



Needs analysis of a sexuality education program for the prevention of sexual violence

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ABSTRACT

Sexuality education at the elementary school level is a crucial preventive measure to protect children from sexual violence. However, its implementation in Indonesian schools remains informal, unstructured, and often confined to moral-religious discourses lacking scientific and psychosocial grounding. This study aims to analyze competency needs as a foundation for developing a school-based sexuality education program grounded in local contexts. Employing a sequential exploratory mixed-methods design, the study began with in-depth interviews involving program implementer teachers and the vice principal for curriculum affairs, followed by a competency-based survey. The findings reveal a strong awareness of the urgency of sexuality education. Significant challenges persist—namely, limited teacher capacity, the absence of structured modules, and time constraints within school routines. Despite these obstacles, school leadership support, teacher openness, and positive parental responses provide a strong foundation for future program development. This study offers a novel contribution by applying a needs-based lens and identifying the implementation gap between global recommendations and local realities, particularly within faith-based school settings. By focusing on local insights within an Islamic school context, this research provides contextually grounded, empirically informed input for curriculum design—bridging the divide between normative recommendations and practical realities in Indonesian schools.

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ABSTRAK

Pendidikan seksualitas pada jenjang sekolah dasar merupakan langkah preventif yang sangat penting dalam upaya perlindungan anak dari kekerasan seksual. Namun, implementasinya di Indonesia masih bersifat informal, tidak terstruktur, dan kerap berbasis pada pendekatan moral-religius yang minim aspek ilmiah dan psikososial. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kebutuhan kompetensi sebagai dasar pengembangan program pendidikan seksualitas di sekolah dasar berbasis kebutuhan kontekstual. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode campuran eksplanatori (*sequential exploratory mixed-method*) dengan pendekatan kualitatif pada tahap awal melalui wawancara mendalam dengan guru pelaksana program dan wakil kepala sekolah bidang kurikulum, dilanjutkan dengan survei kompetensi. Hasil menunjukkan adanya kesadaran tinggi akan pentingnya pendidikan seksualitas, namun dihadapkan pada tantangan berupa keterbatasan kapasitas guru, ketiadaan modul baku, serta kendala waktu dalam pelaksanaan program. Meski demikian, dukungan dari pimpinan sekolah, keterbukaan guru, dan respons positif dari orang tua menjadi modal awal penting untuk mengembangkan program yang sistematis. Penelitian ini menyumbang kebaruan dengan menawarkan pendekatan berbasis kebutuhan dan mendeskripsikan kesenjangan antara norma global dan praktik lokal dalam konteks sekolah berbasis nilai agama. Dengan berfokus pada wawasan lokal dalam konteks sekolah Islam, penelitian ini memberikan masukan yang berlandaskan konteks dan berdasarkan pengalaman untuk desain kurikulum—menjembatani kesenjangan antara rekomendasi normatif dan realitas praktis di sekolah-sekolah Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: kekerasan seksual; pendidikan seksualitas; pengembangan kurikulum pendidikan seksualitas; sekolah dasar

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INTRODUCTION

Sexual violence against children remains a pressing global concern, with elementary school-aged children being particularly vulnerable due to their developmental stage, which limits their complete understanding of bodily autonomy and risk awareness (See in: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000260770>). Furthermore, the majority of victims of sexual assault and rape are children. At least one in four girls and one in 20 boys in the United States experience childhood sexual abuse before the age of 18 (See in: https://www.cdc.gov/child-abuse-neglect/about/about-child-sexual-abuse.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com). Likewise, the risk of experiencing sexual abuse increases in adolescence and peaks around the age of 14–17 for both girls and boys (Gewirtz-Meydan & Finkelhor, 2020). This vulnerability is exacerbated within what Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory identifies as the child's microsystem—their immediate environment. In Indonesia, this is starkly evident in national data; for instance, the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (Komisi Perlindungan Anak Indonesia or KPAI) reported that sexual abuse consistently constitutes the majority of reported violence cases against children throughout 2023. Similarly, reports from the National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) highlight that perpetrators are often close relations, such as family members, teachers, or peers.

