

## Challenges of Implementing Sex Education in Millennial Families to Anticipate Sexual Violence Against Children in Makassar

Evi Irdawanti Anjasmira<sup>1\*</sup>, Darman Manda<sup>2</sup>, A. Octamaya Tenri Awaru<sup>3</sup>,  
Hasruddin Nur<sup>4</sup>, Najamuddin<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia

### Correspondence\*

E-mail: [evi.irda@gmail.com](mailto:evi.irda@gmail.com)

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Anjasmira, Darman Manda, A.  
Octamaya Tenri Awaru, Hasruddin  
Nur, Najamuddin



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### Abstract

Sexual education is the process of providing information, understanding to children about aspects of reproductive sexual health, relationships, behavior and responsibility. Families should play a role in providing socialization of sexual education to children. However, the fact is that parents since ancient times have really considered taboo anything that smells of the word sex including providing sexual education to children. The reality in the field shows that the level of sexual violence that occurs to children in Indonesia is increasing every year including in Makassar, This study uses a descriptive qualitative research method. The data collection technique is by conducting observations, interviews and documentation. The results of this study indicate that the challenges faced by millennial parents in providing sexual education to children are. The influence of social media, dependence on uncurated online information, social stigma that still exists, Gaps in inclusive or open teaching and Cultural and religious resistance. These challenges affect the effectiveness of delivering sexual education in the family, which in the end can have an impact on children's understanding of incorrect sexuality issues.

**Keywords:** Challenges, Children, Sex Education, Millennials Family

## INTRODUCTION

Sex Education is a knowledge that we teach about everything related to gender. This includes everything from the growth of the sex (male or female). How the sex functions as a reproductive tool. How the development of the genitals in women and men. About menstruation, wet dreams and so on, to the emergence of lust due to changes in hormones. Including later problems of marriage, pregnancy and so on. Sex education or education about reproductive health or the more trendy "sex education" should be given to children who are growing up or teenagers, either through formal or informal education.

This is important to prevent bias in sex education or knowledge about reproductive health among teenagers. So the goal of sex education is to create a healthy emotional attitude towards sexual problems and guide children and teenagers towards a healthy adult life, and be responsible for their sexual life (Fachrani et al., 2023). This is intended so that they do not consider sex as something disgusting and dirty, but rather as human nature (Gunarso, 2002). Sex education is an effort to teach, raise awareness, and explain to children about issues related to sexuality, instinct and marriage. According to Ulwan (Abdullah Nasih Ulwan, 2019). sexual education for children was carried out by (Alucyana, A., Raihana, R., & Utami, 2020) who studied the urgency of sexual education for early childhood, stating that many parents only know about the importance of sexual education for children, but parents themselves do not know how to teach their children (Nurhabibah et al., 2023), because of their low knowledge of parents about providing sexual education to children.

In addition, social construction in families in the city of Makassar is formed from three simultaneous processes, namely externalization, objectivation, and internalization. The most prominent stage is the objectivation stage and then forms four constructions, namely 1) sexual education is teaching about the genitals; 2) teaching sexual intercourse procedures; 3) differentiation of the roles of men and women, and; 4) the process of teaching manners in socializing with the opposite sex (Awaru, 2020). In addition, (Anggraeni, 2017) explained that there is a significant correlation between education and the level of parental knowledge about early sexual education for their children. According to research conducted by (Ambarwati, 2022), there is a positive and significant relationship between a mother's knowledge about sexual education and how they apply it to their children.

Parents who are the first pioneers in providing sexual education to children are very much needed, because the first education received by an individual (child) comes from the family environment, especially parents, both fathers and mothers, who have the same responsibility and role in providing education, including sexual education. Difficulties in delivering sexual education carried out by parents make children not respond to what their parents say because

children cannot understand it (Achmad, 2016). Sexual education is important to provide to keep children away from wrong views about sexuality that children are worried about getting from other places such as social media which are not necessarily good and correct and processing the information incorrectly due to the lack of parental role and control (Dewi, 2020).

In addition, parents also need to provide an understanding of sexual harassment, which is intended so that children can protect themselves, such as screaming when someone tries to touch a certain part of the body, whether it is done by a stranger or someone who has a sibling bond (Bestfy Anitasari, 2023). The family should also play a role in providing socialization of sexual education to children. However, in reality, parents, since ancient times have considered taboo anything that smells of the word sex, including providing sexual education to children. As in his research showed that parents who are part of the baby boomer generation or who are 60 years and over tend to never have received information related to sexuality or sexual education (Fileborn *et al.*, 2017).

