

Ecological Citizenship: Developing a Sustainable Parenting Model to Prevent Sexual Behaviour in Children Based on Age Stages

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Abstract: This study aims to determine mothers' perceptions regarding sex education, determine mothers' perceptions of the right time to start sex education, the obstacles faced by mothers in providing sex education, and design an effective parenting model to provide sex education. The research method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative method with a survey approach. Researchers conducted a direct survey of 30 mothers around the Jakarta, Tangerang, Depok, Bekasi, and Bogor areas. The data collection technique used quota sampling. The survey was conducted in October 2024. According to the study's findings, 93% of mothers said that sex education ought to begin at 0 months of age. However, unfortunately, more than 50% of mothers have not prepared sex education for their children for various reasons. Therefore, it is necessary to develop and socialize a suitable parenting model in the community to prevent sexual behaviour in the future. The results of this study can be used as a basis for further research on models that should be developed related to continuous sex education for early childhood.

1 INTRODUCTION

Based on the results of investigations in several major cities in Indonesia, around 72% have dated, almost 92% have kissed, around 62% have groped their partners, and around 20% to 30% of teenagers admit to having had sex. As a result, the dangers of a free sex lifestyle for teenagers, in general, seem increasingly accurate; the group of teenagers included in this group are, on average, 17-21 years old, most of whom are still in school (Indonesian Demographic and Health Survey conducted by the National Population and Family Planning Agency, Central Statistics Agency, and the Ministry of Health, 2017). This data is alarming. Especially for parents who have children. The root of this deviant sexual behaviour comes from the lack of sexual education provided in both formal and informal education (Döring, 2014; Stewart et al., 2022). The current condition of society is increasingly concerning, especially since deviant sexual behaviour is increasingly rampant regardless of gender and age. Unsurprisingly, many parents are

increasingly worried when releasing their children into the outside environment.

This is where the role of parents is to build a strong fortress for children by providing early sexual education. Children can learn about their sexual identity and role, children can maintain their sexual nature, children can learn to cover their genitals from an early age, and children can maintain their private areas independently so that children can consciously protect themselves from deviant sexual behaviour. (Dahlia et al., 2021; Schneider & Hirsch, 2020). Early sex education is not just about teaching about reproductive organs but also providing a comprehensive understanding of sexuality, relationships, and reproductive health. This education begins when children are still small and is given gradually according to the child's age and cognitive development (Justicia, 2017; Yafie, 2017).

Based on previous relevant research, early sex education is considered necessary because sex education provides accurate information about body changes, sexuality, and the consequences of unsafe

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sexual behaviour (Schneider & Hirsch, 2020; Trollinger, 2021). With adequate knowledge, adolescents can make wiser decisions regarding sexual activity. Sex education teaches adolescents how to protect themselves from sexual violence, exploitation, and sexually transmitted diseases. In addition, providing sex education to children early will build a healthy relationship between parents and children (Jatmikowati et al., 2015; Mukri, 2018; Rimawati & Nugraheni, 2019). Sex education encourages open communication between children and parents about sexuality so that children feel comfortable asking and getting the correct information (Anggraeni et al., 2014; Septiani, 2021). Sex education teaches values such as respect, equality, and consent in relationships. By understanding the boundaries of themselves and others, children can prevent and report acts of sexual violence.

Early sexual education will improve reproductive health and prevent unwanted pregnancies; sex education provides information about contraception and the importance of planning a pregnancy (Hasanah et al., n.d.; Rigolon et al., 2021; WHO, 2018). Prevention of sexually transmitted diseases: sex education provides information on how to prevent the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases. Sex education encourages children to maintain their reproductive health. Sex education can be integrated with moral and religious values to form a strong character and teach children to be responsible for their actions (Trigueros et al., 2020; Zarei & Mirzaei, 2022).

There are still many challenges in the implementation of sex education today, including the negative stigma related to sex education in society, the lack of trained teachers and quality learning materials, and differences of opinion between parents, teachers, and the community regarding the content and methods of sex education (Atmawijaya et al., 2020; Marwah et al., 2018). Early sex education is a significant long-term investment in building a healthy, responsible, and dignified young generation. By providing accurate information and building open communication, we can help children grow into physically, mentally, and socially healthy individuals (Insiyah & Hidayat, 2020; Sholicha et al., 2015; Stewart et al., 2022; Wahyuni et al., 2024).

