

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON
ISSUES AND BARRIERS
AFFECTING SEX EDUCATION IN
MALAYSIA**

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

We declare that the work on this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) and had followed UiTM guidelines for research writing on final year project 2012. This is our own project and the result of our own findings, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This write-up has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any other academic award.

If our research paper is found to violate the conditions stated above, we voluntarily waive the right of conferment of our degree and agree to be subjected to the disciplinary rules and regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA.

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ABSTRACT

Background: Malaysia has implemented sexuality education as part of its mainstream school curriculum since about half a decade ago. However, the controversy and lack of knowledge on sexuality education among the public continue despite evidence that comprehensive sexuality education may effectively promote sexual health.

Objective: Aims of this study was to explore the understanding and perspectives of parents on sexuality education in Malaysia.

Methods: A qualitative study was conducted among eight parents (four mothers and four fathers) aged between 33 and 53 years old. All participants gave informed consent. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, audiotaped and transcribed. All quotes were encoded using Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) Miner program and data was analysed using thematic analysis.

Results: Four themes emerged from the analyses; i) misunderstanding of meaning of the terms, ii) attitude of parent towards sexuality education, iii) accessible structural support in sexuality education, and iv) strategies and approaches. Most parents we interviewed have misunderstood the concept of sex that the construct was believed to be exclusive for sexual intercourse. The misconception was further reinforced by the lack of knowledge on sexuality among parents themselves, the needs to conform to sociocultural expectations, poorly trained educators, and various other hurdles to accessing services related to enhancing sexuality education. Hence, parents suggested measures to enhance their knowledge on sexuality, equipped and trained educators at school and implementation of a comprehensive sexuality education which is acceptable to multicultural Malaysians.

Conclusion: Parents lack understanding of sexuality education, hence positive and comprehensive approaches to teaching about sexuality are required.

Keywords: sex, sexual, sexuality, parents, Malaysia