



Parents' role in early sex education introduction for childhood in Taman Pintar Daycare Banda Aceh

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ABSTRACT

Early sex education is an important thing to give to the individual since their childhood as the preventive action of doing immoral behavior that happening nowadays. Giving sex education for children is the responsibility of all parties, such as parents, teachers, societies, and government. This study aims at constructing the role of parents in introducing early sex education for early childhood and to find out the supporting and inhibiting factors of parents in introducing early sex education in Taman Pintar day care Banda Aceh, Indonesia. By using a qualitative descriptive method, the study collected the data through in-depth interview and documentation. The informants are parents who have children aged 4-5 years with total of 8 people. Data analysis used in this study is reduce data, data collection, data presentation and conclusions drawing. The results of this study indicate that the role of parents in introducing early sex education in children aged 4-5 years is very important. They are the closest people to the children, so that parents can be the first source of information for children and can be a model for their children. The supporting factors are parental education, modelling healthy behavior, and media content. While the inhibiting factors are fear of premature knowledge and lack of parental education.

Keywords: The role of parents; early sex education; early childhood education.

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ABSTRAK

Pendidikan seks sejak dini merupakan suatu hal yang penting untuk diberikan kepada individu sejak kecil sebagai upaya preventif terhadap perilaku asusila yang banyak terjadi saat ini. Pemberian pendidikan seks pada anak merupakan tanggung jawab semua pihak, seperti orang tua, guru, masyarakat, dan pemerintah. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui dan mendeskripsikan tentang peran orang dalam pengenalan pendidikan seks pada anak usia dini dan untuk mengetahui faktor pendukung serta penghambat orangtua dalam pengenalan pendidikan seks pada anak usia 4-5 tahun di Taman Pintar Daycare. Penelitian ini menggunakan deskriptif kualitatif method dengan mengumpulkan data menggunakan wawancara dan dokumentasi. Informan dalam penelitian ini berjumlah 8 orangtua yang memiliki anak usia 4-5 tahun di PAUD Taman Pintar, Banda Aceh, Indonesia. Analisis data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini yaitu reduksi data, penyajian data dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa peran orangtua dalam mengenalkan Pendidikan seks pada anak usia dini di Taman Pintar Daycare sudah dijalankan. Orangtua merupakan orang terdekat anak sehingga orangtua menjadi pemberi informasi pertama kepada anak serta menjadi model atau contoh bagi anak-anaknya. Terdapat beberapa factor pendukung dan penghambat dalam pengenalan seks pada anak usia dini yaitu Pendidikan orangtua, mencontohkan perilaku sehat, dan konten media. Sedangkan factor penghambat yaitu kekhawatiran akan pengetahuan yang terlalu dini mengenai Pendidikan seks dan kurangnya Pendidikan pada orangtua.

Kata Kunci: Peran orangtua; pendidikan seks; anak usia dini.

1. INTRODUCTION

Parents and family are the closest people to children, so they have important role in providing sex education to children. Sex education from an early age is a shared responsibility. This responsibility is a manifestation of parents' concern for their children's future as a way to maintain their honour, especially for a woman. On the other hand, sex education for early childhood is still considered taboo by parents so they are reluctant to teach it to children, even though sex education for children needs to be given so that children do not get information from inappropriate sources and know parts that are private for themselves (Fajrin & Antina, 2022).

According to Nirwana & Abu (as cited in Samad, Astuti, & Hayati, 2022), education include everything related to life such practical education in learning activities and internalization value enhancement of perfect intellectual abilities. Indonesia as one of the countries that signed and ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child has an obligation to implement matters in the convention. The state is obliged and morally required to protect children's rights. International law through the formation of the Convention on the Rights of the Children has positioned children as legal subjects who need protection for their rights. Legal protection according to the International Convention on the Rights of the Child includes the right to get special protection if the child experiences a conflict with the law, the right to get special protection if the child experiences exploitation as child labor, the right to get

special protection if the child experiences exploitation in drug abuse medicines, the right to get legal protection if a child experiences sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, the right to get special protection from kidnapping, selling and trafficking of children (Arifah, 2013). As parents, family members, teachers and society, we need to take part in supervising our children by providing a simple understanding of what other people should and should not do to them, providing love and support so that they become individuals who are open and always say anything, good or bad. So when something bad happens to them, we can immediately find out and can follow up on it.