Therefore, sex education must be carried out in a way that is appropriate to the age and development of the child, and involves parents and the community. This study aims to determine mothers' perceptions of sex education, determine mothers' perceptions of the right time to start sex education, the obstacles faced

by mothers in providing sex education, and design an effective parenting model for providing sex education.

2 METHODS

This study employed a survey-based descriptive qualitative research methodology. Researchers conducted a direct survey of 30 mothers around the Jakarta, Tangerang, Depok, Bekasi, and Bogor areas. The data collection technique used quota sampling. The survey was conducted in October 2024. In this study, researchers prepared several questions for respondents: (1) As a mother, at what age should sex education for children begin? (2) What kind of material should sex education for children begin? (3) What reference sources do you usually use to provide sex education material for children? (4) What media do you usually use to provide sex education material for children? (5) What obstacles do you face when providing sex education material for children? Primary data was collected from respondents. Descriptive statistics and descriptive qualitative analysis were employed in the data analysis method. Data gathered from survey results is processed using descriptive statistics to create a percentage analysis.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results show a survey of 30 mothers in Jabodetabek, the following results were obtained:

3.1 Results

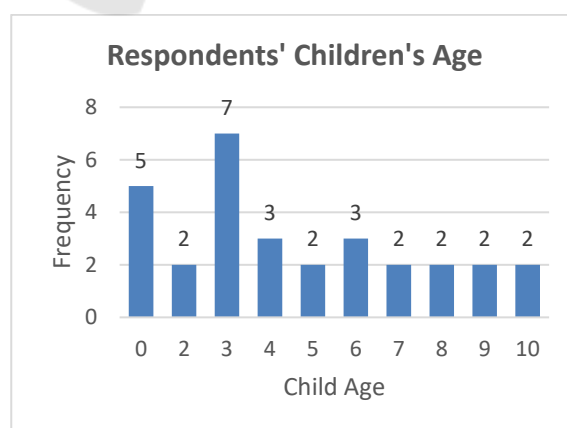


Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents' Children's Ages.

Figure 1 explains the distribution of the ages of the respondents' children in the age range of less than 1 month to 10 years. The highest frequency is in children aged 3 years, as many as 7.

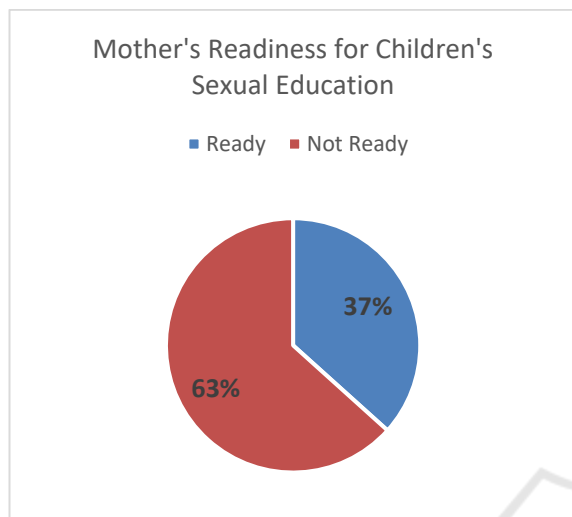


Figure 2: Mother's Readiness for Children's Sexual Education.

Figure 2 explains the mother's readiness to provide sexual education to children. Among them are preparing sex education books, following the directions given by the school, and providing education on body parts that can and cannot be touched by others.

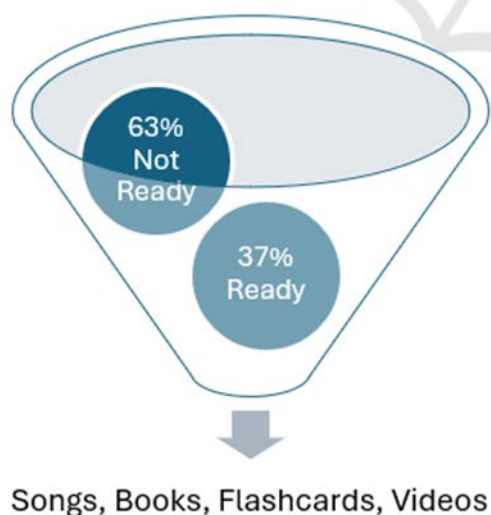


Figure 3: Media prepared by mothers for children's sexual education.

Figure 3 explains that 37% of mothers (11 people) have prepared various sex education media for

children, including songs, books, picture cards, and educational videos. Meanwhile, the details of mothers' preparations for children's educational media are explained in Figure 4.

