

Formulation of Sex Education for Early Childhood in Indonesian Playgroups

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Abstract

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) plays a crucial role in instilling sex education to reduce the daily increase of sexual violence against children as victims and perpetrators. Using the case study research method, this study examines how sex education has been implemented in 27 playgroups in the Singaparna subdistrict of the Tasikmalaya Regency. This study's data was collected through questionnaires to all participants, in-depth interviews with two participants, and observation. Results indicated that playgroup educators in the Singaparna District recognized the importance of providing sexual education from a young age. However, a few participants had not been exposed to information regarding sexual education for minors. The form of sexual education for young children in Playgroups in the Singaparna District of Tasikmalaya remains inconsistent. Most sex education consists of introducing areas/body parts that may and may not be touched through singing. The second form of sex education, introducing physical differences/body parts between men and women and how to protect themselves, is extensively

introduced. Frequently encountered obstacles in teaching sex education to children are related to the use of language and the appropriate delivery method so that children can readily comprehend sex education according to their level of understanding based on age.

Keywords: Sex Education, Early Childhood, Playgroups.

INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, sexual violence has not decreased from one year to the next. WHO, UNESCO, and UNICEF data indicate that roughly one billion children, or half of the world's total child population, experience violence. Children experience various types of violence, including physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence, injury, disability, and death (Antara, 2020). From 1 January to 19 June 2020, the Online Information System for the Protection of Women and Children (Symphony PPA) recorded 3,486 instances of violence against children in Indonesia, including 852 instances of physical violence, 768 instances of psychological violence, and 1,848 instances of sexual violence (Kemenppa, 2020).

West Java has a disproportionately high incidence of sexual violence against minors. The Office of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, and Family Planning in West Java (DP3AKB) reports that approximately 4,500 cases of violence against children occur annually. Every day, 12 to 13 minors are sexually abused (DP3AKB, 2019). The daily superintendent of the Integrated Service Center for the Empowerment of Women and Children (P2TP2A) in Tasikmalaya District stated that child abuse cases have continued to rise since 2018. There were 36 instances of violence against minors in 2018. This number increased by 49 points in 2019. There were 100 cases in 2020. In 2021, there were 94 cases, while in 2020 through July, there were 48. The most prevalent form of violence is sexual violence. (Muslim, 2022).

In the geographically central region of Tasikmalaya Regency, the Singaparna District, a significant number of children were victims of sexual violence. According to Solihat (2019), during the first period of P2TP2A management, Tasikmalaya Regency (2010-2017), a teacher reciting dozens of pupils committed sodomy in Singaparna sub-district, attracting the attention of the media and the national government. During the second management period (2017-2022), minors continued to be sexual violence victims and perpetrators. The perpetrator, who is only 15 years old, sodomized seven children in two villages in the Singaparna subdistrict (P2TP2A, 2020). The seven victims were minors.

Multiple factors contribute to the rise in sexual assaults against minors. From a child's perspective, however, children are frequently targeted because they are viewed as vulnerable, helpless, and easily influenced by adults. One of the causes of sexual violence against children, according to Syahputra (2018), is the high libido and abnormal sexual desire of the perpetrators, who view children as easier to force due to the disparity in physical strength. Lubis (2021) identifies the lack of parental guidance as the primary cause of delinquency in children, including sexually related delinquency, in addition to technological advances. Sexual violence against minors can have serious consequences for their survival.

The effects of sexual violence on minors are no laughing matter. Sexual violence can cause physical and psychological damage, resulting in death (Lestari & Herliana, 2020), can cause post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Ajeng et al., in Solehati et al., 2022), inferiority, hatred of men, insecurity, and traumatization into adolescence (Rakhmawati., 2016, in Solehati et al., 2022). Children's futures must be protected from the effects of sexual violence, which should be prevented as early as possible.

