

A Professional Perspectives on Sex Education Towards Children with Disabilities: Addressing Social Exclusion

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Abstract

Sex education is the education related to human sexuality, human sexual anatomy, sexual emotions, and reproduction. Sexual education for disabled children had been taken lightly due to their growth limitation, thus, most of the society thought sexual emotion will not be developed for disabled children. This shows that there is still lack of awareness among the public regarding sex education towards disabled children. Therefore, in this study is initiated to study three objectives (i) To study level of knowledge on sexual health education towards children with disability; (ii) To identify available resources and factors influencing the adequacy of sexuality education among children with disabilities; and (iii) To analyze how sexuality education will help to reduce sexual crimes among children with disabilities. This study adopts a qualitative survey which structured interviews had been done towards respondents who are the professionals related to the disabled children. Based on the interviews that had been done with 12 informants, it is proved that the society still lacks of knowledge regarding sex education towards disabled children. There are also limited resources that influence the adequacy of this education. Besides, based on the finding, it had been identified that proper sex education will protect the disabled children from sexual crimes that might be happened to them. As this study is only limited from the view of professionals and it is recommended that future study can highlight the views from the disabled children and other groups of society.

Keywords: children with disabilities, sex education, professional perspectives, social exclusion

INTRODUCTION

Children are one of the most vulnerable groups. And children with disabilities are much more vulnerable than non-disabled children. They are much less able to ask for help, especially if the abuse involves caregivers on whom they depend. According to United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1995, defines a child as anyone under the age of 18 and outlines the inalienable rights of all children based on four guiding principles: non-discrimination, best interests of the child, right to be heard, and the right to survival and development. All children have a right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse regardless of age, disability, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation.

Disabled children or special needs children are assumed as children that could not handle their life perfectly compared to normal children. They need to be monitored and trained regularly for them to adapt with life. These children can be classified as children that have Autism, Downs Syndrome, Dyslexia, and many others (Azizah et al., 2012). Even disabled children may not act the same as normal children, but their sexual development is still the same as normal people (Smith et al., 2012). According

to the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, there are seven categories of disabilities includes physical, mental, multiple, speech, learning, hearing and visual.

In terms of sexuality or sex education in Malaysia, it is still being assumed as a taboo topic. Majority of the people think that it must not be exposed openly to all due to many people still have the assumption that sex education is solely teaching about sex to the children. In reality, it has actually been taught about their sexual health, what needs to be done to avoid disease that related to sexuality and others. People will still deny its importance especially when it needs to be exposed to disabled children. Apart from that, there is also widespread among parents and the community misunderstanding that people with disabilities (PWDs) have no sexual needs because of their impairments and that sexual education is unnecessary for them (Treacy et al., 2017). Health education for students with disabilities should be tailored to their ability, learning style, and maturity, in addition to parent values and beliefs (Nelson et al., 2020).

For disabled children to understand sexuality, it needs to be educated by the right platforms and methods (Campbell et al., 2020). The available resources such as campaigns and programs for this issue are limited. This education had led to controversy and had been disagreed by some of the communities especially when it needed to be educated to the disabled children because some of them assumed all disabled children will not have normal development of sexuality. There are also many sexual crime cases involving disabled children such as the case where the disabled teenager had been raped by her uncle, this shows that there are some people that take advantage of disabled children (Zatul Iffah, 2019). Based on the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, there are 1,721 cases related to sexual crime towards children from January and June 2020 (Mutakhir, 2020). This statistic included the cases involving disabled children. Due to that, it is important to give disabled children exposure to actions or ways to protect themselves other than to differentiate between 'good touch' and 'bad touch'. The issue also had been analysed based on the study that had been done by Sorah Stein, Taylor Kohut and Karola Dillenburger, United States (US) states that taught sex education included comprehensive sexuality education had decreased the rate of teen pregnancy and Sexual Transmitted Infections (STIs) (Stein et al., 2017).

Therefore, this study aims to study on these three objectives: (i) To study the level of knowledge on sexual health education towards children with disabilities; (ii) To identify available resources and factors influencing the adequacy of sexuality education among children with disabilities; and (iii) To analyse how sexuality education will help to reduce sexual crimes among children with disabilities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Child

A child according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Child (UNCRC), is defined as 'every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, a majority is attained earlier (Zainudin & Rahim, 2013). The definition of a child is based on the law applied in each country. There are countries that used the term 'minor' which refers to 'child'. In Malaysia, based on relevant legislation (refer table 1.1) there are different definitions of children (Ahmad, 2018).