Many parents have the view that ignorance in providing sexual education is because many parents feel awkward or do not have enough knowledge to convey sexual education to their children, this can be caused by cultural norms or taboos around sexual discussions in society. Lack of or incorrect sexual education can make children unprepared to recognize or protect themselves from potential sexual harassment or violence. Lack of use of media in providing sexual education such as media, be it books, educational videos that can be effective tools to convey sexual education clearly and directed to children, but many parents are not familiar with these media or feel unsure how to use them properly. Sexual education in the digital era is not only about providing information, but also instilling important values in the family (Iai and Azim, 2023). Parents need to maintain a balance between introducing their children to modern realities related to sexuality and technology, and maintaining traditional values that they consider important.

In addition, the many news reports on social media about sexual violence, make researchers interested in being able to study more deeply the form of sexual education in social life and family life. Sexual violence that occurs in the family environment is inseparable from the lack of education or education from the family environment. From this phenomenon, researchers want to explore sexual education in the millennial family environment that occurs in the city of Makassar.

Parents in transferring knowledge can certainly experience several challenges, including millennial parents in the process of providing sexual education to children. The challenges that occur are not only experienced by parents but children can also feel them. These challenges include the selection of language that is lacking so that children can misinterpret the information conveyed. On the one hand, children have never received such information, so there is a strange

feeling, uncomfortable and so on. This challenge then makes it difficult for children to understand the delivery of information and the values in sexual education, most children feel strange and uncomfortable when listening to information about sexual education. Due to the lack of knowledge about good and correct sexual education, parents are ultimately afraid to talk about sex with children. They are afraid that the way they do it is wrong so that children will misunderstand the information or sexual knowledge they provide. In addition to the challenges mentioned above, there are other factors that are challenges in delivering sexual education to children, namely religious and cultural factors. These differences affect the sensitivity of parents to their children, so that the delivery of information will also be different. According to (Keogh et al., 2018) The challenges of sexual education for children focus on several unique aspects related to social change and technological developments. From these problems, a study in this study is to analyze the challenges experienced by millennial generation parents in providing sexual education to children in Makassar City and will see the role of the family in responding to sexual education given to millennial children.

## **METHOD**

This study uses a qualitative Descriptive research approach, where this qualitative research method is used to examine the condition of the object naturally, namely as it is, not manipulated by the researcher, so that the condition of the researcher when entering the object, after being in the object or after leaving the research object is relatively unchanged (Sugiyono, 2015: 1-2). The reason for choosing a qualitative approach in this study is because the researcher wants to emphasize studying in-depth information related to the challenges of sexual education in the family environment in an effort to anticipate sexual violence against children in Makassar.

The informants in this study are divided into key informants/main informants and also basic/supporting informants. The key informants in this study are children and parents in the current millennial generation. Furthermore, key informants (parents) are selected based on several criteria, including the following:

1. Parents who have boys or girls aged 14-18 years
2. Parents domiciled in Makassar City
3. Parents aged 30-45 years, this criteria was chosen because parents who have children in the current millennial era are people who are in the millennial generation.
4. Informal In this study, there were 9 people

The data collection technique in this study involved three main stages: initial observation, interviews, and documentation. Each of these stages was carefully selected to ensure comprehensive and credible data acquisition. Initial

observation allowed the researcher to understand the natural setting and context of the study before conducting deeper investigations.

Following the observation phase, interviews were conducted with selected participants to explore their perspectives, experiences, and interpretations related to the research focus. These interviews provided rich, qualitative insights that could not be obtained through observation alone. Open-ended questions were used to encourage detailed responses, while follow-up questions were asked to clarify and deepen understanding.

The final stage involved documentation, which served as a supporting technique to validate data collected from observations and interviews. This included analyzing relevant written records, such as institutional reports, teaching materials, and activity logs. Overall, the combination of these three techniques formed the most strategic and effective step in the research process to obtain valid and reliable data. Without knowing the data collection technique, the researcher will not get data that meets the established data standards (Sugiyono, 2017: 308).

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Parents in providing sexual education will certainly face several challenges, including in the process of providing sexual education to children. Challenges include the influence of social media, social media is an important part of everyday life especially for the younger generation. Tiktok, YouTube and Instagram are widely used for entertainment, education and communication, this platform is a source of information that is very easy for the younger generation to access. Social media provides sexual education content that is easy to access but not all content on social media contains facts, many myths or misinformation are widely spread, many content does not pay attention to cultural or religious values so that differences of opinion or conflict arise.

