

# The Urgency of Sex Education in Early Childhood in an Islamic Perspective

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## Abstract

Sex education for early childhood is a crucial aspect in shaping a child's character and personality, fostering noble character. This study aims to determine the urgency of sex education for early childhood from an Islamic perspective. The research method used was a literature review, analyzing books, Islamic scriptures, and previous research. The results show that sex education for early childhood, from an Islamic perspective, is crucial for developing a generation of faith, knowledge, and noble character. Sex education in accordance with Islamic teachings can help children understand their bodies, build awareness of reproductive health, and develop positive attitudes toward sexuality within a halal (permissible) framework.

**Keywords:** Sex education, Early Childhood, Islamic Perspective

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## Introduction

Children are a gift from Allah swt, their presence is always awaited by the family. Children are also a mandate that must be maintained and protected so that children grow and develop properly. (Mhd. Habibu Rahman, 2024) Parents as those who are responsible for caring for and raising children have an obligation to provide protection for children. (Novita & Budiman, 2015)

Early childhood is a very important early period in the formation of character, values, and a basic understanding of life. During this time, children begin to get to know themselves, including their body parts, and begin to interact more widely with the surrounding environment. (Scott, 2016) (M. Fadlillah, 2016) One of the important aspects that is often overlooked in early childhood education is sex education, because it is considered taboo or inappropriate to be taught at that age. In fact, it is precisely at this age that children need to be introduced to basic concepts about the body, privacy, and how to protect themselves from deviant or harmful behavior.

Children's education in Islam emphasizes three main aspects, namely monotheistic education as the basis of spirituality, moral education as a moral foundation, and intellectual education as a means of achieving the benefits of this world and the hereafter. (Nainggolan & Lubis, 2023) In addition, the role of parents and the environment in educating children is very important in Islam, where the educational process must be based on compassion, example and continuous guidance. (Dadan Suryana, 2016)

Sex education is still a sensitive and often avoided issue in society, especially when it is associated with early childhood. Many parents and educators find it taboo to talk about sexuality-related matters to children, either for the sake of maintaining innocence or for lack of understanding. (Ritonga & Munisa, 2022) In fact, in reality, children from an early age have begun to experience biological growth and development as well as a high curiosity about their bodies and the surrounding environment.

This sex education aims to ensure that sexual urges in children can run normally without external stimuli that cause deviations from straight behavior. Providing sex education to children can also help children to appreciate what they have, at least they realize that what they have should not be touched and seen by anyone except their parents.

The phenomenon of increasing cases of sexual abuse against children, both in the family, school, and community, shows that delays in providing an understanding of sexuality can actually harm children. Children who are not provided with sex education from an early age tend to be unable to distinguish between right and wrong treatment of their bodies. This condition reinforces the urgency of the need for sex education that is in accordance with the stage of child development and religious values.

Early sex knowledge will protect children from deviant sex offenders and keep deadly diseases away. (Ismiulya et al., 2022) Among them are the manners of asking for permission, instilling a masculine soul, femininity and instilling shame. Islam requires adab to ask for permission for children starting from childhood in the early stages of their learning until they have reached the age of puberty. (Suwarti et al., 2023) A child is obliged to ask permission at home when he wants to meet his parents anytime and anywhere and whenever he finds the door (parents' room) in a closed state. As stated in Surah An-Nur: 58-59

وَإِذَا بَلَغَ الْأَطْفَالُ مِنْكُمُ الْحُلُمَ فَلْيَسْتَأْذِنُوا كَمَا اسْتَأْذَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ٥٩

Meaning: When the children among you have reached the age of adulthood, they should ask permission just like those who were adults before them. Thus Allah explains His verses to you. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

The above verse explains that children who have not reached puberty to excuse themselves when they want to meet their employer or parents at three times, namely before the shubuh prayer, qailullah (noon break) at noon and after Isha. Teaching masculine and feminine values to children can be done by separating their beds.

