhood, including identification of body members, covering *aurat*, gender identity, skills to protect themselves from sexual crimes, identification of situations that lead to exploitation and toilet training at home and school. In addition, Pratiwi's Pratiwi et al. (2023) suggests the importance of learning in ECE to protect sensitive areas, maintain the health and hygiene of genital organs, instill religious values in interactions of the opposite sexual and respect the privacy of others. Learning occurs through songs, fairy tales and role-play. However, this research aims to elaborate on the urgency of sexual education for early childhood that departs from their curiosity about their authority so that parents and teachers can design some programs to introduce sexual education.

## **B. METHOD**

This research is a qualitative study that intends to understand every event or natural occurrence regarding behaviour, perceptions, actions, motivation and others in a comprehensive manner. The research aims to outline the urgency of sexual education for children that arises from an authentic portrait of children's curiosity about their authority. The informants are five teachers and five parents from 5 different early childhood education units in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, Indonesia. It was collected over a month in various integrated Islamic preschools.

Observation and interview activities are carried out directly by researchers in an interactive and participatory manner. Early childhood in kindergarten groups aged 5-6 years, including boys and girls, were objects and observed during the research. This activity is assisted by ongoing discussions through other online information media, including *Google Forms*, to obtain depth and saturation of field data. This activity is intended to find in-depth meaning with several questions for informants to answer regarding a portrait of children's curiosity about reasoning sexuality issues. Personal notes and documentation also become supporting instruments for mapping the picture observed during the research process. Data analysis in qualitative studies can generally coincide with the data collection process. The researcher uses the Miles and Huberman pattern to sharpen analytical activities, including data reduction, exposure, and verification/conclusion.

Information is processed, sorted and separated according to the research theme, descriptions are explained in the results section, and discussions and conclusions illustrate the completeness of the research as part of the validity of qualitative data. Theoretical analysis using Jean Piaget's cognitive development and its relevance to Sigmund Freud's psychosexuality is used to explain indicators of early childhood thinking abilities in the pre-operational stage. The developmental characteristics include the ability to use symbols, understand self-identity, cause and effect, differentiate and classify, sense of four and awareness of thinking activities using executive functions. Early childhood children aged 5-6 years will naturally show illustrations of this thinking ability. At the same time, it is not

uncommon for teachers and parents to find various questions that are difficult to answer when focusing their attention on sexuality issues. In psychosexual development, Freud divided the stages of children's sexual experience from age 0 to adolescence. Phallic age in the range of 3-6 years has a distinctive characteristic: they begin to be sensitive to their genital identity. Unsurprisingly, parents and teachers also find unique portraits shown by children.

## C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Children's curiosity portrait towards their authority

Childhood is the phase where children explore various questions. The Nativism theory explains the importance of a child's innate factors; the development process cannot be separated from environmental influences (Rahman, 2009). Early childhood has unique characteristics, such as egocentric thinking, high curiosity about various exciting and amazing things, being unique as individuals, having the power of imagination, fantasy and relatively short memory. Therefore, the family plays a central role and is responsible for children's education (Fridani et al., 2022).

A child's ability to study and learn something is influenced by stimuli created from outside themselves. This stimulus then forms a schema and becomes a child's habit. In this case, when young children are educated about their body shape and what they can and cannot hold, they will remember it as a habit. In the first stage, children show reflexes to respond to situations or stimuli that are outside themselves and even recognize forms of stimulus outside themselves and accumulate in basic intellectual schemes that are primitive because their brains do not yet have good control tools (Rahman, 2009). When children enter playgroup and kindergarten age, the child's ability to understand the surrounding environment is gained through mastery of symbols and imitating other people (Hanifah et al., 2022). Children also begin to show thoughts that contain problems and simple ways to solve problems but still need to be relevant to the differences in other people's views. As the Mrs. RW once stated:

*“...Waktu itu, ada salah satu guru di sekolah anak saya yang sedang hamil besar, ketika pulang sekolah anak saya bertanya kenapa perut ibunya seperti balon, apa itu balon? Saya jawab waktu itu ibunya sedang hamil seorang ade bayi. Ade nya dari mana keluarnya dan seterusnya dengan sederet pertanyaannya...”*

*“...At that time, one of the teachers at my child's school was very pregnant. When my child came home from school, she asked why her mother's stomach looked like a balloon. Was it a balloon? I answered that at that time, the mother was pregnant with a baby, where it came from and so on, with a series of questions she was pursuing....”* (Mrs. RW at preschool C)

Then the KTR teacher also conveyed the following:

*“...Waktu kegiatan sholat dhuha, semua guru ikut berbaris sholat bersama anak-anak, karena saya sedang berbalungan, lalu saya hanya duduk disamping anak-anak. Lalu salah satu murid saya laki-laki bertanya Ibu kenapa tidak ikut sholat? Saya bilang sedang haid. Haid itu apa bu? Dan lainnya, mungkin kalau ke anak perempuan lebih mudah jawabnya...”*

*"... During the Dhuba prayer activity, all the teachers joined the prayer line with the children because I was absent, so I just sat next to the children. Then one of my male students asked Mom, why didn't you join the prayer? I said I was menstruating. What is menstruation, ma'am? In others, maybe the answer would be easier for girls..." (KTR at preschool C)*

Various questions surfaced for parents and teachers, such as where the sibling was born, why a pregnant mother's stomach looks like a balloon, why a woman does not do prayer during menstruation, what is menstruation, why are male and female genitals different, why the penis becomes firm, why are Mom and Dad's breasts different, why can't boys accompany girls to the toilet, why cannot wear shorts, and the like. Another statement is sometimes quite surprising for adults, such as wanting to get married/dating even though they do not fully understand the concept. Alternatively, it could be behaviour that needs to be anticipated, such as peeking at peers when they are in the toilet, kissing members of the opposite sex, playing with their genitals/constantly touching their genitals, and even making fun of the term genitals. Another surprising occurrence was the question about what they saw at home with their family, such as why doesn't Mom wear a bra at home, why Mom wears sexy clothes at home and other similar things. It is a portrait of a child's curiosity and critical attitude and an analysis of his pre-operational cognitive thinking abilities that demand clear and open answers.

Teaching sexual education in early childhood will positively impact children's self-confidence (Nur Azira, et al., 2020). Especially in recognizing boundaries in social environments (Widayati et al., 2021). The relevance of another theory regarding children's psychosexual development, according to Sigmund Freud, is that the personality of most individuals is formed from the first five years of life and influences children's behaviour later in life. These stages start from the first oral phase (0-2 years). Children aged from birth to the first year of life will seek and feel satisfaction from the energy of pleasure in activities by putting various objects into their mouths, such as thumb sucking, sucking, and tasting, which involves the tongue, lips and mouth. The second phase is anal (2-3 years old), where the child will feel sexual pleasure from activities that he excretes from his anus, such as defecating. In each of these phases, the role of parents and teachers is to assist the child in achieving complete satisfaction, such as recognizing the shape and smell of faeces and controlling the bladder to urinate. When children successfully pass through this phase, it will increase their sense of achievement and independence. So, by providing skills through toilet training exercises, we can see the match between the child's readiness and the stimulus provided by parents and teachers at school.

The third phallic phase is the introduction of children aged 3-6 years to their genital identity. Children start to play and seek pleasure by holding or seeking stimulation by touching, stroking and rubbing their genitals. Children's curiosity in this phase needs to be paid attention to by all parents at home and teachers at school. Because if children are trapped in this situation, they will leave behind conflicts that lead to behavioural disorders, such as seeking various forms of sexual satisfaction (Haidt & Hersh, 2001). The first three phases are included in the infantile phase, starting at 0 to 5 years (Wardianti et al., 2016). Meanwhile, the fourth and fifth phases lead to pleasure in adolescence and

adulthood (Ritonga, 2023). Parents can practice several steps at home, and teachers at school start by teaching children to feel comfortable with their bodies. Giving a warm hug that parents and teachers transmit to a child will ignite the feeling that the people around him love him. TDR teacher encountered the experiences of children in the phallic phase at school:

*“...Waktu saya sedang memantau anak-anak bermain, tiba-tiba perhatian saya tertuju pada salah satu anak laki-laki yang memasukkan jarinya ke dalam celananya, saya kira mungkin hanya gatal, tetapi lama sekali dan saya lihat lagi ia sepertinya lagi memegang atau memainkan kelaminnya, kemudian saya dekati dan tegur...”*

*“...When I monitored the children's play. Suddenly, my attention was drawn to a boy putting his finger in his trousers. I thought maybe it was just an itch. Still, it took a long time before I saw again that he seemed to be holding or playing with his genitals, then I approached him and reprimanded him....”* (TDR at preschool D).

Children must also be taught about the difference between privacy and public areas. It is done through social learning and habits such as when leaving the bathroom wearing a towel and not allowing them to be naked. Likewise, children are accustomed to wearing their underwear even alone when bathing. In detail, this is by demands in Islam itself. Children are introduced to the differences in male and female body anatomy, practice toilet training skills, introduce real name pronunciation and synergize with partnerships at school for follow-up. Education related to sexual advocacy is still underestimated. It is not enough to wait for children to become teenagers and adults because each phase of a child's development has its challenges in teaching it (Tirtawinata, 2016). Especially at an early age, a mother has a major role in providing sexual education, not limited to girls but also boys. It was conveyed by the informant, Mrs. KS, as follows:

*“...Kala di rumah anak saya laki-laki misalnya mandi itu sama ayahnya, saya dengan adiknya yang perempuan. Soalnya kalaun saya semua yang pegang takutnya ga ngena apa saja yang ingin disampaikan dalam hal ini (pendidikan seksualitas). Tidur pun sudah saya pisah supaya tau privasi juga...”*

*“...At home, for example, when my son is a boy, he bathes with his father, and I bathe with his younger sister. The problem is that if I were the one holding it, I would be afraid that I would not be able to understand whatever is being conveyed in this matter (sexuality education). I have even separated my sleep for privacy, too...”* (Mrs. KS at school D)

Even though fathers tend to have little involvement, fathers play a vital role when children reach adolescence (Savitry et al., 2017). Because in adolescence, children are faced with increasingly complex situations (Wahidah, 2021). Suppose sexual education is not constructed from an early age. In that case, it will contribute to opportunities for crime that can occur later in life (Indah & Lubis, 2023). However, some sexual education programs can be designed and implemented from family institutions to schools. It includes providing potty training skills, which can include aspects of manners, morals, social, emotional and spiritual, introducing self and gender identity, privacy boundaries,

how to protect oneself, filtering out the negative impacts of technology, being an example of an aware child and building children's independent abilities.

## **2. The urgency of sex education in early childhood**

Education is a conscious and planned effort to create learning and learning situations to develop the potential of each individual. Learning is an individual's mental process and activity to gradually acquire new knowledge, skills and attitudes over a certain period by involving children's experiences and interactions with the outside world. It shows that education is an inevitable responsibility given by educated adults to their students to help them realise cognitive, affective and psychomotor development. Education will be achieved optimally with a learning process in children supported by a good learning environment. Education is not only limited to developing physical potential but also spiritual potential. More broadly than that, Abdullah Nashih Ulwan, in his book Tarbiyah al-Aulad, states that education starts from faith, morals, physical, intellectual, mental, social and sexual holistically (Amaliati, 2020).

Until now, the development of the education model in ECE has continued to transform both in terms of terms and the launch of programs that seek to provide holistic services for children, as well as mainstreaming child-friendly education models and quality education. It is hoped that the new educational model will include all aspects developed in children in balanced proportions. As far as the research results are summarized, several ECE institutions in Banjarmasin implicitly include sex education for children. In other words, indirectly, teachers in collaboration with parents, have taught their children about sexual education. However, it has not been done on a massive scale and has become a priority in school curriculum design.