This requires prevention efforts from all involved parties, including one of the early childhood education institutions (PAUD), which seek to instill moral and religious values in young children. In accordance with the General Guidelines for

the Implementation of Quality PAUD issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2022, quality PAUD should be able to provide educational and essential services for children. Health and nutrition, educational stimulation, moral and emotional development, care, and protection are in question. Therefore, the chairman of Central Himpaudi, Prof. Dr. Ir. Netty Herawati, M.Sc., and KPAI agreed to promote anti-violence education best practices in PAUD units. One of the reasons for this is that the Ministry of Education and Culture's research involving 117,632 Early Childhood Education (PAUD) teachers across Indonesia found that teachers and caregivers of young children were underrepresented in protection and care services (KPAI, 2023).

PAUD protects and cares for minors by providing age-appropriate sexual education. The 2013 PAUD curriculum includes lessons on children's health and safety behaviors, such as yelling when they feel insecure, displaying caution around strangers, and engaging in personal hygiene activities.

Nonetheless, the conditions encountered in the field continue to be diverse. PAUD units face many obstacles in introducing sex education to early childhood, including the teacher's limited knowledge of sex education, so that implementation is not optimal (Justicia et al, 2019), the lack of sex education materials (Astuti et al, 2017), and learning media that are less appealing for conveying sex education content (Sarasati & Cahyati, 2021).

Given the problem of increasing cases of sexual violence against children in Tasikmalaya District, particularly in Singaparna District, and the importance of PAUD as one of the parties that should play a role in preventing and overcoming sexual violence in children, while based on several sources above, the implementation of sex education in PAUD is still uneven and encountering several obstacles, this article investigates whether playgroup educators in Tasikmalaya District are implementing sex education.

METHOD

This research procedure employs a qualitative case study approach. This was done because they wanted to determine the type of sex education provided to young children in playgroups in the Singaparna District of the Tasikmalaya Regency, whether the PAUD teacher understood the significance of sex education, and whether any efforts had been made to provide sex education from an early age. This study was conducted with approximately 27 playgroups in the Singaparna District of the Tasikmalaya Province. This study's data collection methods included questionnaires and interviews with multiple participants. Initial questions were explored with the aid of a Google form questionnaire, and to collect additional data, in-depth interviews with several participants and observations of the implementation of learning in two play groups were conducted. The obtained data were subjected to thematic analysis.

Thematic analysis is a technique for analyzing qualitative data, such as information gleaned from in-depth interviews or semistructured interviews (Heriyanto, 2021). Thematic analysis is a method for discovering patterns or themes in the data collected by researchers (Berns. Roberto, 1997). This technique is highly effective when a researcher intends to investigate qualitative data in depth in order to discover related patterns in a phenomenon and explain the extent to which a phenomenon occurs in the eyes of researchers (Fereday. J. & Muir-Cochrane. E, 2006). The topic that will be investigated is the state of sex education in playgroups in the Singaparna District of the Tasikmalaya Regency in order to make the findings visible.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research found that the average participant still perceives sex education at an early age as limited to identifying areas/members of the body that may be touched and which may not be touched through singing and the differences between men and women in terms of how to dress and physical characteristics. Several participants conveyed the difficulty of using the right way and language to convey sex education to

children so that it is easy to understand according to the child's level of development. Even so, all participants said that sex education at an early age was very important to prevent sexual violence. However, not all participants were exposed to appropriate information about sex education at an early age.

Following are the complete research findings, which are the result of a synthesis of the themes that emerged based on the participants' opinions, which were then analyzed to understand the similarities and interrelationships of each theme. Departing from the synthesis of emerging themes, it is expected to obtain a comprehensive picture of the form of early childhood sex education. Several themes emerged from the interview results, which will be described as follows. Based on research in the field, all participants thought that sex education given at an early age was very important. The following is an excerpt of statements given by several participants regarding this matter:

Participant I: "It is very necessary....to avoid sexual abuse of children" (11-15-2022)

Participant D: "It's very important because that's the basis of early information for children regarding sex education, don't make them look like an empty glass, right? For example, if there is a child of a girl, there are fathers who approach her, because they don't get sex education, it will be considered a normal thing..." (11-14-2022)

Participant Q: "It's very important, because today's children are different from children in the past, if children now know gadgets, children often look at their cellphones, that's bound to be there..they're afraid to see what they don't want" (17-11 -2022)