The current reality shows an increase in cases of violence and sexual abuse against children. Many of them occur due to the child's lack of knowledge about the parts of the body that must be protected, as well as their lack of ability to recognize and reject inappropriate actions. This is proof that avoiding sex education actually opens up the opportunity for greater damage.

In Islam, education has a very important position and starts early. Islamic teachings have provided instructions on how to educate children in various aspects, including in terms of maintaining self-respect and knowing the limits of interaction. (Waewa, 2016) Islam teaches the importance of instilling the value of shame, maintaining aurat, and providing gradual education according to the age and thinking ability of children. Sex education in Islam is not just about conveying biological information, but rather about instilling the values of manners, responsibility, and understanding that the body is a mandate from Allah that must be taken care of as well as possible. (Pearl, 2023)

Sex education in Islam is not only about teaching the anatomy of the body, but also educating children to understand the value of responsibility, social boundaries, and awareness of rights and obligations towards the body as a mandate from Allah. Therefore, the study of the urgency of sex education in early childhood from an Islamic perspective is very important to provide a correct, comprehensive, and contextual understanding to the community, especially parents and educators.

## Literature Review

The theory used in this study discusses the urgency of sex education in early childhood from an Islamic perspective

### 2.1. Sex Education in Islam

Sex education in Islam is an integral part of moral and moral education which aims to form human beings who are able to maintain their purity and honor in accordance with sharia values. (Pearl, 2023) Islam does not view sexuality as a taboo, but as human nature that must be regulated and directed with the right guidance. Therefore, sex education in Islam must be given gradually, according to the age and level of understanding of the child, and framed in the context of Islamic faith and ethical values.

The basis of sex education in Islam can be found in the Qur'an and Hadith. For example, in QS. An-Nur verse 59, Allah commands the believers to lower their gaze and guard their genitals, as a form of self-control and to maintain honor. This verse shows that sexual awareness should be formed early on as part of the spiritual and social responsibility of a Muslim.

The Prophet PBUH also provided examples and practical guidelines in educating children related to sexual awareness. In a hadith narrated by Abu Dawud it is stated, "Command your children to pray when they are seven years old and separate their beds when they are ten years old." This hadith contains an important message that the separation of beds is the first step in building awareness of physical boundaries and association between the opposite sex, which is a key element in Islamic sex education.

Sex education in Islam is not intended to arouse orgasm, but rather to equip children with knowledge, awareness, and the right attitude towards themselves and their environment. Therefore, the approach used in delivering sex education to children must be adapted to their psychological and emotional development stages, and delivered by parents or educators who have a good understanding of religion and social sensitivity.

### 2.2. Early Childhood

Early childhood is an individual who is in the age range of 0 to 6 years. Based on Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Article 1 paragraph (14), early childhood is a child in the age range of 0 to 6 years. This period is considered the most fundamental developmental period that will affect the process of forming children's personality and intelligence in the future.

Early life is known as the Golden Age or the golden age, because in this age range children experience very rapid and rapid growth and development, both in terms of physical, cognitive, linguistic, social-emotional, and spiritual. (Dadan Suryana, 2016) This period is very important because it is the main foundation for the formation of children's personality, attitudes, and intellectual potential. All stimulation given to children in this phase will greatly affect their readiness to face the next stage of education, as well as in forming character and intelligence as a whole. Therefore, proper education and care in early childhood is crucial so that children can grow and develop optimally according to their developmental stages.

### **Research Methodology**

This research is designed to look at the Islamic perspective of the importance of sex education in early childhood. This research is a qualitative research with an approach to Library Research (Literature study). This approach was chosen to analyze the concept, urgency, and implementation of sex education in early childhood based on Islamic literature and the views of Islamic education figures.

The data sources in this study are divided into two, namely primary data sources consisting of the Qur'an and Hadith related to education and child care, works of classical and contemporary scholars on children's education and sexual ethics in Islam, documents or books that specifically discuss sex education in an Islamic perspective. Meanwhile, secondary data sources consist of scientific journals, articles, general education books, research reports, and digital (verified) sources that support the discussion of the theme.

