

Preventing Child Grooming: Sex Education From Islamic Perspective

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Abstract: Child grooming is an act of sexual abuse in which an adult (groomer) manipulates a child under the age of 18 by building relationships, trusts, and emotional bonds online and offline. One of the prevention efforts of acts of sexual violence and harassment is with sex education. However, modern sex education today has been influenced by political, legal, and economic circumstances of liberal viewpoints. This resulted in sex education in a religious perspective being considered unprogressive and relevant to modern society. In addition, for some Muslims sex education is still taboo to discuss. Based on this, this review will involve a comprehensive search of targeted literature and a narrative examination of research in Indonesia and internationally to look for similarities and differences. The result of this review is that Islamic sex education can be used in efforts to prevent sexual violence including child grooming by embracing and providing education to stakeholders such as parents, teachers, and the government.

Keyword: Islamic, Sex Education , Islamic Sexuality Education, Child Grooming

1. Introduction

In present times, cases of sexual violence against children continue to occur in Indonesia. Komnas Child Protection noted that there have been 2,726 violence against children from March 2020 to July 2021, of which 52% are sexual crimes. The report from the Women and Children Protection Online Information System (SIMFONI PPA) from January 1 to June 19, 2020, also revealed 1,848 cases of child sexual abuse. The high number of cases of child sexual abuse and other abusive crimes have become a matter of urgency for us to consider what acts could prevent these heinous cases. then requires us to think about what efforts should be made so that this heinous case can be reduced.



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One of the sexual crimes to watch out for these days is *child grooming*. *Child grooming* is an adult's attempt to build relationships, trusts, and emotional bonds with a child or teenager, so that they can manipulate or exploit, even abuse the victim. (Magdalena, 2021). Based on research from the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (2017) *grooming* behavior is in online relationships with children under the age of 18 to facilitate non-contact sexual interaction (online) or direct contact (*offline*).

Indonesia has just been horrified by the case of child grooming carried out on online gaming applications. Suspect AAP alias Prasetya Devano alias Defans alias Pras was detained by police for harassment using the application "Hago". Initially he exchanged numbers with the victim which then continued by making a video call where the victim was asked to do pornographic things recorded with the suspect. This footage is then used by the suspect to threaten the victim so that he wants to perform the action repeatedly (CNN, 2021). The child's position still does not understand consensual relationships making them vulnerable to being manipulated by adult interests. Therefore, in order for this case not to happen again, children, parents, and schools must be given psychoeducation regarding sex. According to Kenny (2009) the psychoeducation program of sex to parents has successfully educated families about the potential environmental hazards and child sexual abuse. Parents are given provisions to talk to the child, so that the child can express feelings and have an assertive response. While in the world of education, schools and teachers have an important role to prevent sexual abuse or violence against children by providing sex education. A sex education program in schools is a way to provide information and skills about safe sex, communicating about sex, and how to manage relationships (Douglas, 2002).

Finkelhor (2009) said that the purpose of efforts to prevent child sex abuse in the field of education (sex education) is so that children can identify and prevent dangerous situations, such as sex abuse which include physical touch, how to resist interactions with suspicious strangers, and how they ask for help. However, according to Marhayati (2011) the provision of sex education in Indonesia must be reviewed, because on various sides parents are still worried that sex education is not in accordance with the values of Islamic teachings. Modern sex education has been influenced by political, legal, and economic circumstances of liberal viewpoints. This results in sex education from a religious perspective being considered retrogressive and irrelevant to modern society (Halstead and Reiss, 2003).

Indonesia is the largest Muslim country in the world (*Global religious futures*, 2018). Therefore, Indonesia must pay attention to the best way to provide sex education to children who refer to the Qur'an and Al-Hadith. Sex education in Islam has been taught since the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him), where he opened the opportunity to ask Muslims and Muslims not to be ashamed in questioning the problems of his personal life, including about sex life, which has been overlooked by Aisha ra "The blessing for women *anshar* is shame does not prevent them to find out about religion (Mutafaq'alaih).

