SEX EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN BASED ON ISLAMIC PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH

Dinie Ratri Desiningrum, Darosy Endah H
Faculty of Psychology
University of Diponegoro
dn.psiundip@gmail.com, bundarosyendah@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The research was aimed to review and combine several theories related to Islamic sex education and human development psychology based on Islamic psychological experts, correlated with theories of conventional developmental psychology. The results of this study are expected to be able to enrich the insights of parents and educators about Islamic sex education for children according to their age. The research used qualitative approach by discussing the points of view stated by an educator, Abdullah Nashih Ulwan, about Islamic sex education and the points of view from Islamic psychology and human development as stated by Abdul Mujid. The data were collected by reading, reviewing, and analyzing literatures. The results show: (1) Abdullah Nashih Ulwan stated that Islamic sex education for children is that Islam has set up laws related to sex education, discusses sexual matters as well as provides solutions for sex-related problems, sexual ethics, and sexual techniques related to daily worship/rituals. While (2) Abdul Mujib stated that the stages of human development are unique and stated in Quran so that, naturally, children and adolescents have different needs of sex education and Islam has arranged the education in such a way. (3) General Islamic sex education for children focuses on ethics in controlling desires (from the way an individual sees other to one’s sexual desires), respecting aurat (or parts of the body that should be covered), focusing on worshipping to stay away from sexual desires which might come from media or peers, considering commandments related to puberty and akhil balikh, maintaining communication with parents. It is advised that parents and educators should provide guidance to children based on their age to understand sexuality based on Islamic value.

Keywords: sex education, Islamic psychology, children

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of human’s basic needs. It is impossible for a group of individuals to be able to develop themselves in line with their aspiration to be better, prosperous, and happy based on their concepts. Education should be able to create individuals who are expert in science and technology supported by belief and piety. Islamic education is believed as one of the systems to provide these individuals.

In global era, the stream of information of science and technology is inevitable. Both positive and negative effects of technology advancement have been observed in society. One of the negative effects that is clearly observed is the crisis of moral.

Commonly, one’s religion was obtained from education, experience, and training during the childhood. When an individual is lack of religious experience, the person will not be able to apply religious values. On the other hand, if an individual has religious education and experience, the person believes in the religious values and understands the importance of applying religious values in his/her life [1]. Child’s personality was gained through his/her childhood experience in family [2]. Religious experience during childhood from the main caregiver is essential for the development of religiosity [3].

Education is the most important part of human life. Having a role to form a foundation, parents are responsible for developing their children’s characters and personality. Parental education style is essential in developing the personality of children and adolescents [4].

Parents’ responsibility is inevitable, whether accepted wholeheartedly or not, since it is a gift from Allah SWT to them [5]. Nevertheless, many parents face challenges in taking care for their children due to psychological problems such as emotional barrier that contributes to their relation with children, and results in parental style and child psychology, [6].

Childhood is the age between 2 – 12 years old [7]. Almost 60% of population in Indonesia is children and adolescents [8]. Parents have an important role in developing their children’s moral and behavior, including normal sexual behavior. Children have high curiosity and they will seek for answers for their questions, such as questions related to sex. They try to find information from TV, newspapers, radio, movies, internet, and other media that might provide altered information and cause children to absorb incorrect information about sex. There is correlation between sex education and sexual behavior in adolescents [9]. Their parents should implement the first sex education as the foundation. Parents act as the role model for children’s behavior [10].

There will be pros and cons when sex education is discussed. Many parents refuse sex education because they believe that sex is considered as taboo topic, while others think that sex is identical to uncleanness, obscene, and porn. No matter how many people assume that sexual matters are very taboo to talk about, sexual needs have been part of daily reality. Parents have main responsibility to provide sex education for their children and adolescents according to the parents’ perception on their children’s need and the perception determines the mechanism for providing the parents’ interventions adjusted with the children’s circumstances [11].