The issue of sex education for early childhood nowadays is not being paid much attention to by parents until parents give up all of their children's education for school. As for the introduction of early sex education, those who are responsible are parents, the environment, teachers and the school as a trilogy of education in understanding sex education in early childhood (Alawiyah, 2021). At this stage, parents begin to introduce the names and functions of the child's limbs. The introduction of body parts in children is introduced to the outside of the body and this material is given to children aged 4-5 years (Nadya & Syahrul, 2021). According to Budiarty, it proves that the role of parents in providing sex education for children on the mental and intellectual level starts from children aged 4-5 years, by cleaning themselves, identifying intimate organs, what parts of the body may or may not be touched or touched, this is an effort to prevent sexual violence (Aisyah, 2022). The previous opinion shows that the early sex education is an important thing to give to the individual since their childhood as the preventive action of doing immoral behaviour happening now. It is also supported by Hurlock (Hilaliyyah & Desiningrum, 2022) that the development task that should be achieved by children during their childhood period is to learn about gender and its procedure.

Introducing early sex education to children is responsibility of all parties: parents, teachers, society, and government. That preventive measures that can be applied is by giving kids sex education ever since they are children especially in Early Childhood Education or Kindergarten. Early Childhood Education teacher is pioneer in initiating sex education in lowest education level. Based on interviews were conducted on February 16, 2023 for several parents who entrust their children to Daycare Taman Pintar Banda Aceh, they stated that they had started introducing early sex education but there were several family members who felt that it was common place and taboo to introduce it to young children. Therefore, even at school, children still not understand gender differences, limits on playing with the opposite sex and so on. From this phenomena, it is essential for parents, family, communities and teachers should provide with knowledge and understand as well using appropriate methods or strategies in delivering early sex education based on cognitive level of early childhood. Based on the description, this article describes the role of parents in introducing early sex education and find out the supporting and inhibiting factors.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Parents are the component that has the father and mother and are the result of a legal marriage bond that forms a family. Parents are responsible for nurturing, guiding and educating children when they go through certain stages bring children so that they are ready for social life (Ruli, 2020). Igham, Greem & Tones (2001, as cited in Walker, 2004) explain that research and the literature has identified the impact of socialization on sexual health in that men and women have sexual careers, which start in childhood education from family backgrounds which will affect their future. A "parent" typically refers to an individual or organism that has given birth to or produced offspring. In the context of humans and many animals, a parent is someone who has conceived and given birth to a child, or has contributed genetic material to the creation of offspring through methods such as biological reproduction or adoption. Parents play a crucial role in nurturing, caring for, and raising their children, providing guidance, support, and protection as the children grow and develop. The term "parent" can also refer to a broader concept beyond biological relationships, encompassing individuals who take on caregiving and guardianship responsibilities for children who may not be their biological offspring. Putting mother and father together in consideration of the two-parent home, the model is one of cultural lag. While the social ideal of parenthood and family is being redefined to include co-parenting (Arendell in Padersen, 2012), the practice of family life is still based on the scaffolding of the traditional, ever-present, unemployed mother.

According to Rahman (as cited in Kiram, 2020), children learn to do physical activities, talk, get to know something, imitate, as well as other activities in the family, because parents are the first educators to conduct educational foundation once the primary educator. So that family education is the foundation for further children's education, both formal and non-formal education.

Early sex education for early childhood education refers to the introduction of age-appropriate information and discussions about human sexuality, relationships, and bodies to young children, typically between the ages of 3 to 8 years old. This form of education is designed to provide children with accurate, developmentally appropriate, and respectful information about their bodies, boundaries, and relationships in a way that is sensitive to their cognitive and emotional maturity. Meanwhile, from an Islamic perspective, parents or guardians are key agents of Muslim children's learning. They are considered the "primary school" for the education of a child. As sex could be part of *fitrah* (nature) they need to deal with when they enter the adolescence phase and reach adulthood, this parental obligation must incorporate sexuality education for the children (Abdullah & Muda, 2020).

Sex education for early childhood is a sensitive and important topic that should be approached with care, age-appropriate information, and a focus on promoting healthy attitudes towards body, relationships, and consent. The goal of sex education at this stage is to provide children with accurate information about their bodies, boundaries, and personal safety in a way that is respectful of their developmental level. Some key considerations for providing

sex education to young children are age appropriate information, body awareness, consent and boundaries, respect for differences, emotional intelligence, gender stereotype, communication, and parental involvement. The primary focus of early childhood sex education is on promoting safety, body autonomy, and healthy relationships. It's important to create an open and supportive environment where children feel comfortable asking questions and sharing their thoughts.