In comparison, it can be said that sexual education for early childhood is still minimal. The above phenomenon is closely linked to the taboo stigma of discussing sexuality; it is controversial, and the assumption that children's knowledge will be acquired naturally (Oktora et al., 2023). Then, there are very few modules available for the learning process in school regarding the issue of sexuality, and this is also a problem in itself in multicultural school communities, which have a diversity of cultural and moral values.

Children need space and someone close to them who can be trusted as a reference for them to seek protection when violence occurs. The results of interviews with YJ's as parent and PTM as teacher agreed that:

*“...Pendidikan seksual itu masalah yang ada kaitannya dengan mengenal anggota tubuh, membantu anak mengenal fungsi dan organ seksnya, jenis kelamin dan membersihkan alat kelamin dengan benar...”*

*“...Sexual education is a problem that is related to getting to know body parts, helping children to know their sexual functions and organs, gender and cleaning the genitals properly...”* (Mrs. YJ as parent at school A)

*“...Pendidikan seksual sangat penting dikenalkan sejak usia dini agar anak memahami dan menjaga dirinya dan akan tertanam dalam jiwarinya sampai mereka dewasa...”*

*"...It is very important to introduce sexual education from an early age so that children understand and care for themselves, and it will be embedded in their souls until they grow up..."* (PTM teacher on at school A)

Parents and teachers at school can be a priority source of protection for every child (Justicia, 2016). They can also be a resource in applying behavioural boundaries between 'me and you' in every relational relationship. When privacy issues are taught from an early age, children can understand how to protect their bodies through simple activities that can start from the rules of clothing they wear, such as a program for using *underwear rules* and gradually progress to the process of children learning to urinate (Rakhmawati et al., 2022).

Judging from the suitability of the stages of the material provided. Sexual education for early childhood is different from sexual education intended for teenagers. Even though the two have a close connection and relationship as capital in adolescence and adulthood. Sexual education in early childhood is more about introducing basic knowledge about sex differences and simple anatomy (Rahmawati, 2020). Early childhood children who are not educated from the start are at great risk of being trapped as victims, where sexual violence that occurs has long-term impacts on their psychology, emotionally, physically, trust in social relationships, depression, trauma, anxiety, eating disorders and low self-concept (Chairilisyah, 2019). It was conveyed by the FS teacher as follows:

*"...Pendidikan seksual hal yang wajib diselesaikan mengingat digitalisasi yang membuat pornografi semakin mudah diakses anak. karena sekarang anak-anak sudah mengenal HP. Bahkan ada kartun yang tidak disarankan untuk ditonton oleh anak. tantangan terberat ada pada anggapan tabu yang masih melekat pada sebagian besar masyarakat..."*

*"...Sexual education must be hastened, considering that digitalization has made pornography more easily accessible to children because now children are familiar with cell phones. There are even cartoons that are not recommended for children to watch. The toughest challenge is the taboo perception that is still attached to most of society..."* (FS teacher at school B)

Straightforward and open communication between parents, teachers and children in explaining sexuality issues is a supporting factor for the successful transmission of the message. Avoiding ambiguous vocabulary and using definitive terms to refer to male and female genitalia will help children gain a partial understanding (Hidayati, 2022). However, in some cultures, linguistic euphemisms/use of terms with false connotations also have deep meaning and contain the message that the issue of sexuality is a noble and sacred matter (Roqib, 2008). It was stated by Mrs. ER's parent:

*"...Istilah yang kami pakai biasanya seperti tutut untuk mengganti kata penis, atau burung yang umum disebut untuk anak laki-laki, pada anak perempuan mungkin yang pernah saya dengar nada pepe untuk mengganti kata vagina/ kelamin perempuan. Supaya terdengar sopan saja..."*