Based on the above description, this review will involve a comprehensive search of targeted literature and a narrative examination of research in Indonesia and internationally to look for similarities and differences and then discuss to draw conclusions.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Child Grooming

According to the *National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children* (NSPCC), *grooming* is an attempt by a person to build relationships, trusts, and emotional relationships with a child or teenager so that they can manipulate, exploit, and abuse them. The term *grooming* in the context of sexual harassment was first used by the *Chicago Tribune* newspaper in 1985 (BBC UK,2008).

This grooming behavior then conduct a child as a victim called *child grooming* which is now included in the crime of sexual abuse (Andaru, 2021). *The International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children* (2017) explains that *child grooming* aims to conduct sexual activity by having a relationship with a child under the age of 18 to interact non-contact or contact. *The Parliament of Victoria Family and Community Development Committee* (2013) explains that *child grooming* behavior will usually manipulate victims in a very subtle, controlled, and well-planned way to build trust and emotional relationships with children.

The perpetrator will make the victim obedient, especially in maintaining confidentiality. Such efforts are made so that the perpetrator is not detected and punished (Rutai, 2013). Rutai (2013) also explained that when perpetrators identify a target, they usually use a public forum, such as *chat rooms*, social networks, or *online* gaming sites and then they will communicate with private chats, emails, instant messages, or other applications that support privacy.

According to Winters and Jeglic (2016) there are several stages for child grooming actors in carrying out their actions, namely:

1. *Choosing*

They will make a selection on their victims. Victims are selected based on their preferred taste of physical attractiveness, easy access, and perceived vulnerability. Children who do not get enough supervision from parents will be vulnerable to becoming victims.

2. *Access*

The perpetrators will seek access to be close to the victim. For example, they make excuses to take care of children when their parents are busy, invite children to play, work in children's homes, become teachers, and offer themselves to become teachers.

3. *Building Trust*

The next stage builds trust and emotional bonds to the victim. Like giving gifts, making comfort, and giving compliments.

4. *Silencing*

The perpetrator will ask to keep his actions secret by threatening the victims so that they can not tell anyone

2.2. Signs of Grooming in Children

According to *The Department of Education and Training of the Victorian Government* (2020) the following are some combination signs that children may be victims of *grooming*, among others:

- a. Continuous absence in school, missing tutors, training schedule, and also absence in other

activities

- b. Spend less time with friends or change friendship groups suddenly.
- c. Will disappear for a long time (unlike previous habits) or appear with a condition of looking very tired.
- d. Have many unexplained gifts and do not want to talk about where they come from
- e. Suddenly they had large amounts of money, which they could not explain about the source
- f. Develop very close relationships with older people.
- g. Being dishonest about their location and with whom
- h. A lot of talk about certain adults or older people.
- i. Desiring spending more time with adults or older people
- j. Mood swings (hyperactivity, closed, emotional, aggressive, impatient, upset, anxious, withdrawn, depressed)
- k. The language used is different or mimics the way a new friend speaks.
- l. Talk about new friends who don't belong to normal social circles.
- m. Have a new phone (possibly given by a new friend) to make excessive calls, videos, or text messages.
- n. Covered about phone use, internet and social media.
- o. Using drugs (physical evidence includes spoons, aluminium foil, or torn cardboard pieces)
- p. Picked up by old or new friends from school or on the street, not at home.
- q. Get a lot of messages from someone they only know online.
- r. Don't talk to parents about thoughts or feelings anymore.

2.3. Sex Education

Sex education is an attempt to give knowledge, genetic value and physical function of humans, especially those related to sex in men and women as a form of attraction to love the opposite sex (Roqib, 2009). According to Sahli (2009) the term sex education can be distinguished between sex education and sexuality. Sex education is information about anatomy such as the growth of hair in the armpits or genitals, biological processes such as breeding through sexual intercourse, including family coaching and contraception methods in preventing pregnancy (BIRTH CONTROL).

While sexuality education teaches covering ethics, morals, physiology such as menstruation, economics and other fields of science that a person needs to be able to understand himself as a sexual individual.

Juridically, the application of sex education is clearly stipulated in the 1945 Constitution article 31 paragraphs 1 and 2 which states that every citizen is entitled to education. Also in the National Education Law No. 20 of 2003 Article 11 paragraph 1 states that the government and local governments are obliged to provide services and facilities, and ensure the quality of education for every citizen without discrimination. Article 3 also mentions that national education serves to develop the potential of learners to become human beings who believe, fear God Almighty, be noble, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens.