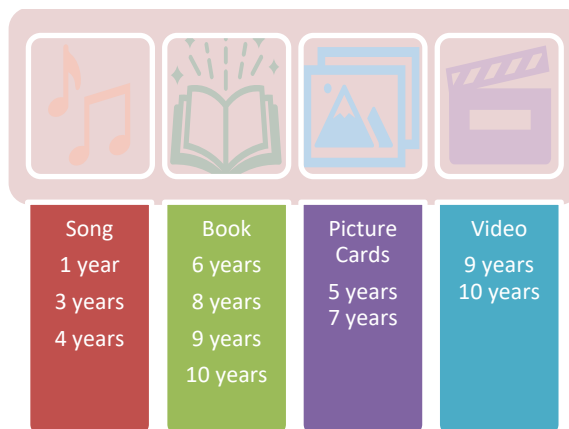


Figure 4: Media prepared by mothers for children's sexual education based on age.

Figure 4 illustrates the media prepared by mothers who are ready to provide sex education to their children. Only 11 out of 30 mothers have prepared sex education with different media variations at each age level. It is seen that children with a low age of 1-4 years are more effectively given education through songs, usually kindergarten children. Meanwhile, the age range of 6-10 years is more effectively given stimulus in educational books. Other choices fall on flashcards for ages 5 and 7 years, while videos are for children ages 9 and 10.

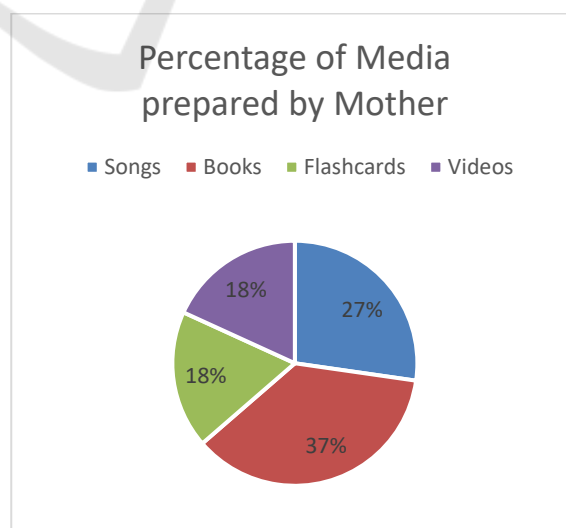


Figure 5: Percentage of Media Prepared by Mother.

Figure 5 explains that books are media that are easy to find and prepared by mothers as a medium for sex education for children. In addition to books, there are choices of songs, flashcards, and videos. Each media has its advantages and disadvantages, so it can be used according to the child's age.

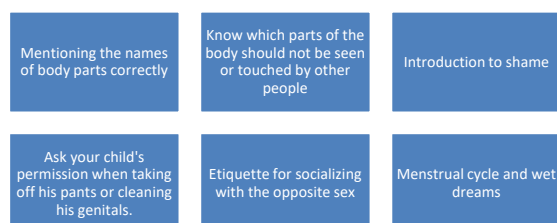


Figure 6: Materials prepared by mothers as sexual education materials for children.

Figure 6 explains the materials that mothers regarding sexual education for children have prepared. Most mothers start sexual education for children by asking permission when opening their pants and cleaning the child's genitals (40%). Then, they start introducing body parts correctly and telling which parts can and cannot be touched by others (35%). When children grow into children, they are introduced to the menstrual phase in women and wet dreams in men (15%).

3.2 Discussion AND TECHNOLOGY

The respondents in this study were 30 mothers who had children ranging in age from less than 1 month to 10 years with various stages of development, from infants to elementary school children. Most of the children of mothers who were respondents were 3 years old, as shown in Figure 1. This shows that the 3-year-old age group has a fairly large representation in the study sample. This age range was chosen because this study focuses on the cognitive development of early childhood to minimize sexual deviations that may occur in the future.

Meanwhile, based on the readiness of mothers, Figure 2 shows that mothers have shown positive initiatives in providing sexual education to their children. Some of the actions mentioned include preparing sex education books. This shows an awareness of the importance of accurate and age-appropriate sources of information for children. These books can be an effective tool to explain sexual concepts in a way that is easy for children to understand (Araiza-Alba et al., 2021; Khusnidakhon, 2021; Nassoba & Samanik, 2022; Radd et al., 2021).