All participants believed that sex education needed to be introduced early on, although not all of them were exposed to information about sex education in early childhood. Sex education for children can start from infancy, where parents can verbalize treatment related to the baby's genitals, for example asking permission when they want to open diapers and clean the baby's genitals from feces, then convey orally that the baby will be put back on his pants so that other people do not see his pri-

vate parts, or when bathing the baby, parents can verbally explain the care given regarding areas/limbs that must be covered and cannot be touched by other people. Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic theory (in Arroisi, Alfiansyah, Perdana, 2021) divides into 5 stages of human life development: the oral, anal, phallic, latent, and genital phases. Sex education can begin in the anal phase, where children can already be taught toilet training which is a form of sex education, and then the phallic phase (age 3-6 years), where children are familiar with sex differences.

Information about sex education for participants was obtained from various sources, such as the Internet, seminars and outreach from several parties, including partner organizations (Himpaudi). Most of the participants believed that early childhood sex education was an introduction to which limbs/body areas were allowed to be touched and which were not to be touched, the differences between boys and girls in terms of physique and how to dress.

Sex education for children should be introduced since early childhood education is adjusted to the stages of child development and is a preventive action (Tabrīzī. Y. al-Madani, 2003). Sexual education has a broad scope, not only related to reproduction but also related to issues of habit, religion, art, morals, and law (Solihin. S, 2015). Sex education for children is more directed at providing correct knowledge as an effort to teach, raise awareness and contemplate sexual topics so that they are able to adapt and be alert to sexual problems and deviations they may face in their future lives (Tabrīzī, 2003). Sex education for children from an early age is expected to be able to provide basic knowledge in accordance with religious norms to children so that children do not receive wrong information about sex education and provide a stronghold of self-defence to children, so that children do not become victims of irresponsible sex offenders. Moreover, one of the unique characteristics of children is having a very high curiosity, so it is feared that if they are not provided with proper information about sex education from an early age from trusted people such as parents and teachers, children will

get negative information about sex education from sources or the environment. other.

All participants agreed and gave a positive attitude towards early childhood sex education and considered that sex education needs to be given as early as possible so that children are protected from various threats of sexual violence. But actually, it's not only that, the purpose of providing sex education from an early age, which was concluded by Marlina & Pransiska (2018), is to prevent children from committing sexual crimes and to encourage good relations with children. More broadly Soesilo (2021) argues that sex education from an early age will provide benefits for positive self-acceptance so that you can then defend yourself from threats of danger.

FORMS OF SEXUAL EDUCATION FOR PRESCHOOLERS

The form of sex education for children is, of course, not the same as for adults, sex education for children does not teach about adult sex, sex education for children introduces gender roles and simple body anatomy (Ratnasari & Alias, 2016), teaches them to be able to identify dangerous situations to prevent sexual harassment from occurring, and teach children forms of touching that are not good, how to refuse or end interactions with suspicious actors or people, and how to ask for help if they are in a dangerous situation (Finkelhor in Joni & Surjaningrum, 2020).

Participants realized that cases of sexual violence experienced by children were increasing, it was from there that awareness of sex education in PAUD began to arise and had made efforts to try to introduce sexual education to children. From several participant statements, the forms of sex education that have been carried out in PAUD include toilet training, introduction to the physical characteristics of men and women, introducing parts of the body that may be touched and which cannot be touched, introducing parts of the body that other people may see and what is not permissible (*aurat*), how to care for body parts, how to protect oneself, differences in how men and women dress according to moral and religious values, how

to behave/behaviour limits for boys towards girls and vice versa. Of the forms of sex education, what is most widely introduced to children is the introduction of body parts/areas that may be touched and which may not be touched through singing.