*"...The terms we use are usually things like 'tutut' or 'bird' to replace the word penis, which is commonly referred to as a boy; with girls, I might have used 'pepe' to replace the word vagina. To*

*sound polite...." (Interview with Mrs ER parent informant on February 8 2024 at school B)*

In the end, the basis of sexual education for early childhood is an urgency and obligation that has a good impact if taught appropriately. These include improving social skills, building children's independence, encouraging them to be responsible for their behaviour, honing their adaptive abilities to adapt to social norms, preventing them from deviant behaviour and sexual crimes, reducing the risk of sexual harassment, and recognizing sexual boundaries in relationships. With the opposite sex so that children do not associate with the wrong people in the future. Intervention can be carried out programmatically in schools through the role of teachers and the proactive attitude of parents to filter the influence of digitalization and information media full of pornographic elements, LGBTQ cartoons and children understand carefully the differences in gender, function and protect their body organs and maintain their cleanliness (Rohmah et al., 2023).

### **3. Early childhood sexual education awareness program**

Sex education and sexual education are two different things. The definition of the first term focuses on reproductive function, protection and physical security. Meanwhile, the second term covers a more comprehensive coverage, including physical, spiritual, affective, value and cultural aspects (Noh & Abu Bakar, 2023). Material in sexual education is an effort to convey information, including knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, values and individual behavior. It explains body anatomy, human physique, sexual chemistry responses (attraction, liking), identity and personality, thoughts, feelings, behaviour and social relationships. Sexual education is not only limited to knowledge about the differences in male and female body organs but also the natural construction of each role/gender, such as women being able to get pregnant and give birth because they have a womb/uterus and breastfeed.

Meanwhile, men do not. Boys are usually associated with the masculine stereotype, while girls are the opposite. Where this role labelling is an estuary that will have an impact on strengthening the patriarchal dimension if it is misused and causes inequality in power relations. As an example, male power, if it is used for bad things, will hurt other people/the opposite sex. A basic introduction to sexual education will help children grow and develop healthily in the future (Balter et al., 2016). Sexual education requires clarity to understand. Suppose children are not taught clearly and directly. In that case, it will lead to indecisiveness in determining privacy boundaries between themselves and other people, the courage to refuse and say no and conveying feelings when they feel dangerous so that children will not be easily trapped in victim situations.

Having sexual education that is explicitly depicted will equip and become capital for children to understand gender differences, roles and social boundaries so that they can filter out the promiscuous lifestyle that triggers today's pathological social problems. The family environment is the first school for every child, especially both parents. Next, children will interact with their second environment, namely educational institutions. Providing sexual education from an early age is considered important to form an appropriate and healthy understanding in young children about their bodies and those of

others. It will have a long-term impact on preventing sexual violence and answering the confusion and myths that often occur on this topic. As stated by Carroll (2018), sexual education starting from an early age can underlie the roots of a strong and healthy understanding. In designing a curriculum program that includes awareness and instilling morals and knowledge of sexuality issues in early childhood, parents and teachers become partners who are mutually involved with each other. Starting from problem formulation to practical implementation in schools. Referring to the findings of Jones and Wilson (2020), the success of the sexual education curriculum program will be successful if parents are involved and not neglected. At least one of these parental roles. In school practice, teachers must have the readiness and confidence to teach sexual education material to children. Let go of taboo feelings/worries about misperceptions. Suppose teachers have been equipped with good training. In that case, teachers will no longer face any dilemma in conveying this crucial issue to children.