One of the main reasons why it is important to increase awareness to communicate with children in school age is reflected in the facts that there are many cases observed in Indonesian teenagers related to porn, from free sex, abortion to infected with HIV/AIDS. From the survey conducted by Indonesian Commission on Child Protection (KPAI) and Ministry of Health in October 2013 [12], recorded that around 62,7% teenagers in Indonesia had conducted premarital sex, while 20% of 94.270 women experiencing premarital pregnancy were teenagers and 21% of them had committed abortion. In HIV/AIDS infection cases, in a period of 3 months, from 10.203
cases, 30% of the patients are teenagers. The phenomena is a result of their privilege, including privilege from parents, to access pornographic contents in social media through their gadget, obtained at early age, without guidance.

Irresponsible sexual activities put teenagers in the danger or reproductive health problem. A research shows that there is a correlation between internal factors (educational background, knowledge, attitude and lifestyle) as well as external factors (information sources, information completeness, roles, and settlement) to premarital sexual behavior in teenagers in Indonesia. Another finding is that misbehaved teenagers are exposed to the risk of conducting premarital activities 2,129 times higher compared to those who are well-behaved [13].

Cases of sexual deviance by children such as sodomy, rape, and premarital sexual behavior indicate misinformation about sex education. Teenagers are usually affected by adults who conduct the behavior reflecting sex deviance / watching pornographic scenes and images in magazines, TV, newspapers, and the internet; then children / teens imitate them. These cases are slightly revealed on the surface and show indications of incorrect sex education.

Commercial sex exploitation and sex trafficking of children and adolescents are forms of severe child abuse, thus, awareness on child health becomes important. Common physical conditions experienced by commercially exploited children and adolescents include injuries related to violence, pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and other acute infections [14].

Premarital pregnancy is a fact of life. The frequency of premarital pregnancy will be increased if there are no efforts to control it. The higher pregnancy rate before the marriage results in the increasing number of children born with the lower quality of intelligence and self-control. A research on pregnancy in teenagers shows that one of the reasons of premarital pregnancy is lack of understanding of sexual matters [15]. Most likely, those teenagers got incorrect sex education.

Worse, Parents and family fail to provide proper information on sex education. Sex education for children and adolescents plays an important role in their sexual and reproductive health and general well-being. Schools and families usually share responsibility for providing sexuality education [16].

Parents often feel confused when having to provide sex education to their children. They choose not to take care, which results in their children trying to seek information from various sources secretly [17]. To reduce the negative effects, it is advised to parents to prevent and handle the problem wisely. Providing information regarding sex should not be based on sex education in western countries but Islamic values. Therefore, sex education given by parents is very important. Teaching Islamic sex education for children is essential and necessary. Religion is an important thing to protect them from having premarital sex.

The desire for sexual activity is a natural feeling in both human and animals. Sexual desire is a psychological event. Since sexual desire is the strongest desire, so that in the order of various desires, sexual desire is the first to mention. “Decorated for people are the desires of women …” (Quran Surah Ali Imran: 14) [18].
Sigmund Freud stated that sexual desire has existed since one’s birth, together with the desire to eat and drink [7]. As is known, every man and woman has sexual feelings. The feelings have existed since the first couple, Adam and Eve, until the last man as his descendant. Channeling sexual desire is basic needs which was once hidden and is a personal right. However, society requires that sexual matters should be between only husband and wife [19]. because in terms of education, sex education should be actualized so that the community can accept it.

Abdullah Nashih Ulwan is an expert in Islamic education who concerns with children’s education. He has exposed children’s education to parents and educators to pay attention to matters related to children's education. All this time, educational experts always refer to Western experts, but to go deeper into Islamic values, it is advised to learn from Muslim experts without denying the opinions of Western experts. Nashih Ulwan's works on education have been widely spread in Indonesia. One of his most famous works is Children's Education According to Islam (Pendidikan Anak Menurut Islam) which consists four volumes. There, Nashih Ulwan explains and discusses all the problems related to children’s education, especially about sex education.

In terms of providing sex education for children, Author believes that sex education is easy to be transferred if parents educate their children on sexual matters based on their children’s level of development, with their cognitive ability. So understanding child development will also be analyzed based on child development theory according to Islamic psychology from Abdul Mujib.