Despite these alarming statistics, comprehensive sexuality education in Indonesian elementary schools is often avoided. Therefore, improving educators' knowledge and changing their perceptions are crucial to overcoming the challenges of implementing sex education in early childhood education, ensuring that children receive comprehensive education tailored to their developmental stage (Chairilisyah, 2019; Gerda et al., 2021). Instead, sensitive topics are sometimes touched upon informally and without clear structure through gender-segregated, character-building sessions known as *Keputraan* (lit. 'matters of sons') and *keputrian* (lit. 'matters of daughters'), which are extracurricular or co-curricular school activities in Indonesia, often with a religious or moral focus, where male and female students are separated to discuss gender-specific topics.—gender-segregated sessions for boys and girls, respectively, focused on character and religious teaching, which lack formal structure, clear objectives, or assessment mechanisms (See in: <https://www.smadwiwarna.sch.id/keputrian-adalah/>)

Global guidelines—such as UNESCO's *International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education* (2018) and WHO's *Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe* (2010)—have long advocated for the implementation of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) that is age-appropriate, scientifically accurate, and rights-based. Empirical studies in various countries have shown positive outcomes of such programs (See in: <https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UNFPAEvaluationWEB4.pdf>) found that CSE empowers young people to make informed decisions regarding their sexuality and sexual behaviour, and to exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens in school, the community and society at large., while well-designed sexuality education programs in the U.S. contribute to healthier relationships, delayed sexual initiation, and increased reporting of abuse (Goldfarb & Lieberman, 2021). However, the implementation of similar programs in Indonesia faces cultural, religious, and institutional challenges that constrain schools from

adopting a complete CSE framework (Shibuya et al., 2023). Confusion about the true meaning of sex education causes people to have negative perceptions about sex education (Skoufias & Vinha, 2021). Society tends to equate the meaning of sex education with the term sex itself (Rumble et al., 2020). In the Indonesian context, a case study revealed that diverse backgrounds, students' sexual behavior, and lack of confidence among teachers were causes of conflict in implementing CSE. Furthermore, many of the teachers were afraid to teach sex education because sex is still a taboo topic, and religious norms and traditional culture still strongly exist in the community (Bhana et al., 2025; Zhuravleva & Helmer, 2024). It is worth noting that unity in diversity is closely tied to teachers' perceptions (Shibuya et al., 2023). Teachers are expected to deliver sensitive material without sufficient institutional support. At the same time, schools remain cautious due to the perceived sensitivity of the topic and potential parental resistance. This situation is exacerbated by the lack of specialized training that equips early childhood educators with the skills to teach sex education appropriately and effectively (Astuti, 2017; Pratiwi et al., 2024).

This study addresses that gap by proposing a needs-based approach to designing sexuality education programs at the elementary school level. Rather than evaluating an existing program, it begins with exploring the lived experiences and perspectives of program implementers and school leaders to identify what children need to learn in order to prevent sexual abuse.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Urgency of Sexuality Education in Elementary Schools for the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse

Sexuality education at the elementary school level is a crucial preventive strategy against child sexual abuse, particularly given children's developmental stage, where they begin to explore bodily awareness, social interactions, and emotional relationships (Lidyani et al., 2022). Numerous studies emphasize that most grooming predators start with the first step (identifying vulnerable children) with a lack of adequate knowledge, especially students at the elementary school level (Dorasamy et al., 2021; Hendrick et al., 2024). In Indonesia, this vulnerability is further exacerbated by the fact that Indonesia still does not have a national curriculum related to sex education and that formal school-based sex education programs are still commonly considered taboo or controversial (Shibuya et al., 2023). The urgency for school-based sexuality education is supported not only by national statistics on child sexual violence but also by developmental psychology.

