

BARRIER TO PARENTS-ADOLESCENT COMMUNICATION ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH TO PREVENT PREMARITAL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR: A QUALITATIVE SISTEMATIC REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Background : Adolescence is a crucial period that will be faced with several problems, one of which is sexuality, namely premarital sex which can affect adolescent pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, HIV and abortion. Adolescents need information about their sexual health primarily from their parents. Previous studies have shown that some sexual problems in adolescents are caused by communication failures between parents and adolescents regarding condom use, puberty, SITs, physical development, etc.

Method : This study used A Qualitative systematic review on 6 qualitative articles between 2017 to 2021, Heading Sex Education "AND" Parent communication "AND" Qualitative. Critical appraisal is carried out using standard criteria and synthesized using the meta-ethnography method

Result and Analysis : Based on a review of six articles with qualitative methods, it can be synthesized that there are several factors that inhibit communication between parents and their adolescents regarding sex education in an effort to prevent premerital sex, namely taboo assumptions, gender inequality, differences in communication patterns between parents and their teens, lack of knowledge and parents' skills about sex education, the wrong assumption that sex education teaches adolescents to try to have sex and also the busyness factor of parents

Conclusion : This study evaluates the It is necessary to increase the knowledge and skills of parents who have adolescents regarding sex education and effective communication between parents and adolescents regarding sexual problems.

Keywords : Communication Parents-Adolescents, Premarital Sex, Sex Education, Qualitative Study

1. INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines adolescents as adolescents aged 10-19 years, while the United Nations definition of adolescents is young people aged 15-24 years. This period is crucial because of changes in values from children to adults so they often face several problems including sexuality, HIV/AIDS, and Drug Abuse. Among these three problems, premarital sex behavior will have an impact on adolescents such as unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions (Paton et al., 2020). Parents are the main source of inculcation of values, morals and standards that have a major influence on sexual behavior and adolescent decision-making, parents are the key in shaping adolescent sexual behavior (Avelar E Silva et al., 2016). Mothers are considered as the main person who is responsible for socializing sexual education to their adolescent. There are several factors that hinder communication between mothers and their adolescent such as the context of communication, the frequency of parental discussions and the relevant time when setting effective communication strategies, especially communication related to sexual education which some cultures still consider taboo (Sámano et al., 2017; Shams et al., 2017). It is hoped that reducing and eliminating communication between parents and adolescents will provide future implications so that parents have the ability to communicate effectively with adolescents, especially regarding sexual education so that parents can provide monitoring and prevention of

risky behavior problems for adolescents (Mullis et al., 2021).

Data from SKRRI 2012 states that 0.1% -0.4% both male and female adolescents have premarital sexual intercourse for the first time at the age of 15 to 17 years, this figure is influenced by several factors such as low education, economic background, and low understanding of reproductive health. Other data from the Performance Monitoring and Accountability Survey, 2015 stated that 5.02% of unmarried girls aged 15-19 years were sexually active. The impact of sexual intercourse before marriage is the occurrence of pregnancy and childbirth in adolescence. 9.5% of women aged 15-19 were married, gave birth and were pregnant and 36 babies were born for every 1000 women aged 15-19 years. Complications during pregnancy and childbirth are the main causes of death for adolescent girls besides suicide (Atmasari, 2019)

According to data, 44% of adolescents get information about sexuality from mass media, 35% from pornographic content, 16% from peers and only 5% from parents. Many parents find it taboo and awkward to discuss sexual education with their adolescents, causing adolescents to find out for themselves and get the wrong understanding from sources that cannot be justified about sexual education (Mediawati et al., 2022)

Previous research mentioned other factors that hinder communication between parents and adolescents are gender differences, education, traditional norms, religion and work related to crippling communication between parents and adolescent about sexuality and

reproductive health issues (Abdallah et al., 2017)