With easy access to information, it becomes one of the challenges for parents in choosing sources of information that can be accessed by children to avoid children from confusion in getting wrong information, social media can also be a place for the development of wrong information or information that is not based on scientific facts, because anyone can create content that is often the information conveyed is not verified. The flood of information that exists causes an excess of information and unverified sources of information. This condition is a challenge for parents themselves. The millennial generation grew up in a digital era that makes it easy to access information, but also causes an excess of unverified and often inaccurate information.

This can lead to confusion and even misunderstanding about sexual topics. This confusion then becomes the cause of the emergence of ambiguous meanings. Unmanaged confusion ultimately becomes a way for children to get to know pornographic content while on social media or browsing information. Social

media and pornography are also one of the obstacles to sexual education in families in the millennial era. Inappropriate and vulgar content is often easily accessible and can influence the thoughts and actions of children who are still too young and immature in thinking. Inappropriate access to this source of information stems from the lack of parental control over their children, because the child's parents' time is spent working.

Many parents in the millennial era work hard and are busy with their daily routines so that they pay less attention to their children's sexual education. So that children's sexual education is often ignored and not given enough time, Family time is also expensive for the millennial generation, so that this condition causes a lack of time and attention from parents to children.

The influence of social media such as TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram, as a source of easily accessible information, Social media allows children today to get any information including information about sex education. Platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram are very popular among children and adolescents, so that educational content about sex education is very easy to access, but this is also a challenge for parents in balancing the use of social media as an additional source of sex education, but there is still a need for guidance and supervision from parents so that children do not get the wrong information.

In addition to the challenges mentioned above, there are other factors that are obstacles in delivering sex education to children, namely; religious and cultural factors. These differences affect the sensitivity of parents to their children, so the way the material is delivered will also be different. These two factors are obstacles to the implementation of delivering sex education to children in the current era (Ambarwati, 2013). Parents with religious beliefs and understandings that tend to be conservative assume that sex education can influence individuals and damage their children's moral and religious views. In addition, cultural factors are also one of the obstacles in the process of delivering sex education to children. This cannot be separated from the views of some people who think that delivering or teaching sex education to children is teaching children how to have sex.

Therefore, efforts are needed from parents and families to overcome these challenges and provide good and correct sexual education to their children. This can be done by directing children to accurate and reliable sources of information, conducting discussions and using social media wisely and not relying on online information alone, and eliminating the social stigma that still exists in families and communities and providing open sexual education by parents, teachers and families.

Social stigma is one of the challenges in providing sexual education, especially in a society that still considers sexual education to be taboo, many people consider sexual education as something that is not appropriate to talk about,

especially to children or teenagers, sexual education is still considered vulgar or impolite, even though it aims to provide understanding. Social stigma is a major obstacle in providing sexual education, especially in a society that still views it as a taboo topic. Many people consider sexual education as something that is not appropriate to talk about with children or teenagers, even considering it vulgar or impolite, even though the aim is to provide a healthy understanding. As expressed by Mrs. Fitri, this social stigma still exists, but she believes that nowadays, with the differences in the way children live compared to the past, sexual education is important to be given early on.

Peter L. Berger's socialization theory is related to understanding the challenges of parents in providing sexual education to children, especially in the digital era full of social media influences. In Berger's view, socialization is the process by which individuals learn the norms, values, and behavioral patterns of their society through social interaction. This process includes two main stages, namely primary socialization and secondary socialization. Primary socialization occurs in the family and is the initial stage where children learn the basics of values, norms, and identity. Social media disrupts the primary socialization process because children can easily access sexual information from other sources, such as TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram. This information often conflicts with the values that parents want to instill.

Secondary socialization occurs when individuals interact with socialization agents outside the family, such as peers, schools, media, and other social environments. Information from social media is often unbiased.

verified, contains myths, or even conflicts with cultural and religious values internalized in socialization.

This Socialization Theory teaches that socialization is a dynamic process that occurs in various stages. The challenges of sex education in the millennial era and the use of social media indicate a disruption in the primary and secondary socialization process. Parents need to take active steps to bridge traditional values with the modern reality presented by social media, so that sex education can take place effectively without sacrificing family values.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Challenges experienced by Millennial parents in providing sexual education to children in Makassar City, in providing sexual education to children, parents face various challenges, especially those related to the influence of social media, uncurated information, time constraints, lack of parental knowledge, and cultural and religious barriers. These challenges affect the effectiveness of delivering sexual education in the family, which can ultimately have an impact on children's understanding of incorrect sexuality issues.

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