The next thing mothers do is follow the school's directions. This shows a collaboration between parents and schools in providing sex education (Ellis & Bentham, 2021; Goldfarb & Lieberman, 2021a; Lyu et al., 2020; Nikkelen et al., 2020; Paton et al., 2020). Schools often hold programs or workshops that can help parents provide appropriate sex education. Mothers have also started providing education about body parts that can and cannot be touched. This is an essential step in protecting children from sexual abuse. By teaching children about body boundaries, they will better protect themselves. However, only 37% of mothers prepare sex education for their children. In fact, with early preparation, it is hoped that there will be an increase in awareness for parents to provide sex education from an early age. Parents do not only passively receive information but must also be proactive in finding learning resources and implementing them. Parents can work with schools to strengthen the effectiveness of sex education (Goldfarb & Lieberman, 2021a; Lyu et al., 2020; Nikkelen et al., 2020).

However, there is still a lot of potential for development. Many parents may still feel less confident or do not have sufficient knowledge about sexuality. Therefore, there needs to be more intensive education programs for parents. Sex education is not only limited to body anatomy and self-protection but also includes topics such as relationships, consent, and reproductive health. Sex education materials need to be adjusted to the child's age and level of understanding (Goldfarb & Lieberman, 2021b; Meredith, 2024). Parents need to create a safe and comfortable atmosphere for children to ask and discuss sexuality.

Figure 3 shows that 37% (11 people) of the respondents were mothers who had proactively prepared sex education materials for their children. This figure is quite significant and shows an increasing awareness of the importance of providing sex education from an early age. The eleven mothers prepared several media for sex education for their children from an early age; the following are details of the media that the mothers had prepared: (1) Songs: The use of songs in sex education can make the material more enjoyable and more accessible for children to remember. Simple and cheerful song lyrics can help children understand basic concepts about the body, feelings, and relationships between people; (2) Books: Story books or picture books with children's sexuality themes can be practical tools for starting conversations about the body and feelings. Exciting illustrations and simple stories can help

children understand more complex concepts; (3) Picture cards: Picture cards with simple pictures can be used to teach children about body parts, feelings, and healthy relationships; (4) Educational videos: Educational videos created specifically for children can provide more visual and interactive explanations of various topics related to sexuality (Chavula et al., 2022; Dawson & Carrigan, 2021; Eyres et al., 2022; Schmidt et al., 2021; Sinaga & Simorangkir, 2021).

The data shows that more and more parents are aware of the importance of providing sex education to their children. Parents involved in this study showed high creativity in choosing and creating appropriate educational media for their children. The availability of various educational media shows that there are more choices that parents can make to provide sex education to their children. Data on mothers' readiness to prepare sex education media for children shows that there are positive steps in providing sex education to children. However, there is still much room for improvement and development. By providing the proper support, parents can become vital partners in providing comprehensive sex education that has a positive impact on children (Davies et al., 2022; Lameiras-Fernández et al., 2021; Widodo, 2024; Woolweaver et al., 2023).

Figure 4 provides a fascinating picture of how mothers choose age-appropriate sexual education media for their children. There is a clear tendency for media choices to vary according to children's cognitive development and interests at each age stage. Mothers use a variety of media, ranging from songs, books, and picture cards to videos, to provide sexual education to children. Based on the data collected, the choice of media is based on the child's age. For children aged 1-4 years, songs are the leading choice. Exciting music and rhythm can help young children understand simple concepts about the body and relationships. Picture cards and books are introduced for children aged 5-7 years. Clear visualizations and simple stories on flashcards and books help children understand more complex concepts. Books are a more dominant choice (Araiza-Alba et al., 2021; Woolweaver et al., 2023). Children at this age have better reading skills, so story books with sexual themes can effectively provide information. For children aged 9-10 years, videos are introduced. Interactive and visual educational videos can attract the interest of older children and provide more in-depth explanations (Döring, 2014; Widodo, 2024).

The data shows that the selection of sexual education media must be adjusted to the age and developmental stage of the child. Media that is effective for a 3-year-old child may not be suitable for

an 8-year-old child. Using songs, pictures, and videos shows that visual and audio elements are essential in children's sex education. Children find it easier to understand abstract concepts through exciting and interactive media (Septiani, 2021; Yulianci et al., 2021). The different media choices for each age group reflect the child's cognitive development. Early childhood is more responsive to music and pictures, while older children can understand more complex stories and detailed information. These data provide valuable insights into parental practices in providing sex education to children. By understanding different media preferences and choices, we can develop more effective sex education programs that are appropriate to the needs of children of various ages (Goldfarb & Lieberman, 2021b).

The data also shows that each prepared media has its advantages and disadvantages, which are presented in the following Table 1:

Table 1: Advantages and Disadvantages of Media prepared by Mothers.