The absence of proper sex education in Indonesia exposes many children to higher risks of victimization, including abuse and exploitation. Additionally, children with a disability are three times more likely to experience maltreatment, and approximately one in two preschoolers (Persdotter et al., 2024; Pumariega et al., 2022). In many Indonesian schools, such instruction is hindered by sociocultural taboos, religious sensitivities, and a lack of teacher preparedness, because sex is considered a taboo subject (Nur et al., 2024; Siti, 2019). Some of the teachers were afraid of encouraging sexual behavior among students outside of school due to the development of social media, which has influenced the understanding of sexual information among students (Shibuya et al., 2023). Whereas, by

teaching sex education to children, it is hoped that it can prevent children from the negative risks of sexual behavior and deviant behavior (McElvaney et al., 2020). This pedagogical hesitation results in children being left uninformed or misinformed, creating a dangerous knowledge gap precisely at the age when awareness is most needed. Furthermore, while global frameworks such as UNESCO (2018) and WHO (2010) advocate for comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) to be introduced in early education, these guidelines often fail to translate into practice in local contexts due to policy resistance, parental concerns, or a lack of curriculum alignment.

In Indonesia, school-based programs such as keputraan and keputrian attempt to address issues of identity and character, but are seldom structured or evaluated as true educational interventions. Without a clear framework, competencies, and monitoring tools, these sessions risk being reduced to routine moral instruction rather than empowering, protective education. Therefore, the urgency of sexuality education in elementary schools lies not only in the high prevalence of abuse, but also in the institutional and curricular neglect of a subject that is both sensitive and vital. The literature makes it clear that, while there is theoretical and normative support for early intervention, a significant gap remains in context-sensitive program design, teacher training, and resource allocation, particularly in faith-based or conservative educational settings. Addressing this gap requires not only political will, but empirical grounding—starting from the real needs of schools, teachers, and students.

Knowledge Gaps and Implementation Challenges in Schools

The majority of victims of sexual assault and rape are children. One of the central factors contributing to the high vulnerability of children to sexual abuse is their limited knowledge about body autonomy, sexuality, and physical boundaries (De Costa et al., 2022; Harefa, 2023). Children's knowledge and attitudes about sexual violence and prevention are still minimal, and self-efficacy towards preventing sexual violence in children is still low (Collins et al., 2021). Research consistently shows that elementary school children often lack the cognitive and emotional tools to differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate touches or interactions (Goldman, 2008; Scholes et al., 2012). Without early exposure to structured and age-appropriate sexuality education, children are less likely to recognize abusive situations, may internalize inappropriate behavior as usual, and are less likely to report incidents due to confusion or fear. Consequently, children need to be taught the parts of their body that are private as well as who has the right to touch them (Gibson, 2015). Consent and sexual abuse prevention education is most effective in a formal education (Willis et al., 2018). This cognitive gap underscores the urgent need for preventive education that starts before children reach adolescence, a point emphasized by both international guidelines (See in: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000260770>) and child protection specialists.

Despite widespread acknowledgment of its importance, the implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in schools faces multiple layers of challenges, rooted in a conflict between public health principles and sociocultural norms. At the conceptual level, many teachers approach the topic through moralistic and religious frameworks, a perspective that aligns more with abstinence-only approaches rather than scientific or child-rights-based ones (Ibrahim et al., 2024; Taja et al., 2021). Consequently,

educational content is often reduced to ambiguous warnings about "avoiding bad behavior," failing to equip students with concrete skills for protection, communication, and critical decision-making. This theoretical gap manifests institutionally, where in many Indonesian schools, sexuality education is omitted from the formal curriculum. Instead, it is informally and improvisationally integrated into existing character-building programs, such as *keputraan/keputrian*, which lack systematic design and consistent objectives.

Pedagogically, teachers often report feelings of anxiety, discomfort, or inadequacy when addressing topics related to anatomy, sexuality, or gender identity (Goldfarb & Lieberman, 2021). Meanwhile, Education here is not limited to cognitive teaching; it also includes the integration of religious values into every aspect of students' lives (Poncini, 2024). Many educators have never received formal training in delivering sensitive material and express concern about miscommunication or parental backlash (Kennedy et al., 2024). This results in the omission of crucial topics or the use of vague and confusing language. Furthermore, institutional challenges such as limited instructional time, a lack of consistent program leadership, and the absence of monitoring systems create significant obstacles to sustainable program delivery. As one school leader remarked, "Time is the biggest issue. Sometimes teachers are too tired; the program is great, but it does not run because everyone's energy is drained." This reflects a broader issue of structural under-prioritization, where important programs are sidelined due to practical constraints.