A research conducted by Ahul Muslim [20] entitled “Peranan Orangtua Terhadap Pendidikan Seks yang Islami bagi Remaja” (Parents’ Role on Islamic Sex Education for Teenagers) contains a statement that sex education is included in moral education and a form of healthy sexual behavior is the result of good ethics, while good ethics is the result of strong faith. Faith education is actually the foundation of giving sex education to children. That is, the sex education for children should be able to direct them to be closer to and to love God more, unlike common sex education nowadays. Lack of moral values, the sex education offered to the child is limited to showing romantic and erotic things, displaying only the anatomy of genitals, functions and differences of body structures between men and women. Sex education should be able to provide the correct information about sex through known media / teacher. It should include material and methods to provide sex education for adolescents in accordance with Islamic teachings.

In the article, Abdullah Nashih Ulwan’s ideas and related concepts on Islamic sex education for children will be analyzed as well as the concept of human development from Islamic Psychology point of view according to Abdul Mujib. It is expected that the article can provide an ideal sex education from the perspective of Islamic psychology.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research was based on library research that is collecting the data from various literatures. The literature was not only limited to books, but also articles, journals, and newspapers. The focus of library research is to find theories, laws, propositions, principals, opinions, and ideas that can be used to analyze and provide solution for the issues in the research. The method used in the research was documentation method.
Since the research is a qualitative research, the information needed for the research was conducted through literary data collection and used the following methods: reading, reviewing, and analyzing literature related to the research.

In correlation with data collection, the data source can be classified into:

Primary data: The opinions of Abdullah Nashih Ulwan and Abdul Mujib that are written on self-written books or edited by others, articles, journals, and other scientific publications. The primary data for the research are books entitled “Pendidikan Anak dalam Islam” (Child education in Islam) [21], and “Nuansa-nuansa Psikologi Islam” (The colors of Islamic Psychology) [22]"

Secondary data: Literature having similar topics from other authors, both the ideas from Abdullah Nashih Ulwan and Abdul Mujib and other ideas related to the issues in the research. Secondary data supported primary data in analyzing issues of the research.

In the research, data were analyzed descriptively, by retelling, interpreting, classifying, and comparing the phenomena.

The approach applied in the research was psychological approach and literature review by employing inductive thinking method that is the method to draw a conclusion from specific items to general conclusion.

Psychology is the science of mind: the science, which studies one’s mental condition based on the way of thinking, performing actions, or behaving [23]. Psychological approach in the research is the approach based on psychology to analyze sex education in children since sex education is not only related to sex, but also a psychological event that should be released according to syaria.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Sex education in this thesis is limited to the process of guidance and from parents so that children understand about the meaning, function, and purpose of sex; to be able to channel correctly. Thus, sex is not only related to the function of reproductive organs, but also should be accompanied by moral, ethical, and religious commitment to avoid abuse of reproductive organs. In the theory of behavioral psychology-social learning theory proposed by Skinner, in a book entitled Psychological Theories, it is stated that one's behavior is learned better through operant conditioning. The statement is supported by Bandura's opinion that the main effect of behavior is the result of imitating model behavior. From a classical study, Bandura shows the tendency of children in imitating the behavior of adults [24]. The research conducted by Bandura suggests that social behavior can be learned by imitation.

A study conducted by psychological experts, Black and Bevan [25] shows that, if seen from the perspective of social learning, children learn to behave based on what they see, including what is shown by media which is very influential on their psychological condition. Usually children imitate and look for more kinds of material that they have seen. Sigmund Freud’s theory on sexuality states that the development of children can be observed from their psychosexual development that takes place during 0-12 years old. During the age period, children have passed...
through four phase of development. After those phase (12 years old and above), they can be considered as adolescents.

In a book entitled Pendidikan Seks Anak Dalam Islam (Sex Education for Children in Islam), dr. Boyke stated that sex education for children is not only teaching the techniques of sexual intercourse, but also introducing the function of sexual organs, and managing sexual desires to children based on their age: providing guidance on the importance of protecting and maintaining their sex organs, as well as giving an understanding of healthy associations as well as the risks that can occur related to sexual issues [13].