The above values are in line with the 1945 Constitution which contains the dimensions of Islamic teachings. In line with this goal, Aziz (2015) states the purpose of sex education is to provide knowledge about biological, psychological, and psychosocial changes as a result of human growth and development by deeply engraving education about moral, ethical, and religious commitments.

2.4. Islamic Sex Education

Sex education in Islam prioritizes spiritual, moral, ethical education from the time of the infant to lay the foundation of faith in Allah. While knowledge of physiological anatomy and psychology can be added as a complement according to the level of education and age. Sex education that begins with knowledge of anatomy, physiology and psychology will actually be easily stimulated rather than resisting sex appetite. The following is the curriculum of Islamic sex education according to Anshori (2012) is as follows:

1. Sexual growth and development
 - a. Tamyiz (pre-puberty) is between the ages of 7-10 years.
 - b. Muraqahah (transitional period or puberty), which is between the ages of 10-14 years.
 - c. Puberty (adolescent period) at the age of 14 years-16 years.
 - d. Youth, characterized by physical changes during puberty and
 - e. The need for family life.
2. Physiology of the reproductive system
3. Pregnancy and birth
4. Venereal disease
5. Mental, emotional, and social aspects of puberty
6. Social, moral and religious ethics at puberty which includes
 - a. Instilling shame in children
 - b. Instilling the soul of masculinity in boys and the soul of femininity in girls.
 - c. Where is Ibn Abbas ra. The Prophet cursed men who acted like women and women who acted as men. Bukhari).
 - d. Separate the child's bed when you are 7 years old (with parents and children of different types).
 - e. Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani rahimahullah explained that our Imams oblige us to separate between boys and girls so that they cannot gather on one mattress.
 - f. Introducing the time of visit (asking permission in 3 times) described in Surah Al-Ahzab verse 33 is before the dawn, noon, and after isha prayer. This rule is set considering that the time is the time the adult's awrah is open.
 - g. Educating children to always maintain the cleanliness of their genitals, this includes toilet training in children
 - h. Introduce the child to his muhrim.
 - i. Educate children to always hold their eyes from things that can lead to sexual urges.
 - j. Educate children not to do ikhtilat (mixing men and
 - k. non-mahram women without any need allowed syara").
 - l. Educate children not to do khalwat (both with non-

- m. mahram).
 - n. Teach children to dress ethically that closes the aurat.
 - o. Introducing ihtilam (wet dreams) to boys and menstruation to girls and the obligations associated with it.
 - p. Educate children to always isti'faf (maintain self-respect).
7. Teaching how to avoid negative influences from friends

Safrudin Aziz (2015) explained that sex education materials that must be given to children aged 14 to 21 are about the prohibition of approaching adultery, keeping the eyes, closing the aurat, and not tabarruj. While 'Ulwan (2015) revealed that sex education for adolescents is divided into two: the age of 10-14 years children are kept away from everything that leads to sex, 14-16 years of children are taught about the ethics of sex before they marry.

After adulthood they are taught how to maintain honor and restraint when not ready to marry. In addition, sex education materials also include dress manners, speech, and having sex after marriage. This aims so that as an adult the individual is able to control themselves in sexual intercourse with ethics and a noble soul.

Completing the above description, BKKBN (2008) provides sex education materials that vary covering aspects of adolescent growth and development (physical and psychological changes), factors that affect adolescent growth and development including sexuality, puberty, wet dreams, menstruation, and reproductive organs.

2.5. Islamic Methods of Sex Education

According to Safrudin Aziz (2015) methods that can be used in sex education include: first method of example, this method was first given by the family. Second, habituation for example by telling the child to close the aurat. Third, the binding method that must be done by parents or educators with the bond of faith, worship, social benefit, and a noble soul. Fourth, the method of discussion that can be done by discussing reproductive health issues as well as various other sexuality issues.

In addition, early sex education can be done in children aged 1-5 years. In this age range, teaching only emphasizes how children understand the condition of the body and the opposite sex, then avoid sexual violence. The way that can be used is with the medium of images, posters, and also games.

Based on the description above, it is known that teachers and parents can stand shoulder to shoulder in educating students. The method is also flexible because it can be adapted to students, age, and place of sex education.