Fullan, in "*The New Meaning of Educational Change*" presented findings from implementation science, which emphasize that effective program delivery depends not only on the quality of content but also on teacher capacity, resource availability, and leadership support. Improvisational, under-resourced, and poorly supported programs often result in low fidelity, which reduces both the effectiveness and the evaluability of interventions. Therefore, overcoming implementation barriers requires a comprehensive systems approach, which involves strengthening teacher training, developing straightforward and adaptable curriculum modules, engaging parents, and establishing policy frameworks that institutionalize sexuality education as part of the formal school mission.

Needs Analysis as the Foundation for Program Development

To address the multi-layered challenges of implementing sexuality education in elementary schools, a systematic and evidence-based program development process is essential. One of the most critical early stages in this process is conducting a thorough needs analysis, which serves as the foundation for designing interventions that are both effective and contextually relevant. According to Kaufman in "*Strategic Planning for Success: Aligning people, performance, and payoffs*", needs are defined as the measurable gap between current performance (what is) and desired performance (what should be). In this context, the "need" is the gap between students' vulnerability—due to a lack of knowledge, skills, and awareness regarding bodily autonomy and sexual abuse—and the ideal outcome, where students are developmentally competent to recognize risks and protect themselves.

An influential taxonomy of needs provides a multidimensional lens for conducting this analysis, helping to prevent a narrow or superficial understanding of stakeholder demands. He identifies four types of needs (Bradshaw, 1972):

1. Normative Needs refer to needs determined by experts, benchmarks, or scientific evidence. In the context of sexuality education, this includes global standards from the WHO (2010) and UNESCO (2018), as well as developmental psychology literature, which consistently emphasizes the importance of age-appropriate sexuality education as a form of child protection (Goldfarb & Lieberman, 2021).
2. Felt Needs are subjective perceptions held by individuals—captured in this study through interview data where both teachers and school leaders expressed that sexuality education is a “basic necessity” and admitted to “lacking sufficient pedagogical skills” to teach it effectively.
3. Expressed Needs arise when felt needs translate into observable behavior, such as teachers’ requests for training and structured modules, and students’ active participation and questions during existing informal sessions. Parents’ verbal support for the school’s initiatives also reflects this category.
4. Comparative Needs, McKillip, in “*Need analysis: Tools for the human services and education*” identified comparative needs by comparing the conditions of similar groups or institutions. For example, schools with integrated sexuality education programs often demonstrate better preparedness and stronger support systems compared to those without such programs.

This comprehensive approach enables the identification of not only immediate instructional gaps but also structural, cultural, and institutional needs that may not be immediately apparent. Unlike one-dimensional assessments, multidimensional needs analysis acknowledges that program development must consider various actors—teachers, students, parents, and policy environments—and multiple domains—knowledge, attitudes, skills, resources, and institutional readiness. As emphasized by McKenney and Reeves in “*Conducting educational design research*”, educational design research, aligning interventions with actual needs, increases the relevance, sustainability, and scalability of educational innovations. In sum, a needs analysis is not merely a preliminary step. However, a strategic foundation that ensures sexuality education programs are not only reactive to current problems, but also proactive, anticipatory, and grounded in contextual realities. It transforms stakeholder insights into actionable design input, reducing the risk of developing programs that are technically sound but socially misaligned.

METHODS

This research employed a sequential exploratory mixed-methods design (QUAL → QUAN) to explore and validate the competency needs for a school-based sexuality education program. The study was conducted at SD Cendekia Muda in Bandung, Indonesia, a private elementary school known for its character education initiatives. The qualitative phase involved semi-structured interviews with three key participants: two classroom teachers serving as implementers of the *keputraan/keputrian* program, and one vice principal for curriculum affairs. These participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in informal sexuality education efforts. The interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns related to teacher understanding, student needs, and institutional challenges.