Singing is one of the learning methods that can be applied in early childhood education. However, instilling behaviour, including sex education in children, cannot only be done in a short time with just one method. As stated by Soesilo (2021), sex education in PAUD cannot be provided instantly but requires a long and continuous time. In addition, sex education in PAUD cannot be targeted only from one form of introduction to areas that may and may not be touched but requires comprehensive material. Several participants had carried out more than one form of sex education for children, including Participant D, based on his statement: "Through songs and clapping related to touch, providing learning materials on certain themes, for example, the theme of clothing (love understanding how to cover genitals), the theme of members of the body (gender differences), separate places to change clothes between boys and girls, provide an understanding of the culture of shame if genitalia are visible, etc." (15-11-2022). Likewise, what was conveyed by Participant E, "It has been done by introducing body parts that other people cannot see and touch, teaches the concept of gender differences, instils a sense of shame." (16-11-2022).

Even so, sex education is still shallow given to children. Sex education material is given when certain events arise, for example, such as a child running around not fully dressed after changing clothes or after leaving the toilet, so the participants tell the child that this should not be done. In addition, it was observed during observation (15-11-2022) that some boys wanted to kiss their female friends, so the participants immediately invited the children to discuss that loving friends don't have to kiss friends.

Sex education for children requires appropriate learning methods and media so that it can become a behaviour that

children are used to. Hidayati & Nurhafizah (2021), argued that sex education for children should use methods and media that are interesting and fun for children. The same thing was also stated by Saraswati & Cahyati (2021), that learning media is a tool used in important learning activities used in sex education in early childhood.

In addition to learning media, the chosen method supports the success of sex education in children. Sex education for children is not enough to deliver advice verbally. More than that, children need habituation that is done repeatedly so that the behaviour they want to instil in children becomes a behaviour that children automatically display in their daily lives. As according to J. Martin, H. Riazi, A. Firoozi, and M. Nasiri (in Justicia et al, 2020), sex education is a process whereby people obtain the information and knowledge they need about sex and sexual identity as well as the forms of attitudes, beliefs and mark. Ulya (2020) conveys the same thing, that children cannot fully understand what is said to be good and bad according to immorality, and do not have obligations that must be carried out like adults, so habituation is one way that can be used to instil behaviour, including the introduction sex education for children. This statement strengthens the belief that sex education cannot be delivered only occasionally to children.

While the opinion of all participants, sex education is given when certain events arise. The planned sex education was delivered in the material on the themes "Self" and "My Environment". When discussing self, children are introduced to body parts/areas that others may and may not touch, and differences between boys and girls based on physical characteristics and clothing. Meanwhile, during the theme of my environment, sex education was applied to the theme of family. Children were given information about the ethics that may and may not be done with members of a different family, such as daughters may not bathe with their fathers.

CONCLUSION

The material content of sexual education knowledge in Singaparna Subdistrict Playgroups is still inconsistent. Despite the fact that the majority of them have been exposed to information about sex education for children, a tiny minority have not. Most forms of sex education are carried out by introducing areas/parts of the body that may be touched and which may not be touched through singing. The second form of sex education that is widely introduced in Play Groups in the Singaparna District teaches children about the physical/limb differences between men and women and how to protect themselves. While the introduction of toilet training, introducing parts of the body that are permitted to be seen by others and those that are not (aurat), how to care for body parts, and ways of behaving/limits of behavior for boys towards girls and vice versa, there are still very few parents who introduce these concepts to their children. The introduction of sex education to children in the Singaparna District, primarily through unanticipated events, such as children's inquiries or unacceptable behavior, such as wanting to kiss a friend, running without pants after urinating, or changing clothes.

In planned learning activities, sex education is introduced through the themes "Myself" and "My Environment," but not through daily habituation activities that can help children internalize values/sex education. Obstacles that participants frequently encounter relate to the use of language and the method of delivery to children, so that children can easily comprehend sex education based on their level of understanding. Participants admitted that they were still hesitant to use the scientific names of the male and female genitals when introducing the genitals, and that there were still many limitations in the method of delivering sex education so that it was easily understood by children and elicited a positive response from parents. It is hoped that PAUD educators will introduce sex education to children not only occasionally based on events that occur or certain themes, but also on an ongoing basis using media and methods that are appealing to children,

such as audio-visual media, games, pictures, or direct practice, for example, how to perform personal hygiene, by paying careful attention to sex education material for children.

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