

Analysis of Strengthening Sex Education for Global Youth

Jiahao Peng^{1,a,*}

¹Shanghai Xiwai International School, Shanghai, 201699, China

a. pengsimon227@gmail.com

*corresponding author

Abstract: For the rapid development of today's society, schools spend much time on students' education, parents spend much energy on students' academic lives, and the government builds or refurbishes many libraries for students. What we don't realize is that there is a lack of sex education in China and abroad, especially among high school students. Through questionnaires, this paper examines the importance of sex education in Asian countries, like China and other Western countries, from the perspective of parents, schools, and the government. This paper concludes that strengthening sex education in schools, parents' communication, or other ways to improve students' knowledge of sex, and the government policies and measures to enhance the awareness of sex education for teenagers. The goal of this paper is to make the sex education environment in China better and to increase the awareness of sexuality among the youth. They were growing their knowledge about their bodies and relationships, decreasing their risk-taking, and reducing the frequency of unprotected sex.

Keywords: Sex education, relationships, risk-taking, unprotected sex, parents' communication

1. Introduction

Sex education is a controversial topic in the whole world. Do teenagers need sex education? In Asia countries, most parents won't discuss sex with their children because it is too sensitive for adolescents. For instance, the sexual values and behaviors of young Chinese people have changed significantly since the country's opening up and reform: the youth's sexual behavior and their comparatively limited sexual knowledge cause a great deal of trouble. For instance, among young people, the low rate of contraceptive use (32.3% among unmarried women) has contributed to a high rate of induced abortions (28.13%) and unmarried pregnancies [1].

In the last few years, the problem of Child sexual abuse (CSA) has received growing attention in China. Also, if there is no good sex education for teenagers or parents don't keep up to date with what their children know about sex, they may face more severe problems such as CSA. According to a meta-analysis of 27 studies, Chinese females reported lower. Still, total CSA rates (15.3%) are not significantly lower than are estimated to occur internationally, and males reported substantially higher real CSA (13.8%) than in the international composites [2]. But in other nations, such as the United States or several European countries, schools provide pupils with a variety of sex-related activities or tiny counseling clinics. Allow students to freely ask questions about their bodies or safe sex out of curiosity. This healthy education benefits students' health in a variety of ways. Such as postponing

sexual intercourse initiation, increasing their usage of protection, specifically condoms, and having fewer instances of unprotected sex [3]. This paper compares sex education in Chinese adolescents and U.S. adolescents in three different fields: schools, parents, and governments.

2. Analysis of the importance of adolescent sexuality education

2.1. Importance of school sex education for adolescents

Adolescents go through increasingly intense experiences with sexual development as they go through the phases of puberty, establish closeness, and exchange sexual thoughts. Sexual development is understood to be a multifaceted process [4]. So, this poses a problem for many professionals. But schools should play an essential role in the sex education of young people. People should understand what is the definition of sex education. If schools only offer classes, and students do not participate well, it definitely cannot bring some positive results. So, schools need to focus on the quality of sex education. Well, a good sexual education program will teach kids about sexual health in a medically correct and appropriate way, with an emphasis on achieving specific behavioral outcomes. More specifically, schools should prioritize the health needs of all kids, including those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning (LGBTQ), and hire skilled and highly trained teachers and personnel to meet those needs.

Schools should connect students to sexual health and other health services at school or in the community and foster positive relationships between adolescents and essential adults [5].

Take this study as an example: there is no significant difference in the attitude of male and female teachers toward teaching sex education in Federal government colleges. Teachers have observed that students experience many changes during adolescence and thus manifest behaviors that are anti-social and damaging to their general well-being. So they will do some work for students to avoid those bad habits. Some of the teachers have worked at the school for a long time and have grown familiar with the behavioral patterns of teenagers, as well as their concerns about how they look and their desire to try new things. As a result, they recognize the need of providing them with useful information for a healthy development [6]. Experienced teachers from international schools can devise effective programs to safeguard pupils against sexual cognition deficiencies. What do Chinese teenagers look like in school when they are exposed to sex education? According to the Medical Ethical Committee of Peking University Health Science Center, the data came from a cross-sectional study of Chinese junior high school pupils [7]. A convenience sample strategy was used to conduct a sex education survey within a school environment due to the potential for controversy and a high rejection rate. With the support of school administrators or by reaching out to individuals linked with the local education or health sectors, the survey invited all kids inside the school to participate.