Based on these themes, the quantitative phase followed with a competency-based survey instrument, administered to the same participants, aiming to quantify the perceived importance of each competency area. The research was conducted in two stages between October and November 2024. In the first stage, the research team designed interview protocols based on child protection principles and obtained ethical approval from the relevant school authorities. Interviews were conducted on-site at SD Cendekia Muda, recorded with the participants' consent, and transcribed verbatim for coding purposes. In the second stage, a structured survey was developed to operationalize the core competencies. To ground this instrument in robust, evidence-based practices, the competencies were systematically adapted from UNESCO's (2018) *International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education*.

The rationale for selecting this framework was threefold: first, its credibility as a global standard enhances methodological rigor; second, its comprehensive structure ensures that crucial domains for child protection are addressed holistically; and third, it provides a solid international foundation that can be thoughtfully adapted to ensure local cultural and developmental relevance. The six measures were understanding of anatomy and personal boundaries, communication skills, decision-making and risk assessment, emotional regulation and empathy, understanding of children's rights, and digital safety awareness. Integrating qualitative and quantitative data through triangulation served a dual purpose: it solidified the empirical foundation by validating findings and enhancing reliability, and it ensured the development of a context-sensitive program framework responsive to both practitioner needs and developmental priorities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Integrated Findings from Program Implementer, Teachers, and Vice Principal for Curriculum Affairs

To gain a holistic understanding of the needs related to sexuality education in elementary schools, this study examined the perspectives of both implementer teachers and the vice principal for curriculum affairs at SD Cendekia Muda. The findings are presented thematically by merging insights from both roles and highlighting similarities and differences in perception and experience.

Perception and Understanding of Sexuality Education

Both implementer teachers and the vice principal acknowledged the urgency and relevance of sexuality education in elementary schools. Teachers viewed it as essential for self-protection, though their understanding was predominantly framed through religious and moral lenses.

"Children indeed need to be prepared to protect themselves, and of course, following religious rules and prevailing norms," (Teacher 1)

The vice principal added a developmental and spiritual dimension, positioning sexuality education as a fundamental need aligned with Islamic principles and not just a curricular formality:

"First, the teachers must be strengthened. They need to understand that this material is important—not because of the curriculum, but because children need to know that their bodies have their innate nature and boundaries," (Vice Principal)

Implementation Experience and Student Engagement

Teachers and the vice principal observed that students show active engagement and curiosity, especially from grade 4 onwards. Sensitive topics often emerge naturally during *keputraan/keputrian* sessions.

"Students are becoming more active in asking questions about sexuality, even if the topics are not brought up intentionally." (Vice Principal)

"Students feel they have space to ask questions and discuss issues related to their bodies and personal development," (Teacher 2)

Challenges in Delivery and Teacher Capacity

All informants identified significant challenges in delivering content, particularly due to a lack of teacher confidence, training, and resources. Teachers expressed discomfort in addressing reproductive topics.

"Sometimes I feel awkward when explaining the reproductive system, so I tell the students, 'Let us just discuss this within the lesson context only,'" (Teacher 2)

The vice principal echoed this concern but stressed the importance of using clear terms and avoiding euphemisms.

"Children need to understand reproductive organs clearly, not just through metaphors or nicknames," (Vice Principal)

Student Competency Expectations

Both parties expect students to develop the ability to identify unsafe behavior, set boundaries, and seek help when needed. Teachers also want students to refuse unsafe invitations assertively, while the vice principal emphasizes the importance of gender roles and spiritual identity.

"Children need to know how to be boys and girls according to the Prophet's example," (Vice Principal)

"They must be able to recognize inappropriate touches and speak to trusted adults," (Teacher 1)

Teaching Methods and Tools

Teachers prefer interactive methods such as storytelling, simulation, and discussion, although these are applied improvisationally. The vice principal supports small group formats for deeper interaction.