Data collection is carried out through the study and collection of information from relevant library sources on the verses of the Qur'an, Hadith, and scientific texts on the values of sexual education in Islam. Furthermore, data analysis is carried out with the stages of data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawn.

### **Results**

#### **4.1 An Overview of Understanding Early Childhood Sex Education**

The results of the study revealed that the public's understanding of sex education in early childhood is still very diverse. Many parents and educators tend to view sex education only from a narrow perspective simply providing moral prohibitions or conveying biological information such as the differences between men and women. This approach, while important, often does not touch on the deeper and more essential aspects, namely the formation of children's values, manners, and self-awareness.

In fact, in Islam, sex education is not only about avoiding things that are considered taboo, but is actually part of the process of guiding children to have awareness of themselves and their bodies, as well as understand the limits in interacting with others. This education should start early, in a gentle, gradual, and developmental way for the child. For example, by getting children used to maintaining the awrah, teaching the importance of commendable shyness, or guiding children to understand the concept of privacy and respect the personal space of others.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to broaden the understanding of the public, especially parents and teachers, about early childhood sex education in a more holistic Islamic perspective. This is not about making children mature prematurely, but about equipping them with the right understanding so that they grow up to be individuals who know how to take care of themselves, respect others, and take responsibility for their own bodies and behaviors (Rahman, 2020). of the 45 respondents of parents and early childhood education teachers in the study area, as many as 72% stated that they only explained the issue of sexuality if the child asked first. While 18% admitted that they never discussed it because they thought it was "inappropriate" for an early age. Only 10% actively provide Islamic sex education at home, for example by teaching children to cover the awrah, asking permission before entering their parents' room, and separating beds between boys and girls (Fitriani, 2021).

These findings suggest that taboo assumptions are still one of the biggest obstacles to implementing sex education in early childhood. Many parents and educators feel hesitant or afraid to talk about things that are considered sensitive. In fact, in Islam, sex education is not about talking about vulgar things, but instilling important values such as politeness, positive shyness, and maintaining self-respect from a young age (Lubis, 2020). This approach is actually an important foundation in shaping the character and protection of children from an early age.

#### 4.2 The Role of Early Childhood Education Institutions (PAUD) in Islamic Sex Education

Early childhood education institutions have a strategic role in instilling the basic values of Islamic sex education through habituation and exemplary activities. Based on the results of observations at three Islamic-based PAUD institutions at the research site, it was found that learning activities were directed to:

- a. Teaching prayer before and after bathing and dressing, Example: When a child wants to take a bath, the teacher or parent says:  
"Let's tell Allah, so that not only our bodies are clean, but our hearts will also be good."
- b. Habit of dressing modestly and covering the aurat, Example: The teacher shows two pictures of the doll – one neatly dressed and covered, the other not.
- c. Use of educational images that show the difference between body parts that are allowed and not allowed to be touched, for example: Use **a body illustration with green (allowed) and red (not allowed) zones** Give examples of **everyday situations**. Teach the phrases: **"My body is mine"** and **"I can say no."**

#### 4.3 Sex Education in an Islamic Perspective

In Islam, sex education is not understood narrowly as a lesson about the reproductive organs or biological relationships alone. Rather, it is seen as a process of fostering manners, shame, and responsibility towards oneself and others. The goal is to instill the value of honor and maintain self-purity (iffah), so that humans are able to manage their sexual instincts according to the guidance of sharia and maintain their human dignity.

Some of the normative policies that are the reference for sex education in Islam include:

- a. QS. An-Nur: 30–31, about the commandment to guard one's eyes and close one's awrah.
- b. Q.S An-Nur : 58 , who ordered the children to ask permission before entering their parents' room at the three hours of the aurat.
- c. And as the Hadith of the Prophet PBUH reads:  
(عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: «فَصَلُّوا أَسْبِرُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ عِنْدَ عُمُرِ الْعَشْرِ سِنَوَاتٍ») «رواه أبو داود»  
The Prophet PBUH said: "Separate your children's beds when they are ten years old."  
(HR. Abu Dawud)

Thus, sex education in Islam aims to build spiritual and moral awareness, not just the transfer of biological information. This education must be provided in a gentle, dialogical, and tailored way to the child's cognitive capacity (Husna, 2022).