2. METHODS

The research method used in this study is a qualitative systematic review or meta-ethnography approach, where the researcher narratively summarizes several relevant research results to develop new theories or exist theories (Creswell, 2007)

The article search uses three databases, namely Pubmed, Science Direct, and Google Scholar, which is research conducted from 2011 to 2021. In this study using the keyword Sex education "OR" Communication "AND" Adolescent "AND" Qualitative

Selection Criteria

In this study, the researcher conducted a search by reading the title and abstract to find out the article was relevant according to the criteria. The criteria used in this study are: 1) Articles that discuss barrier communication parents and adolescent about sex education to prevent premarital behaviour; 2) the article uses a qualitative method. Researchers obtained 240 articles from Pubmad and 15.000 articles from Google scholar and after going through several stages of selection, 6 appropriate articles were obtained.

3. RESULTS

A. Taboo Assumption

Of the six qualitative articles using both In-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD), five of them stated that the taboo perception of discussing sex education with their adolescents was the main barrier in communication between parents and

adolescents about sexual education. According to the following information:

Some of adolescents are afraid to tell their parents when their male friends express their love, because it is considered harassing and many parents tend to blame the adolescent girls for it.

"Girl: No! I received a love letter from a boy. I feared to tell my mother about the letter but I told a teacher. I discerned that my mother might think that I brought the problem upon myself yet that was not the case. There is also a boy in our neighbourhood who touches me inappropriately when my parents are away. I wanted to talk to my mother but I still fear her because she might think I am drawing the advances myself (IDI Girl semi-urban)"

Even some parents will respond harshly when their daughter tries to tell her if a boy approaches her and thinks that it is the girl who is flirting.

"Some parents can respond harshly by telling you that perhaps you want to sleep with a man if you start sharing information about sexual advances or ask questions about sexuality (IDI Girl Rural)."

"My mother is tough. She is likely to say that the boy would not have approached me if I had not shown interest by familiarizing with boys for example, by smiling in a seductive way (IDI Girl semi-urban)."

Neither adolescents nor parents are open to discussing sexual issues because they still consider it taboo

"Sometimes the adolescent are not open to what you are saying to them. They will not like to listen to what you are saying. And if you force him/her, he/she will allow you to talk and after that he/she will ask you 'have you finished?' and he/she gets up and goes, that means he/she is not

interested in what you told him/ her.” (a mother)

“My parents never talked to me about sexual issues. I don’t know whether or not they were feeling shy to talk to me about such issues.” (a father in Ablekuma South, FGD)

Some parents think that providing sexual education to adolescents will make adolescents curious and want to try it

“I think it depends on how you go about the education. Because some of the adolescents are adventurous, and when you talk to them about sex, they will really want to find out what it is about. So, it is better we educate them, but we should let them know the dangers associated with indulging in sexual activity. Most of the adolescents indulge in sex because they may learn about it at school, but the teacher probably did not educate them about the dangers associated with indulging in sex. So, they want to experience it.” (a mother, OsuKlottey, FGD)

Another source, from Arabic migrant parents, thinks that sex education is a taboo thing to talk about both inside and outside the home

“Education in the home country is zero. As we said before, not in school, not in our country.”

B. Gender inequality

Two of the six articles reviewed, another obstacle to communication between parents and adolescents is the existence of gender inequality where there are differences between the two articles, the first article considers that girls are more vulnerable so they need more sexual education than boys, while the article others think it's inappropriate for girls to ask about

sexual issues, According to the following information :

Some parents think that girls need more sexual education than boys because they think girls are more vulnerable.

“...She is more gullible and easy to prey upon, so you have to give her the right information on sexual issues so that she can protect herself. Normally, it is the boys who are doing the chasing, so you must teach the girl to be assertive and how to say “no” to sex and she will be able to protect herself.” (a mother in OsuKlottey, FGD)”

There are differences in the information given to adolescent boys and girls. Many people believe that it is inappropriate for women to ask questions about their reproductive health, let alone sexual education.