"In classical settings, kids get bored quickly. Small groups work better so they can open up," (Vice Principal)

"We use storytelling and discussion, but there is no standard guide yet," (Teacher 2)

Program Evaluation and Institutional Support

Currently, evaluation practices are unstructured and observation-based. Teachers rely on intuition to assess student understanding. The vice principal has initiated a shared behavior documentation system as a potential basis for future monitoring tools.

"We usually just observe how they ask or respond... but there is no specific tool," (Teacher 2)

"Everything is documented in a shared drive. It helps adjust material in the following year," (Vice Principal)

Implementation Challenges and Solutions

Both the program implementer teachers and the vice principal identified significant implementation challenges that hinder the consistent delivery of sexuality education programs. One of the most pressing issues raised by all participants is the time constraint. Teachers often feel overwhelmed by the demands of the formal curriculum, leaving them with limited space and energy to carry out additional programs, as one teacher noted.

"Sometimes teachers are already exhausted; the program is good, but it does not run because the energy is gone," (Teacher 1)

This was echoed by the vice principal, who highlighted that even when there is institutional will, scheduling limitations and teacher burnout make it difficult to maintain continuity and depth in program delivery. Another shared challenge is inadequate teacher preparation, as well as a lack of confidence in handling sensitive topics. Teachers reported discomfort in explaining reproductive concepts, often avoiding them or oversimplifying them. The vice principal acknowledged this, pointing to the lack of formal training and structured modules, which leaves teachers uncertain about what is appropriate to teach and how to communicate it effectively. Without clear institutional guidance, teachers are left to rely on personal judgment, which varies significantly and contributes to inconsistent implementation.

A further institutional issue lies in staff turnover, particularly among those appointed as program coordinators or points of contact. The vice principal noted that each transition risks disrupting the continuity and quality of the program:

"When the PIC changes, the approach sometimes changes too. We need delegation and continuity," (Vice Principal)

Despite these challenges, some initial solutions have been attempted. The school has begun to develop a shared documentation system to track student behavior and classroom observations, which aids in adjusting the curriculum annually and preserving institutional memory. Teachers and leaders also expressed a strong desire for capacity building through training, modules, and official policy support. In comparison, the perspectives of both program implementer teachers and the vice principal align on the urgency of sexuality

education, viewing it as a crucial form of primary prevention against sexual violence (See in: <https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/violence-prevention/global-status-report-on-violence-against-children-2020>). They share the perception that students are increasingly curious and have reached a developmental stage where structured guidance is needed to understand their bodies, personal boundaries, and appropriate social behavior. However, both parties acknowledge a significant gap between this perceived need and current practice. They recognize that existing efforts are mostly informal and unsupported by standardized curricula, relying instead on improvisation during specific character education sessions. These sessions are known as *keputrian* (lit. 'matters of daughters,' for girls) and *keputraan* ('matters of sons,' for boys). They are typically gender-segregated and focus on religious or moral guidance. For instance, an improvised lesson on sexual health during a *keputrian* session might involve a teacher advising girls on modest behaviour and dress as a primary means of self-protection, rather than providing a structured, rights-based lesson on consent and reproductive health. (See in: <https://www.kompasiana.com/asrimasudah/62f1a702a51c6f438a566022/sosialisasi-keputrian-dan-keputraan-untuk-bekal-menghadapi-masa-remaja-awal-di-sd-sukahati-01-dan-sd-sukahati-02>)

However, key differences emerge in their depth of perspective and strategic orientation. The teachers' approach is primarily protective and reactive, emphasizing how children should avoid danger and report misconduct. In contrast, the vice principal offers a more holistic and forward-looking view, highlighting not only the importance of safety but also the need to shape children's understanding of gender roles, personal identity, and religious values from an early age. While teachers often express discomfort or hesitation when discussing sensitive topics like reproductive anatomy, the vice principal insists on the importance of using direct and accurate language to prevent misinformation.