The supporting factors for the implementation of sex education for early childhood are (Sahla, 2018): (a) Family Education Level Factor, in this case education in the family is the level of education of the parents as a very determinant of the success of the child's education. Where children who live in families with high enough education can get special attention in the field of sex education than children who live in families with low education; (b) Family Economic Factors, in this case the cost is something that has a very big influence. Families who have an established economy can facilitate various needs and facilities for children to support the smooth running of education. Because the economic structure can determine the ability of families to provide the facilities needed by children; (c) Community factors, regarding the role of the environment in sex education, it is clear that the community environment is an educational institution but the family and school that can foster habits, knowledge, interests, and attitudes. From here, generally children can get sex education from parents when educating them in the hope that the person can accept the situation so they can solve problems and adjust the family, school or community environment.

According to Haryono (2018), sex learning given to children from an early age has benefits in the form of: (1) providing knowledge and opening children's knowledge regarding sex issues correctly, so that this can make children understand the function of their reproductive organs and can understand how to maintain and care for these organs. (2) can prevent children from various cases of sexual crimes and the risks of such sexual behaviour.

3. METHOD

This research was conducted in Taman Pintar Daycare, Banda Aceh. This research was conducted using a descriptive qualitative method. Purposive sampling technique was used in determining the subjects that will be used as informants in the study by considering certain criteria include: (a) parents who have children aged 4-5 years, (b) parents who has introducing early sex education for the children, so that based characteristics, 8 informants were appointed as key informants in this study. The primary data sources consist of parents who have children aged 4-5 years, totaling 8 people and secondary data obtained through document studies such as books, scientific journals and references related to the problems studied. The researcher collected the data using interviews and documentation. The collected data were then analyzed through qualitative data analysis by Miles and Huberman (1994), they are: (a) collecting data; (b) reducing data; (c) presenting data.

Table 1.

The Research Informants Selected to be Interviewed.

No	Companion Name	Occupation	Age of Children
1	MU	Teacher	4 years
2	DA	Teacher	4 years
3	NA	Teacher	5 years
4	CH	Teacher	4 years
5	FS	Teacher	4 years
6	SY	Teacher	5 years
7	DN	Doctor	4 years
8	DL	Nurse	4 years

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. *The Role of Parents in the Introduction of Sex Education to Children Aged 4-5 Years at Taman Pintar Banda Aceh Daycare*

The role of parents in the introduction of sex education in children must be truly optimal. Parents really have to teach and notify about gender differences between men and women, identification of children's body parts, how to cover genitalia and body parts that may and may not be touched by other people. So the introduction of sex education is very important to apply to children, because it gives the goal of introducing children to gender, how to cover children's genitals and how to take care of them both in terms of health and hygiene, security and safety. The way of introduction is done by teaching children about shame, such as not undressing in front of people. With the development of social media, one of the ways to convey it is also by giving movies to children, such as through Youtube. The role of parents in providing early sex education to children is very important, especially mothers. Mother is the first school for children. The role of parents as educators has been able to instill and teach sex education as early as possible to children from starting to introduce gender, the differences between men and women and how to protect genitalia. Based on the results of interviews with the informants which are DA, Ch, and Fs of the 3 samples above, only 1 parent drew that they had played a role as an educator, "I am a teacher and as educator for my children in providing an understanding of sex, starting from introducing the private parts, and so on" (DA, March 2023). In addition, based on the results of interviews with MU and DN subjects, it is known that parents must supervise and provide understanding to children to guarantee their privacy which they should limit. The following is an excerpt from the interview "We as parents must introduce him that his body parts belong to him and cannot be touched by anyone other than his parents, except for going to the doctor and checking at the Posyandu" (DL, March 2023).

Based on the results of interviews with 8 parents at Taman Pintar Banda Aceh Daycare that the role of parents is very important in introducing early sex education to the children. From the opinion above, there are several parents who have played a role in providing the introduction of early sex education in early childhood, one of which is

becoming an educator, parents have started introducing sex education by means of basic and simple things, making it easier for children to understand it like the introduction of gender to children, regarding the boundaries of genitalia between men and women, and their limbs are theirs and cannot be touched by other people. The role of parents in the introduction of children's sex education is quite good. But there are also parents who don't have much knowledge and how to convey sex to their children, so that makes parents worry about sex education. There are parents who think that sex is a trivial thing to convey to children, and there are even parents who say that sex education is only for adults, even though it is not. Parents have started to teach and slowly remind their children to always be careful when they are around them, including their family and friends. Parents serve as models for children by setting an example in explaining how to care for and clean their limbs after bathing. For early childhood, the stages of introducing sex education are given according to the child's age. Parents start introducing sex education when the child is starting to be able to speak, starting at the age of 2 years. Children are given an introduction to sex in accordance with the knowledge possessed by parents, for example introducing children about their sex organs briefly and through songs given to children.