Teachers, as school resources, need to receive support from an environment aligned with the school's administrative and institutional aspects. Teachers and parents both play key roles in teaching and discussing sexuality issues with children (Davis, 2020). The program design can be described in table 1:

**Table. 1**

|    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| 1  | Introduce children to the names of body parts, the differences between males and females, and their functions | Self-identity and gender differences   |
| 2  | Introduce children to the sensations and responses of the body when urinating/defecating                      |  |
| 3  | Introduce and invite children to go to the toilet every time and after sleeping                               |  |
| 4  | Introduce children how to use the toilet sitting/squatting/standing (according to gender) and how to clean it | <i>Toilet training skill set:</i><br>independence, self-help, daily activities, emotional management |
| 5  | Introduce the differences between men's and women's toilet symbols  |  |
| 6  | Introduce children to seeing and smell urine and faeces   |  |
| 7  | Get children used to taking off their pants in the toilet before going to the toilet                          |  |
| 8  | Get children used to closing the toilet/bathroom door when defecating   |  |
| 9  | Get children used to praying before entering the toilet/bathroom  | Internalization of moral, spiritual and religious values   |
| 10 | Get children used to keeping the genital area clean   |  |
| 11 | Instilling shame when other people see the child's body parts/genitals  | personal hygiene   |
| 12 | Teaching children boundaries and privacy (what is and is not allowed)   | Community life within the framework of moral and religious values                                    |
| 13 | Teach children how to protect themselves when they encounter threats/danger/violence                          |  |
| 14 | Limit the flow of information through safe, child-friendly browsing   | Child self-protection  |
| 15 | Teach children to sleep separately from their parents   |  |

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|    |  |  |
|----|--|--|
| 16 | Teach children to ask permission/knock on other people's bedroom doors | Internalization of moral and social-emotional values |
| 17 | Model good behaviour for children that by religious and societal norms | Modeling for children                                |

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Some shortlists are designs/layouts referencing curriculum concepts that develop sexual education for children at school and home. Delivering this program requires an approach that is adapted to the characteristics of early childhood. Using simple language, concepts that are easy to understand, using media or learning aids, both digital and conventional, will make it easier for children to understand a particular material topic (White & Anderson, 2019). The material can also be packaged and developed interestingly and interactively to encourage effective learning in children. Not only that, evaluation in curriculum development can be obtained based on observations and feedback from parents and teachers. It aims to ensure that the program remains relevant and efficient.

The various learning objectives in sexual education are basically to build the foundation for early childhood independence. Children can create a sense of autonomy through an independent attitude. Authority is a means for children to develop critical thinking skills and strengthen their curious attitude. Children will learn to explore the surrounding environment and reduce dependence on adults. According to Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory, a child's self-authority will not occur without being supported by the child's sense of trust in the people around him, including parents and teachers. When young children have a sense of security and trust to establish social relationships, they can minimize their shame and fear of something. This self-independence is a great modality for children to increase their initiative behaviour and self-confidence. For example, suppose a child has a close attachment to both parents. In that case, the father acts as a protective figure and the mother as a security figure; the child will have a complete self-concept based on the gender roles he or she acquires in the family (Syafrudin et al., 2022). So that when children are faced with the issue of sexual violence, they can know the direction to go. Erik describes the relationship between social behaviour that adults support and instil in children and can have good and bad influences on their lives.

## **D. CONCLUSION**

The stigma of taboo and privacy in sexual education issues today needs to be corrected. Sexual education by parents and teaching staff at preschools can sharpen children's sensitivity as well as be a preventive measure for sexual violence against children, which could potentially occur in the future, both in family institutions and schools. Parents and teachers can establish a synergistic partnership in preparing learning components and curriculum content, including a basic introduction to sexuality material. This implementation can be provided through reinforcement, advice, example, habituation and applicable rules. Sexual education cannot be separated from normative religious values. It can build a child's character and morals personally and in their behaviour.

When children face complex experiences and differences in the context of early childhood schooling in multicultural ECE institutions, children encounter very diverse value dimensions. The relevance to aspects of the development of values, religion and morals is that morality here is relative because it originates from the beliefs and traditions of each group. Children who show their love for their peers will not do things that can hurt or injure other people. It will be the manifestation of the introduction of long-term sexual education. Apart from the advantages of this research, the author recommends the development of further research to complement the existing shortcomings on a broader scale and evaluate sexual education in early childhood through the implementation of the curriculum program that has been designed.

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