In terms of pedagogy, both groups favour interactive methods—such as storytelling, small-group discussions, and simulations—as effective strategies to foster student engagement. However, the teachers tend to rely on informal observation and intuition. In contrast, the vice principal has already begun systematizing data collection through shared documentation, which can serve as a foundation for future evaluation and planning. This reflects a difference in institutional mindset, where the teachers focus on delivery, and the vice principal looks toward sustainability, structure, and alignment with long-term school goals.

These distinctions suggest that while there is a strong shared foundation, the development of a comprehensive sexuality education program must bridge the practical classroom realities faced by teachers with the strategic, value-based vision of school leadership. Empowering teachers with clear guidelines, training, and aligned support systems will be essential to transforming their shared concern into an effective and sustained educational practice (Meng, 2023). There is a need for explicit training for all school professionals who support young children with disabilities (Chudzik et al., 2023).

Table 1. Survey Results of Program Implementer Teachers

No	Competency Indicators	Sub-Indicator	Number of "Agree" (n=2)	Percentage of Agreement (%)
1	Understanding of Anatomy & Personal Boundaries	Recognizing private body parts	2	100%
		Being aware of boundaries and expressing discomfort when violated	2	100%
		Asserting personal boundaries in specific situations	2	100%
2	Effective Communication Skills	Expressing feelings and needs clearly	2	100%
		Talking to a trusted adult when feeling uncomfortable	2	100%
		Politely and assertively refusing or objecting	2	100%
3	Decision-Making & Risk Assessment Skills	Distinguishing between safe and unsafe situations	2	100%
		Making appropriate decisions in risky situations	2	100%
		Knowing how to seek help in risky situations	2	100%
4	Emotion Regulation and Empathy	Managing emotions in stressful situations	2	100%
		Showing empathy toward others' feelings and understanding the importance of mutual respect	2	100%
		Understanding the role of empathy in maintaining healthy and safe relationships	2	100%
5	Understanding of Children's Rights	Identifying the right to feel safe and respected	2	100%
		Understanding children's rights to protection from violence and exploitation	2	100%
		Identifying violations of rights and knowing available protection steps	2	100%
6	Awareness of Sexual Violence in the Digital Era	Recognizing risks of sexual violence on social media/internet	2	100%
		Identifying appropriate actions to maintain digital safety	2	100%
		Understanding privacy settings and the importance of not befriending strangers online	2	100%

Source: Research, 2025

The survey results from the two program implementer teachers (in **Table 1**) showed that all competency indicators and sub-indicators were marked as "Agreed" by both respondents (100%). This indicates that the teachers recognize the importance of the six core areas in sexuality education, encompassing topics such as understanding private body parts and digital safety. In addition, the respondents provided specific input for program development. G1 emphasized that students need to understand the context of digital relationships wisely—for example, that parents are not to be considered "strangers," so the concept of privacy must be defined in a contextual manner. Meanwhile, G2 added that the competency of having the courage to voice refusal should also be part of the learning objectives, so that students not only understand but also feel empowered to take a stand.

Table 2. Survey Results of the Vice Principal for Curriculum Affairs

No	Competency Indicators	Sub-Indicator	Percentage of Agreement (%)
1	Understanding of Anatomy & Personal Boundaries	Recognizing private body parts	100%
		Being aware of boundaries and expressing discomfort when violated	100%
		Asserting personal boundaries in specific situations	100%
2	Effective Communication Skills	Expressing feelings and needs clearly	100%
		Talking to a trusted adult when feeling uncomfortable	100%
		Politely and assertively refusing or objecting	100%
3	Decision-Making & Risk Assessment Skills	Distinguishing between safe and unsafe situations	100%
		Making appropriate decisions in risky situations	100%
		Knowing how to seek help in risky situations	100%
4	Emotion Regulation and Empathy	Managing emotions in stressful situations	100%
		Showing empathy toward others' feelings and understanding the importance of mutual respect	100%
		Understanding the role of empathy in maintaining healthy and safe relationships	100%
5	Understanding of Children's Rights	Identifying the right to feel safe and respected	100%
		Understanding children's rights to protection from violence and exploitation	100%
		Identifying violations of rights and knowing available protection steps	100%
6	Awareness of Sexual Violence in the Digital Era	Recognizing risks of sexual violence on social media/internet	100%
		Identifying appropriate actions to maintain digital safety	100%
		Understanding privacy settings and the importance of not befriending strangers online	100%