4.2. Factors Supporting and Inhibiting Parents in the Introduction of Sex Education to Children Aged 4-5 Years at Daycare Taman Pintar Banda Aceh

4.2.1. Supporting Factors

Based on the results of interviews which are the supporting factors for parents in the introduction of sex education in early childhood at Taman Pintar *Daycare*, as follows:

a. Parental Education

Parents are very influential in giving sex education to children. Parents should be educated about the stages of child development, including cognitive, emotional and social milestones. This knowledge helps parents tailor their discussions to their child's level of understandable and non-threatening. This is based on the results of an interview with one of the informants "I think parental knowledge is very important, at least we went to college or attended parenting events so at least we understand and can apply it to our children, that's how it can be taught, right?" (DA, March 2023). Additionally, parental education should emphasize effective communication strategies, such as active listening, using age-appropriate language, and creating a safe space for their children to ask questions.

b. Modeling Healthy Behavior

Children often learn by observing their parents, so displaying respect, communication and consent in relationships is essential. Parents should demonstrate privacy and modesty in their behavior. Many cultures and religions have conservative beliefs about discussing sexual topics with young children. Effective communication between parents and children fosters understanding, trust, and open dialogue. This is based on the results of an interview with one of the informants "In my opinion, parents

themselves are very influential in what children can follow, children are closer to their parents so they will imitate and listen, moreover, our religion and culture really teach that so we have to be an example to our own children” (NA, March 2023). So that, it allows children to express their thoughts, concerns, and questions. Additionally, parents introduce children to their cultural and religious heritage, helping them understand their roots and values.

c. Media Content

Parent should be carefully selected and age-appropriate in giving media or screen time for using supplement sex education. There are educational resources, books, and videos designed to teach young children about their bodies, privacy and appropriate touch. Based on the results of interview “Maybe social media, because social media has a lot of information about sex for children, or educational films and the like, so it could make it easier for children to understand because it is packaged in the form of stories or shows” (MU, March 2023). However, parent and educators should review the content beforehand to ensure its appropriateness and accuracy.

4.2.2. *Obstacle Factors*

Sex education for early childhood is a crucial of a child’s development, contributing to their understanding of their bodies, relationships, and personal boundaries. However, parents often encounter various obstacles when attempting to introduce sex education to their young children. There are some of obstacle that parent faced in introducing sex education for early childhood in Taman Pintar Daycare Banda Aceh, namely:

a. Fear of Premature Knowledge

Parents often express concerns about introducing sexual topics too early, fearing that it might expose their children to information that is not age-appropriate. This is in line with the results of an interview with one of the informants who said that they felt it was too early to introduce sex education to children, it was considered taboo by family members. This is based on the results of an interview with one of the informants “Sometimes I as a parent, feel like I'm still awkward and taboo about introducing sex to my children, and feel like it's too fast because the children are afraid they won't understand and it will become more questions, plus there's also a lack of communication with my children.” (SY, March 2023). So that, this became an obstacle in introducing sex education to children.

b. Lack of education

Some parents might not have received comprehensive sex education themselves, and therefore, they might not feel equipped to discuss these topics with their children. Parental education is very influential in giving sex education to children. Parents who have higher education will find it easier to convey an understanding of the introduction of sex for young children. More precisely using good words, so that children are easier to understand. Additionally, sexuality is often considered a private and taboo subject in

many societies. Parents might feel uncomfortable discussing it openly, even with their own children, so that they might feel difficulty in introducing early sex education for 4-5-year olds to understand. Yet, parents themselves might feel embarrassed or uncomfortable discussing topics related to sex and sexuality, they worry about how they will react to their children's questions and how to approach the topic appropriately or answer questions that might arise. This is based on the results of an interview with one of the informants "It seems like my knowledge is indeed lacking in discussing sex education, because I admit that I don't really understand how to explain it and where to start first." (SY, March 2023).

Parents play a major role in providing sex education, because the introduction of sex education from an early age must first be introduced by parents after that only in their environment. Because every child's growth and development, the most important factor is the family environment. The family environment greatly influences the process of introducing sex education to children, where fathers and mothers become the first teachers for their children. Parents involvement gives children a sense of belonging and security. Knowing that their parents are invest in their lives fosters a feeling of being valued and loved.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research that has been conducted at Taman Pintar Banda Aceh Daycare, it can be concluded that: (1) Most parents in Taman Pintar Banda Aceh daycare understand the role of introducing sex education and understand the importance of this education being given to children according to their age stages. Parents play a very important role in children's sex education, one of their roles is as educators; (2) Supporting factor in introducing early sex education are parental education, modelling healthy behavior and media content. Additionally, the obstacle factors for parents in the introduction of early sex education in early childhood in Taman Pintar Daycare are fear of premature knowledge and lack of parental education.

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