The most popular sex education topic was “mental health during puberty”, with “reproduction and contraception” coming in last, presumably due to parental guilt. However, evidence suggests that sex education, including knowledge of reproduction and contraception, might positively influence behaviors that prevent undesired pregnancy. As a result, China should adopt a comprehensive school-based sex education curriculum that covers reproduction and contraception information to raise gender equality awareness and reduce school bullying.

2.2. The importance of parents for their children to learn about sex education

When people discuss sex education with teenagers, the first thing that comes to mind is the parents, who are the people closest to their children. And parents play an essential role in delivering sex education to their children. However, due to the sensitive nature of the subject and their ignorance of sexual topics, the majority of Asian parents are hesitant to have frank conversations with their kids about sexual concerns. Take the example of adolescents in Iran; there are two scenarios, which are

nothing more than the cooperation between parents and the school or the encouragement of parents to actively participate in the discussion of sex education because the home environment will influence the children's thinking about sex education. They dare to explore or ask questions.

There were six main themes in how Iranian parents taught their boys about sexuality:

- Strict control and restriction.
- Trying to build peace and tolerance.
- Criticizing cultural taboos.
- Doubt and confusion.

The idea of "transition from tradition to modernity" came from these groups. Also, thorough monitoring, limiting access to sexual information, and not knowing what will happen are the two worst examples of this. Using quotes from parents, "I know that he watches some things on his phone sometimes". His mother has also seen him a few times and scolded him severely. "We haven't talked about sexuality because he doesn't like talking about small things!" I also didn't think he had to talk about sexual things with him. When kids asked their parents about sexual things, most parents kept quiet.

Most parents felt unprepared or unsure about how to have healthy conversations with their children about sexuality, but they were open to learning more. "What a strange muddle! I have moments of desperation! Do I need to argue with him? Or have her confiscate his mobile device. Maybe disconnect the home network? That girl, should I find her? In my perspective, these are not the solution. No idea what to do here!" These are the words of a father. There is a conflict between religious tenets and the demands of modern life for Iranian parents. They explained that they didn't know how to balance tradition and progress and that spiritual teachings didn't apply to everyday life. Parents' perspectives on sex education for their children reveal an optimistic current of change from tradition to modernity. Parental concerns have been found to include doubts about sexual education's value and a lack of clarity between traditional religious teachings and contemporary sexual mores. They hoped that keeping the peace with their kids would encourage them to follow the family's morals and principles. And the evidence for culturally responsive educational interventions for parents to improve their skills and knowledge regarding sexuality education. Parents transitioning from tradition to modernity will be more equipped to handle these issues [8].

2.3. The government should make teenagers learn sex education correctly

Preventing young people from coming into contact with sexual content is nearly impossible. A father from Iran expressed his concern that his children were exposed to explicit sexual information on their smartphones. Teenagers now devote considerable time and energy to their technological devices and social media sites. They run the risk of being exposed to adult content, fraud, and unwanted sexual messages from strangers at any time and in any place. A teen's developing sense of sexuality and susceptibility to harm might be affected by events like these. As a result, the government must take the necessary steps to improve the internet ecosystem.

It will be three years since Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE) lessons became required in all English schools. In 2023, the government will look over its advice on RSHE. But a study released yesterday by the Sex Education Forum shows troubling holes in RSHE. Many young people are still not getting the promised high-quality curriculum, and there is a gap between the promised investment and the help teachers are getting on the ground. The review gives us a chance to fix this terrible mistake. The risks our teens and young adults face now have never seen before. Worries about how young people can find harmful material online have grown. A recent study from the Children's Commissioner found that 79% of 11-year-olds had seen violent pornography, and 27% had seen pornography. A higher frequency of pornography use is linked to a higher likelihood of

sexual violence, and teens' unrealistic standards are being skewed by their easy access to violent and explicit sexual content online. Even worse, it's linked to long-lasting physical and mental harm for a lot of young people [9].