“I got married really young, I was 14 years old, so I didn’t understand anything, it was the parents who sat down and taught or explained a little to us. So our traditions are like that, that the parents explain before marriage.”

C. Differences in communication patterns

Four other articles believe the barriers to communication between parents and adolescents are communication differences that cause discomfort, embarrassment, difficulty initiating and lack of openness to discuss issues related to sexuality. According to the following information :

Some mothers say they have difficulty starting to talk about sexual issues with their teens

“I find it difficult talking with my daughter about sexual intercourse and kissing because she would not like me to talk about it. Sometimes you would be

watching TV with her and you would see her covering her face during such scenes or she would walk out of the room. Sometimes I call her to come back and ask her to sit down and watch. Then I would tell her that it was just a film and they are just showing what people have been doing. It is when you practice what you see that you will have problems.” (a mother who is a data officer, ID)

Some parents feel uncomfortable and embarrassed to talk about sexual issues with their adolescents.

“I don’t feel comfortable because sometimes I think they may ask me questions that need to be answered and I may not have the answers to give them. I also think that if you give them too much information, adventurous as adolescents are, they may want to try whatever you told them, for example, condom, when they see what it is they may like to try it.” (a father who is an administrative officer, IDI)

Some parents find it difficult to change the perception that it is important to be more open about discussing sexual education with their teens

“I don’t know how to talk to my daughter about sex. I want them to learn our culture/.../I don’t really know what I should raise my daughter. My values in the home country or the Swedish values.”

Differences in communication patterns between parents and adolescents, causing distortion and closed to discussing issues of sexual education

“The communication pattern between me and my mother tends to be normal every day. However, I never talk about personal issues like boyfriends. I am afraid to tell my mother since she said that I am still a child and should not be close to boys. As a result,

I was always scolded when I told my mother.”

D. Lack of parental knowledge

Three articles consider parents' knowledge and skills regarding sexual education to have a major influence on communication barriers between parents and adolescents. The following information:

Some parents find it difficult to start talking about sexual issues with their teens, what topics to talk about and what impact from premarital sex

“The difficulties I faced talking about sexual topics with my daughter are: the appropriate time to provide the education. There are also some terminologies that I am not able to provide an appropriate explanation for the daughter to understand me. iii. There are some health implications such as having menses which I could not explain e.g. why some girls have regular menses while others have irregular? I don’t know whether that is normal or not. Why some girls have their menses early and others late. For instance, some girls start their menses at 10 years but others at 15 years of age.” (a father who is an administrator in Ablekuma South, FGD)

Some of the parents' lack of knowledge about sexual education makes it difficult for them to talk about it to their adolescents.

“...Some parents have no knowledge about sexual issues or how to go about it. Therefore, if parents are trained, they will have the knowledge to educate their adolescents and their adolescents will, in turn educate their own adolescent in future and they will be better than the present generation. I told my sister that “something” like blood is coming from my vagina when I had my first menses and she told my mother. When she told my mother

about my experience, my mother said to me 'that is what we call 'period', don't you know, and I said I didn't. And she said that is what when a man calls you and you go you will become pregnant'. So, how will a man call me, and I will go'. You are afraid to go." (a mother, who is a record offer, IDI)

Many parents, especially mothers, feel that they do not have knowledge about sex education that should be given to their adolescent, moreover they feel ashamed and find it difficult to start talking about sex education.

"I couldn't believe my wife knew nothing when she was married. It took a long time to learn everything. It was not easy."

E. Considering sexual education as teaching sexual practices

Two articles consider parents who provide education to their adolescents as if they are teaching their adolescents to have early sexual intercourse. The following information:

There are still many assumptions that by providing adolescent sexual education as a form of teaching sexual practices that will make adolescents curious and try to do it

"We don't want anyone under the age of 18 to be taught how to act with his girlfriend in bed."