3. Method

The design of this research is Literature Review. Literature review is a way used to collect data or sources related to a particular topic that can be obtained from various literary sources such as journals, books, the internet, and other libraries. The research design taken in this scientific processing is Mix methods of study, experimental studies, study surveys, correlation analysis, comparative analysis, qualitative studies.

Research on publication articles on *academic search complete, Proquest and Pubmed, EBSCO, BASE, Crossref, Scopus, WoS, Garuda, SINTA* using the selected keywords: Sex education in the view of Islam. Articles or journals that fit the criteria of inclusion and exclusion are taken for further analysis. *This Literature Review uses literature published in 2012-2021 which can be accessed full text in pdf and scholarly format (peer reviewed journals).*

This literature review is synthesized using narrative methods by grouping similar extraction data according to the results measured to answer the purpose of research journals that match the inclusion criteria then collected and made journal summaries including the name of the researcher, the year of publication of the journal, the country of the study, the title of the study, the method and the summary of the results or findings. Summaries of research journals are entered into tables sorted according to *alphabet* and year of publication of the journal and in accordance with the format mentioned above. To further clarify abstract analysis and *full text* the journal is read and observed. The journal summary is then conducted an analysis of the content contained in the purpose of the research and the results / findings of the study. The analysis used using the analysis of the contents of the journal, then coded on the contents of the journal reviewed using the category of Islamic Sex Education. The data that has been collected is then searched for similarities and differences and then discussed to draw conclusions.

4. Results and Discussion

BBC (2008) in an article "*Why does grooming become a dirty word?*" The term grooming in the context of pedophilia was first used in 1985 by a newspaper called the Chicago Tribune. The newspaper reported that the perpetrators of sexual abuse began their actions by trying to get acquainted and befriend the victim, until the victim believe them, then they do the grooming by sexually abusing the victim. Winters and Jeglic (2017) also found that the term *grooming* is almost used in half of child sexual abusers. However, until now there has been no appropriate legal action in tackling child grooming cases (Andaru, I, P, N, 2021; Georgia, M, et al, 2020, Suendra & Mulyawanti, 2020). In Australia and Canada sentences will be applied to adult *groomers*.

While in Sweden and the United Kingdom, criminals do not apply until the initial evidence of *the grooming* process is revealed (Zsuzsanna, R. (2013). This is because of the difficulty of *detecting groomer* perpetrators as an act of sexual harassment (Winters & Jeglic, 2017) because until now there is still no absolute definition or one voice about *grooming*. There are various definitions of the term *grooming*. This difference originated by referring to the different contexts that are used. One example is the terms *seduction* and *grooming* (Lanning, 2010). According to Taylor (2017), the most recent and generally accepted multifactorial definition of grooming was proposed by Craven, Brown, and Gilchrist (2006). Grooming is the process that a person does to prepare the child, adults (relatives), and certain environments so it is easier for them to abuse the child abuse the child (Craven, 2006).

Christina, (2021) explained that grooming is usually done by charismatic adults, or those with high authority such as teachers, religious leaders, to foreigners. Identifying and clarifying *grooming* behavior is also not easy. Usually groomers have a variety of tactics when carrying out their actions such as pretending to be peers, giving gifts, taking walks, paying attention or giving advice so that this action is indeed difficult to realize as an act of manipulation by the victim or even the victim's parents (Bannet, 2014).

Uniquely, *grooming* is not only physical contact, child *grooming* can also occur through the use of technology. Advances in technology have also played a role in grooming and discussions about this have focused more on child *grooming*. Kierkegaard (in Wood & Whatcroft, 2020) states that advances in technology give sexual predators the ability to connect with unsuspecting children. According to the *International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children*, (2017) online grooming offenders will be harder to detect because they can be anonymous and hide their real identities.

Greene-Colozzi et al., (2020) study reported that 23% of 1,133 college students in America have had intimate conversations with people who is located further than they live. Then as many as 38% of them met in person without having sex, while 68% of them met for sexual intercourse. It's just that victims often find it difficult to identify groomer perpetrators as acts of sexual abuse (Winters, & Jeglic, 2017). Therefore, the need for *awareness* of sexuality education and understanding about information and characteristics of child grooming are very important, to protect and provide a safe environment for ourselves and those around us. In addition, understanding our role in preventing this phenomenon and how to overcome it with credible sources related to information about child *grooming* is also a crucial thing to know.