Media	Advantages	Disadvantages
Books	Easy to find, flexible, combining visuals and narrative.	Information may be more limited than other media and less interactive.
Songs	It is attractive, easy to remember, and can create a pleasant atmosphere.	The information conveyed may be more limited and less in-depth.
Flashcards	Clear visuals, easy to understand, can be used for discussion.	The information conveyed may be more straightforward and less varied.
Videos	Complete and in-depth information, interactive, engaging.	It requires special equipment, takes longer, and content is only sometimes appropriate.

Figure 5 shows the percentage of media prepared by mothers for sex education for their children. From the data, it can be seen that books are a popular medium for sex education. This data shows that books are the most common and easiest choice for mothers to use as sex education media for children. This shows several important things: books are easier to find than other media, such as educational videos that may require internet access or special devices. Bookstores, libraries, or even online stores provide a variety of children's books with various themes,

including sex education. Books can be used anytime and anywhere. Children can read books alone or with their parents (Heath & Thomas, 2020; Tattersall Wallin, 2022). This provides high flexibility for parents in managing time to provide sex education. Books combine visual elements (pictures) and narrative (stories) that can help children understand abstract concepts. Exciting pictures and simple stories can make the learning process more enjoyable.

Each media has its advantages and disadvantages. Therefore, the choice of media must be adjusted to the age and developmental stage of the child (Aslan & Shiong, 2023; Humprecht et al., 2022; Karakose et al., 2021). For example, books with simple pictures and short stories are more suitable for young children, while more complex educational videos can be given to older children. In addition to the child's age, several other factors can influence the choice of sex education media. For example, not all parents have the same access to various media types. Each parent also has different preferences when choosing media for their children. The choice of media can vary depending on the specific topic. Books are a popular and easy choice for parents to provide sex education to children. However, it is essential to remember that only some mediums are the most effective. The choice of appropriate media must be adjusted to the child's age, the topic to be conveyed, and the availability of resources.

Therefore, parents should use several media to get optimal results (Dahlia et al., 2021; Humprecht et al., 2022; Sinaga & Simorangkir, 2021). For example, parents can invite children to sing or play with picture cards after reading a book. After using educational media, invite children to discuss what they have learned. This will help children understand the concept better and feel more comfortable asking questions. In connection with the many reference sources, parents should continue to look for new resources and the latest information on children's sex education.

Figure 6 provides an exciting overview of the initial materials mothers generally teach their children regarding sex education. The data shows that mothers focus more on a fundamental understanding of the body, privacy, and physical changes during puberty. Most mothers start sex education with simple things such as asking permission before opening their child's pants and introducing the names of body parts. This is an essential first step in building children's confidence and comfort in talking about their bodies. The concept of body parts that can and cannot be touched by others is an integral part of sex education. This helps children understand the

importance of maintaining privacy and protecting themselves from sexual harassment. As children enter puberty, mothers begin to introduce the concept of menstruation to girls and wet dreams to boys. This helps children understand the physical changes in their bodies and reduces anxiety or confusion.

These data show that mothers are generally aware of the importance of providing a basic understanding of the body and sexuality to children from an early age (Aslan & Shiong, 2023; Humprecht et al., 2022). Although basic materials have been taught, there needs to be an effort to develop more comprehensive sex education materials covering various aspects such as relationships, consent, and reproductive health. Parents are vital in providing sex education to children (Dahlia et al., 2021; Davies et al., 2022; Keenan & Hot Mess, 2020; Papadakis et al., 2020). They are the first and primary source of information for children. These data show that mothers have made a good start in providing sex education to their children. However, there is still much room for improvement and development. Sex education must continue to be carried out sustainably and adjusted to the age and development of the child.

4 CONCLUSION

The study's findings suggest that depending on their developmental stages, children have varying needs for sexual education. Therefore, appropriate media is needed according to the child's age development to prevent sexual deviations in the future. Future research can explore the sexual education needs of children at each age level and develop existing media so that children have sufficient education to face future global challenges.

Need developed curriculum education comprehensive and appropriate sex with age children, which includes various aspects like anatomy, physiology, relationships, consent, and health reproduction. Parents need to be given training about methods to give education about effective and appropriate sex with their children. Professionals like psychologists, children, and teachers can give support and guidance to parents in giving education about sex to children. Media for the education of sex children must use simple and easy language understood by children. Parents and teachers are also required to create a safe and comfortable atmosphere for discussing sexuality. Parents must show an open and positive attitude about sexuality.

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