Although not explicitly dedicated to sex education, these particular sections of the school policy and advisory guide do encompass information about sex-related health interventions, prevention, and care for students. As an illustration, they delineate protocols about sexual assault, homophobic harassment, and the involvement of pregnant and parenting pupils within the school community. As an illustration, they trace protocols concerning sexual assault, homophobic abuse, and the participation of pregnant and parenting pupils in school activities [10]. The government conducts real-time oversight of school sex education policies. The organization develops policies in response to various concerns, monitors multiple social media platforms, and implements legislation to safeguard minors to promote order in the digital space.

3. Conclusion

Sex education is critical for teenagers, and it works best when everyone gets involved—schools, parents, and the government. It is not only about what causes a baby to be born in schools; it is also about helping kids understand their bodies' feelings and how to have good relationships. Furthermore, schools provide a sex program to ensure that youngsters are appropriately sensitized to the value of sex to decrease adolescent pregnancies or prevent adverse effects. Parents play an essential role in sex education. Parents speak with their children, maintain communication with the school, and monitor their children. Parents must also enhance the family atmosphere by allowing their children to discuss sex freely and providing suitable counsel, particularly in extraordinarily religious or feudalistic families. For the sake of their children, they must take this action. The government is in charge of providing correct information to the general public. Establishing rules by appropriate authorities allows for the specification of educational content to be presented in schools, ensuring its accuracy and utility. Teachers must be trained to address these issues effectively in the classroom. When adults worked together, they were able to support teenagers in making educated decisions about their health and relationships. And to avoid a high risk of pregnancies and a lower incidence of infections. The goal is to create a cultural framework that values the overall well-being of all persons. Sex education requires a coordinated strategy combining schools, parents, and governmental bodies to guarantee that adolescents obtain the necessary knowledge.

References

- [1] Shi W., Lin Y., Zhang Z., Su J. (2022) *Gender Differences in Sex Education in China: A Structural Topic Modeling Analysis Based on Online Knowledge Community Zhihu*. *Children*. April 26, 9(5):615.
- [2] Ji K., Finkelhor D., Dunne M. (2013) *Child sexual abuse in China: A meta-analysis of 27 studies*. *Child Abuse & Neglect*. September, 37(9):613–22.
- [3] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *What Works: Sexual Health Education [Internet]*. CDC. 2020. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/whatworks/what-works-sexual-health-education.htm>
- [4] Holland-Hall C., Quint EH. (2017) *Sexuality and Disability in Adolescents*. *Pediatric Clinics of North America [Internet]*. April; 64(2):435–49. Available from: <http://depts.washington.edu/dbpeds/Schedules/Holland%20Hall%202017%20Sexuality%20and%20Disability%20in%20Adolescents.pdf>
- [5] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020) *What Works: Sexual Health Education [Internet]*. CDC. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/whatworks/what-works-sexual-health-education.htm>
- [6] Onoyase A. (2018) *Teachers' Attitude towards Teaching of Sexuality Education in Federal Government Colleges in Nigeria - Implications for Counselling*. *Higher Education Studies*. November 14, 8(4):162.
- [7] Zhu F., Zhu G., Jia B., Wang P., Zhao T., Ma Y., et al. (2022) *The Influencing Factors of Comprehensive Sexuality Education Capacity and Its Correlation with Subjective Social Status among Chinese Junior High School Students*. *Children*. August 10, 9(8):1201.

- [8] Rouhparvar Z., Javadnoori M., Shahali S. (2022) *Parents' approaches to sexuality education of their adolescent boys: a qualitative study in Ahvaz, Iran. Reproductive Health. March 19, 19(1).*
- [9] *Government must make its review of Relationships, Sex and Health Education a top priority [Internet]. Politics Home. 2023. Available from: <https://www.politicshome.com/thehouse/article/sex-education-review>*
- [10] *Sexuality education policy (2019) [Internet]. Vic.gov.au. Education and Training; Available from: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/physed/Pages/aboutpolicy.aspx>*