Sex education is one of the efforts to prevent sexual harassment behavior. But almost the entire Muslim population in some countries still considers sex a taboo to discuss (Maryati, 2021). As in Pakistan, 46% of parents feel that sex education is contrary to Islamic ideology. In addition, parents are also reluctant to discuss sex in children because it is considered a dangerous knowledge that will arouse sexual desire for them (Nadiem, 2020). If we look at other Islamic countries, Saudi Arabia as the Islamic state in the world also conducts semi-instructed interviews with policy makers, health-care providers, teachers and religious scholars. The conclusion of the interview revealed that school-based sex education is indeed necessary to prevent sexual harassment. They also discussed who should plan the program and who should deliver it (Horanieh, et al, 2020). Malaysia has included sex education in its religious curriculum. But it is unfortunate that the teacher still feels uncomfortable to talk about it, so the teaching material becomes less comprehensive (Ihwani, 2016). In Indonesia, sex education has been included in the curriculum since 2013. It's just that according to Nurfadhillah & Ariasi (2019) sex education in Indonesia is still abstinence. What's more, the *pantinence-only* method only uses the frills of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV as an excuse for adolescents to keep acting abstinence (sexual behavior without a partner or by using objects). Then the proposed approach from a Western perspective is with a comprehensive approach that uses the cognitive, emotional, physical, and social of human sexual behavior. His education includes procedures for the use of contraceptives aimed at reducing the negative impact of sexual intercourse such as pregnancy outside marriage, abortion and HIV (Collins, 2002).

Meanwhile, according to Rusdi (2012) in the Islamic perspective sex education is not only built on cognitive understanding, but is followed by building morality, personality, awareness, and child responsibility regarding the phenomenon of sexuality. Here is the theory of Islamic sex education from Rusdi (2018) which researchers integrate as an effort to prevent child grooming, namely at the age of 0-3 years, sex education begins with the provision of physical identity such as dress, accessories, and so on. At the age of 4-6 years the child has begun to be able to communicate and have a strong memory. According to the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection

of the Republic of Indonesia (2009) *grooming* perpetrators target children easily attacked with very real weaknesses: unpopular, lack of affection, those who seek love and attention outside, are not confident, isolated from the audience, often spend time alone, are under-supervised by parents and experience family problems. Therefore, parents should be present listening carefully, then showing respect to them and their perspectives, thoughts, opinions, and ideas. Communicate that respect by sitting with them, making eye contact, and giving them their full attention when they want or need to talk (Michigan State University, 2020).

Aged 5-7 years, children have started to hang out with their peers, then preventing *grooming* children need to be taught to use a clear voice with respect, then express likes and dislikes to how they feel. In the prevention of *grooming* children need to be wary of adults who pretend to be their peers. At the age of 7-10 years the child should be separated from the bed as described in the hadith. Because at this age the child is very eager to explore what is around him. Then at this age the child already has an interest in the opposite sex. According to Atkinson, et al., (1983) at this age cognitive development in children has begun to think objectively and logically. Then the child must be educated against things that are not desirable in the use of gadgets, where groomers are also on the online track. Children should be instructed if someone appears charming on social media or off-network by questioning whether their behavior is appropriate to the situation? Do their words match their actions? Are they trying to lure me? By the age of 15 and above, the child has entered the early teenage phase. In this phase, children should be reminded of the dangers of following passions and the danger is that excessive love of the world will strengthen the impulses of sexuality. On the contrary, the desire to draw closer to God is automatically a way to stay away from lust. Ibn Qayyim explained that following the lust of the shahwat to love people rather than Allah is a category of shirk.

5. Conclusion

The conclusion of the study after researchers conducted a review of Islamic sex education as a whole is that sex education is oriented to morals and personality, not health-oriented and academic only. Child grooming is an adult's attempt to build relationships, trusts, and emotional bonds with a child or teenager, so that they can manipulate or exploit, even abuse the victim. Based on all journals examined that Islamic sex education can be used as a preventive effort of child grooming.

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