#### 4.4 The Urgency of Early Childhood Sex Education According to Islam

Analysis of field findings and literature shows that the urgency of early childhood sex education in an Islamic perspective can be seen from four main dimensions:

- a. Preventive Dimension (Child Self-Protection) Early sex education is an instrument of prevention against violence and sexual abuse of children. By knowing their bodies, children are able to understand the limits of physical interaction with others (Sari & Handayani, 2021).
- b. Moral and Moral Dimensions Islamic sex education is part of moral education. Children are taught to respect themselves and others, and understand that maintaining aurat is a form of worship and obedience to Allah (Husna, 2022).

- c. Spiritual and Social Dimensions  
Awareness of self-honor (iffah) fosters a sense of moral and social responsibility in children. This serves to build the foundation for ethical behavior in association in adolescence and adulthood (Kurniawan, 2020).
- d. Dimensions of Parental Responsibility  
Parents have an obligation to educate their children to understand the values of purity and self-respect. This is in accordance with Allah's command in QS. At-Tahrim: 6, "Protect yourself and your family from the fire of Hell." Islamic sex education is a tangible form of parents' spiritual responsibility to their children (Fitriani, 2021).

#### 4.5 Synthesis of Research Results

Overall, the results of the study show that the urgency of early childhood sex education in an Islamic perspective lies in its function as moral, spiritual, and self-protection education for children. Islam not only allows, but advocates sex education from an early age in the corridor of manners and modesty.

The ideal implementation is one that is family- and school-based, with the approach:

- a. **Dialogical and loving:** Children are invited to speak openly and comfortably, so that they dare to ask questions and understand their bodies and their boundaries without fear or embarrassment.
- b. **Value-based education:** The material is delivered by emphasizing Islamic values such as self-respect, good manners, and moral responsibility.
- c. **Integrated into daily habits:** These values are applied in the child's routine, for example when dressing, bathing, or interacting with others, so that learning becomes natural and easy to remember.

In this way, Islamic sex education will help children recognize their identity, maintain the honor of their bodies, and understand the boundaries of social interaction according to the sharia.

#### Conclusion

Sex education for early childhood is an urgent need in the midst of a modern society full of information and the risk of sexual abuse. From an Islamic perspective, education should be provided from the beginning with an approach that emphasizes the values of monotheism, manners, and morals, not in a vulgar or exaggerated way. With the right methods, children can understand their bodies, know their own limits, and grow moral and spiritual awareness, so that they grow up to be healthy, polite, and responsible individuals from an early age.

Islamic sex education has a very important role in child development, including:

- a. Protect children from sexual deviance and violence: Children learn to recognize body boundaries and inappropriate behaviors, so they are better able to take care of themselves.
- b. Cultivate self-awareness and shame: Children are taught to recognize the value of self-respect in a reasonable and Islamic way, without fear or trauma.
- c. Instilling the value of honor and purity of the body: This education emphasizes that the body is a mandate that must be maintained, in line with the principles of Islamic morality.
- d. Reinforcing the role of parents and teachers: Parents and teachers become primary educators who guide children with compassion, while instilling character, moral values, and good ethics from an early age.

Thus, the urgency of sex education for early childhood in an Islamic perspective goes far beyond biological knowledge. This education plays an important role in **shaping the personality of children as true Muslims** who have noble character, are civilized in interaction, and are responsible for their nature and body. Through an age-appropriate Islamic approach, children learn to respect themselves, understand their limits, and instill moral values from an

early age, so that they grow up to be healthy, polite, and able to maintain their self-respect in daily life.

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