Salim Sahli, in Akhmad Azhar Abu Mikdad’s book entitled Sex Education for Teens According to Islam (Pendidikan Seks Bagi Remaja Menurut Islam) stated that sex education is the enlightenment that aims to guide and nurture every man and woman, from childhood to adulthood, about sexual intercourse in general and sexual life in particular, so that they can do as they should, so that their sexual life brings happiness and prosperity for mankind [26].

Ayip Syafuddin in his book entitled Islam and Sex Education for Children (Islam dan Pendidikan Seks Anak) stated that Islam has provided practical guidance related to sexual matters. Islam is a universal religion, which regulates the entire human life, manages relationships among human beings to be harmonious and balanced. Therefore, education is essentials to put moral values in mind.

From the definitions mentioned above, it can be concluded that sex education is the education to guide and teach individuals so that they understand the meaning, function, and objective of sex, and will be able to channel the desire legally. Thus, Islamic sex education is the guidance, direction, and teaching related to sex, sex organs, and norms related to sex according to the Qur'an and Sunnah, so that Moslems are able to fulfill their needs of sex properly and correctly [20].

In Quran, Allah SWT conducts that human should avoid free sex or adultery, and the rule by God is called marriage: “They should lower their gaze and guard their modesty…” (Surah An-Nur: 30). The verse shows that free sex is prohibited by law, so sexual desire should be met legally. Parents should realize that sex education for children is important as stated by the Prophet Muhammad SAW: Every child was born pure, it is their parent who makes them. Christians, Jews, or Majusi (Hadith narrated by Bukhari)

Sex education can employ various methods such as lecturing, asking-answering questions, providing exemplary, mau’idhah, and self-practicing. Parents are urged to to understand the importance of sex education for their children, so that the deviation from sexual can be minimized because the sexual education started from the family by their own parents, will at least help the joint effort to straighten the real meaning of sex education.

The definition of sex is not limited to the techniques to do sexual intercourse, but also a more general and complex scope. Thus, Islamic sex religion is the guidance and teaching related to sex, sexual organs, and norms related to sexual desires.
Abdullah Nashih Ulwan’s analysis on Islamic sex education for children can be concluded as follows: Islam has conducted all things related to sex education, especially for children. Islam really pays attention to purity and provides complete guidance, starting from sex education to the process to marriage: pre-marriage, marriage, and post-marriage. Nashih Ulwan talks about many problems as well as solutions related to sex such as being single, virginity, rape, and female circumcision. He also provides guidance on how to maintain purity (in terms of managing sexual desire if an individual can not afford a marriage and maintain purity in marriage life), sexual ethics, and sex techniques; and discuss about how sex is related to the rituals performed in daily life. He also discusses about the sexual revolution in the past, which has influenced recent sexual development.

Abdullah Nashih Ulwan categorizes parental role in Islamic sex education into two aspects, that is internal aspects and external aspects. Parental responsibilities in sex education categorized in internal aspects consist of: a) Teaching ethics on how to ask permission before entering the house, b) Teaching ethics on how to look at others (mahram, proposed woman, wife, foreign / non-mahram woman, male to other men, women with other women, pagan women to moslem women, teenagers, women look at strange men, look at child's aurat, and look at others because of rukho'h / urgent situation). c) Keeping children away from sexual stimulation with preventive efforts, i.e. internal and external monitor. d) Teaching religious law in puberty and akhil baliq; such as learning about the signs of puberty / ukulil baligh, the procedure of junub, and the nature of sexual intercourse when guiding their children to a sacred marriage. e) Explaining the details of sex. While parental role categorized in external responsibilities are: a) Preventing damage due to the increasing number of crime in community. b) Choosing good association, c) Monitoring the influence of different types of social interaction. d) Selecting qualified school. e) Cooperating with media, NGO, and so on.