Source: Research, 2025

The survey results from the vice principal for curriculum affairs (in **Table 2**) also indicated complete agreement with all proposed competency indicators in the sexuality education program. This affirms that the school's managerial leadership supports a comprehensive and contextual learning approach. There was no rejection of any indicator, which demonstrates alignment between the program's vision and the school leadership. This approval also aligns with the prior in-depth interview findings, which revealed the urgency of developing a systematic, psychosocially relevant, and religiously aligned sexuality education program.

Discussion

This study reinforces longstanding concerns identified in the literature: Child sexual abuse can occur anywhere; however, children can be at greater risk in institutional settings, such as those attended for educational, recreational, sporting, religious, or cultural activities (See: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/types-of-violence/child-sexual-abuse>). Our findings confirm that teachers in Indonesia often rely on moral and religious frameworks, feel uncomfortable discussing anatomy, and lack structured guidance—resulting in program variability, however, unlike prior research by Abdellatif et al., which found that teachers and school leaders can improvise on limitations by improving their ability to explain anatomy (Abdellatif et al., 2022). Our study identifies a crucial pre-implementation stage, where both teachers and school leadership recognize needs but lack the necessary curricula and tools. This anticipatory insight adds a proactive dimension to the existing literature.

Beyond confirming prior trends, our findings align with international studies demonstrating the effectiveness of structured, culturally sensitive media and materials. For example, teaching methods that involve active engagement, multimedia resources (which can include animated storylines), group discussions, and hands-on activities have been shown to improve students' academic performance and comprehension of religious concepts (Asta et al., 2024). Moreover, other studies indicate that involving parents in core activities has a positive impact on their children's education both at home and at school (Hasmar, 2024). Our study resonates with these findings by uncovering emerging institutional openness, including teacher documentation systems, positive parental feedback, and interest in training, which suggests readiness for aligned program development.

What truly sets our study apart is its focus on systemic alignment between teachers' immediate protective priorities and leadership's emphasis on values-based identity formation within a religious framework. Within a religious framework, there are typically several limitations to the explanation of sex education (Chavula et al., 2022). Prior studies in religious and inclusive schools demonstrated that school-based sex education can enhance elementary school students' self-help skills in the face of sexual violence (Rudolph et al., 2024). In contrast, our study illuminates the tension and synergy between pedagogical pragmatism and institutional vision, thereby advancing the theoretical understanding of how global CSE frameworks (see <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000260770>) can be reconciled with local cultural values through modular, context-responsive models.

CONCLUSIONS

This study explored the competency needs for implementing a school-based sexual education program aimed at preventing sexual violence in elementary school students. Using a sequential exploratory mixed-methods approach, the research found that both implementer teachers and school leadership agreed on the urgency of equipping children with self-protection skills, such as recognizing inappropriate behavior, setting boundaries, and communicating with trusted adults. Despite strong awareness, the study revealed significant barriers including a lack of pedagogical preparedness, the absence of formal curriculum and assessment tools, and time limitations in daily school operations. Nevertheless, institutional openness, teacher commitment, and parental receptiveness provide a foundation for building a more structured and sustainable program.

The implications of this study are both practical and theoretical. For schools, the findings underscore the importance of investing in teacher training, developing modular and flexible instructional materials, and establishing clear institutional policies to support the delivery of sensitive content. Curriculum developers should integrate localized values with international best practices to ensure relevance and cultural fit. Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature by applying a needs-based framework grounded in lived school experiences—bridging the gap between global standards and local educational realities. Future research may expand on this work by piloting and evaluating the program framework in broader school settings, thereby strengthening the empirical foundation for sexuality education in the Indonesian elementary context.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The authors declare no conflict of interest related to the conduct or publication of this study. All participants provided informed consent, and the study was conducted with approval from the school involved.

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