Many assume that giving sex education too early will cause early puberty and provoke adolescent to have early sexual intercourse

"If the girl doesn't get to learn these things, that her whole body doesn't get affected, that the body hormones don't become active. That's why she... doesn't

start having her periods early and she keeps on growing to a good height."

F. Busy parents

Only one article argues that busy parents become a barrier to communication between parents and their adolescents, according to the following information:

Busy parents cause they don't have much *time* to communicate with their adolescents

"I am rarely home. I take care of my child alone because my husband and I divorced [1] was little, so I work and rarely stay home. My child and I often communicate every day whenever I am at home"[1] never told me anything. She tends to be introverted. I always told her to study hard to get a stable job when she graduates. She can think about boyfriends later after graduation and work." [10]

4. DISCUSSION

In six qualitative articles reviewed, almost all of the articles or five articles wrote that the informant said sexual education was taboo because 1) the adolescent informant felt embarrassed discussing his sexual life with his mother 2) the adolescent informant said his mother responded rudely when he tried to talk about his relationship with a boyfriend 3) both the adolescent informant and his mother consider it taboo to talk about sexual education 4) the adolescent mother informant considers providing sexual education as if teaching her adolescent to try to have sexual relations 5) the adolescent mother informant thinks sexual education is

not worth giving either at home or outside the home.

Two qualitative articles have different opinions regarding gender inequality in the provision of sexual education, one article considers that it is more important for female adolescents to receive sexual education because they are considered riskier, while the other article considers that sexual education is inappropriate for both male and female adolescents.

Four qualitative articles reported that barriers to providing sexual education were feelings of discomfort, embarrassment and confusion about how to start a conversation

Four qualitative articles say 1) difficulty starting conversations about sexual education 2) some parents feel uncomfortable and embarrassed discussing sexual health issues with their adolescent 3) some parents have difficulty changing their adolescents perceptions regarding their views on sexual health 4) parents often have different communication patterns with their adolescents.

Three qualitative report articles report 1) some parents have difficulty talking about sexual issues with their adolescent 2) some parents cannot understand what topics or materials should be explained in sexual education 3) some mothers say these difficulties occur because of shame and confusion to start a conversation about the issue of sexual education.

Only one qualitative article stated that parents' busy lives were an obstacle in providing sexual education to their adolescent.

Several previous studies that support this research include Amanda Kastrinos et al who explained both

parents and adolescents experienced personal barrier, such as embarrassment, discomfort and fear: communal barriers, such as outside source and responsibility shift: cultural barrier such as taboo, focus on abstinence and age generation difference(Mullis et al., 2021). Another article argues that parent-adolescent-sex communication is influenced by communication barriers and was limited, heteronormative and influenced by disclosure of SGM (Sexual and Gender Minority). Parent-adolescent sex communication has been proven to improve the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents, but adequate parental guidance is still lacking. This review identifies ways that healthcare providers can promote positive and inclusive PASC (Parent-adolescent sex communication)(McKay & Fontenot, 2020).

From the results and theory above, the researcher assumes that sexual education from parents to adolescents is not optimal, influenced by sexual communication barriers experienced by both parents and adolescents, these barriers include feelings of discomfort, embarrassment, maternal sexual knowledge and cultural barriers such as taboo assumptions. . Moreover, Indonesian people who adhere to eastern culture still consider it inappropriate to discuss sexual matters, especially with their adolescents.

5. CONCLUSION

Information obtained qualitatively using both in-depth interviews and focus group discussions can be concluded that the most

inhibiting factor in providing sexual education is the assumption that discussing sexual health issues is taboo so that many parents and adolescents feel embarrassed, uncomfortable and confused about how to start the conversation regarding sexual health issues. Apart from taboos, differences in communication patterns are also an inhibiting factor in providing sexual education, where parents and adolescents have different perceptions regarding sexual health issues. In addition, parents' lack of knowledge about educational material is also an inhibiting factor. However, some parents who are busy working also use this as an excuse not to provide sexual education to their adolescents.

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