Abdul Mujib mentioned the implication of the belief on spirit to psychology such as (1) Structure of personality. Humans consist of body, spirit, heart and desire (lust which has the nature of bahimiyah and ghadhab which has the nature of subuiyah). A good personality (muthmainnah) occurs when the self is dominated by qalbu whose nature leads to the spirit, while the bad personality (ammadah) occurs when the self is dominated by passions and demons whose nature tends to the body; 2) Mental health, psychopathology and psychotherapy. Mental health is a spiritual health in which individuals feel calm and tranquil in carrying out the command of Allah SWT to obtain the happiness of the world and the hereafter. Psychopathology (qalb marîd) is a disease in heart that disturbs the psychic and purity of the human that is caused by sin and immorality, such as envy, jealousy, revenge, kufr and shirk. While psychotherapy (syifa ’al-qulûb) is the remedy that can restore individuals to their nature with repentance, Qur'an and abandoning bad behavior as well as conducting good behavior; (3) Psychological Paradigm. Psychology does not only deal with empirical-inductive problems but also meta-empirical-deductive problems based on divine revelation. In terms of sexl education for children, parents can involve the three components of the soul in human beings: that the individual who has a good personality (muthmaainnah) when dominated by qalbu whose nature leads to the spirit. Mental health can be
achieved if the child is taught to obey the command of Allah SWT to get the happiness of the world and the hereafter.

Humans are God's chosen beings who take on multiple tasks, as the chaliph of Allah and Abdullah. To perform the tasks, Allah has equipped human with some potentials/fitrah within them.

According to Abdul Mujib and Jusuf Mudzakir [22] fitrah revealed in the Qur'an as much as 20 times in 17 surah. One of the surah mentioning fitrah is Ar-rum: 30, So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. [Adhere to] the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created [all] people. No change should there be in the creation of Allah. That is the correct religion, but most of the people do not know. (Surah Ar-Ruum: 30)

According to Abdul Mujib and Jusuf Mudzakir, [22], the unique image of human in Islamic Psychology can be simplified as:

First, human beings are born with a good image, such as bringing the holy potential, in Islam, believe in monotheism, sincere, able to bear the mandate of Allah SWT to be His caliph and servant on earth, and have potential and the power to make decision. Through sex education, Children are provided by the guidance to protect them, not to be affected with negative environment, but to invite to the good things

Second, in addition to the body, humans have a spirit that comes from God. The spirit becomes the essence of human life. Human is essentially Abdullah, i.e. submissive and obedient to the rules of God. Then all human physical needs boils down to the joy of his spirit, i.e. only one, submissive to the commandment of God, including the sex education for children. Naturally, sexual desire exists in every individual, but because our spirit is obedient to God, then children should taught to fear God when they want to do immoral conducts.

Thirdly, through the nature of nafsani (psychophysical) in Islamic psychology, the center of behavior is the heart, not the brain nor the human body. If human life is controlled by the role of heart, then his life will be safe and happily in world-hereafter. The purpose of this third unique human image is the invitation for children to follow the conscience according to nature, such as avoiding disobedience based on worldly desires.

CONCLUSION

From the finding of the two experts above, it can be concluded that Islamic sexual education for children in general, among others, are:

1. It is important to introduce ethics in maintaining sexual desire (from view to lust)
2. Children are introduced to how aurat should be protected
3. Parents should make an emphasis on worship and daily activities to divert sexual desire
4. Children are taught to be able to keep themselves from negative environmental influences that can cause sexual stimulation from both the media and peers
5. Children together with parents learn about religious law related to puberty and akil baligh.
6. Children and parents should establish good interpersonal communication.
7. Parents and educators need to guide children according to age in understanding sex based on Islamic points of view to guard their conducts.
8. Parents should pay attention, be role models in the development of their children, and endlessly give good advice, especially about Islamic sex education.
9. Teachers and educators can provide educative and context-based sex education, so that the teaching of sex education is in line with the laws of Islam.
10. Adolescents and children are required to further increase the knowledge of science and religion in a balanced way, so that in their efforts to search for identity, they do not get lost in free association.

References