Table 1.1: Sources of Child Definition

Legislation / Act / Details	Definition of Child
Section 2 of the Child Act 2001	a child is defined as (1) a person under the age of 18 years;
Section 82 of Penal Code (Act 574)	relation to criminal proceedings, a child means a person who has attained the age of criminal responsibility
Sexual child abuse, the reported child sexual abuse cases are investigated under the Penal Code based on the ages of the child.	1) rape cases- Section 375 covers girls under the age of 16-year-old. (2) incest- Section 376A covers a child below 16 years old; and (3) unnatural intercourse- Section 377E, covers the victims under the age of 14.

Source: Empirical Evidence on Child Abuse in Malaysian Context (Ahmad, 2018)

Sexual Education

Sexuality education is the knowledge of sex education encompassing all teaching measures and protection, prevention, presentation, and family development (Jaafar, 2012). According to (European Expert Group on Sexuality Education, 2016) sexuality education (SE) generally means studying male and female gender characteristics and information. Both genders have their features of sexuality, which is an essential aspect of life aimed at providing knowledge related to the function, structure, and anatomical characteristics of human reproduction.

Study done by Johan and Mohd Yassin (2019) reveal that studies of 86 special education teacher found that the relationship between knowledge and SE practice among students with disabilities (SWD) teachers were discussed on misunderstandings, objections to SE content, lack of cooperation between family and parents, lack of training for teachers, and lack of collaboration from various experts to reach a consensus. Sex education to the disabled children must not be ignored as disabled children also need to have their social lives with the surrounding of normal people. They are much vulnerable due to their limited physical or knowledge abilities to survive with the surrounding of normal people (Travers et al., 2014). In fact, most of them will prefer to stay in silence due to lack of knowledge regarding what they should do and do not do. The education that had been provided must be relevant to the receiver that will receive the information and knowledge. It must be something useful for the children for long and short terms (McCann, et al., 2019). As the importance of sex education had been stressed by some researchers and expertise, it had shown that it will a good impact on the disabled children besides the normal children.

Sex education also helps for the disabled children to be more independent to face public surround them (Dwi Karina et al., 2017). This is because as disabled children may be exposed to the sex abuse higher than normal children. The importance of sex education to disabled children usually been taken lightly. As parents that the closest persons to the disabled children, they should realize how important sex education to their children. This need to be looked carefully as disabled children are not the same as normal children that can properly think the bad and good things. People around children with disabilities need to be extra cautious regarding this issue. Many children, particularly those with disabilities, get little or no formal sex and reproductive health education at school or home (Kristien & Brockschmidt, 2021).

Malaysian Perspectives: Sexual Education towards Children with disabilities

The issue of sex education for children with disabilities in Malaysia, especially in 2017 to 2024 has become a growing concern as these children who are unable to communicate and know about their own bodies are often targets of sexual abuse. Worldwide, children with disabilities are up to three times as likely as non-disabled children to experience sexual abuse (Frontier, 2024). A number of factors have been associated with this heightened susceptibility, such as impaired communication, stigma and reluctance on the part of care professionals to provide sexual education.

A decade of research in Malaysia on sex education for children with disabilities reveal the challenges and changing perspectives. It may be easy to forget about children with disabilities when gearing up for a mainstream sex education lesson due to assumptions on their sexuality or inability to comprehend sexual issues. These attitudes act as barriers to delivering them the age-appropriate sex education that is important for their safety and health. Indeed, the importance of an inclusive sexual education which caters for children with disability is finally gaining recognition in Malaysia. It is well recognized that disabled children are at a higher risk of sexual abuse as they are dependent on caregivers and have limited accurate, relevant sex education targeted to their cognitive levels (Frontier, 2024). Furthermore, the fact that individuals with disabilities-particularly those who struggle with intellectual or learning disabilities-are frequently disregarded when it comes to sexual health education raises serious concerns since it makes them more susceptible to sexual abuse, exploitation, and misinformation (Schaafsma et al., 2014).

There are notable differences in Malaysia between the approaches taken in sexual education for individuals with impairments. Despite the existence of initiatives such as the Ministry of Education's (2006) recommendations on Social and Reproductive Health Education, these programs are not always designed with those with learning or intellectual disabilities in mind. According to a study, cultural taboos and a lack of specialized training for educators are two reasons why secondary students with learning difficulties frequently struggle to receive proper sexual education (Ang & Lee, 2013). One of

the main conclusions of the research is that comprehensive and ability-specific sexual education programs are necessary for people with intellectual disabilities. According to studies, teachers should employ approachable language and interactive strategies that draw students in using real-world examples and visual aids (Gil-Llario et al., 2018).

Research around the world demands a more inclusive approach that recognizes persons with disabilities' sexual rights, as stated in international accords such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). In order to promote independence and lessen vulnerability to abuse, this movement highlights the significance of making sexual education accessible to people with disabilities so they can manage relationships, consent, and safety (Frawley, 2023).

METHODOLOGY

The research is an exploratory study. The researcher used qualitative approach to understand about primary data. According to Yin (2009), the qualitative approach helped to describes why and how an event and occurrence occurs. Even though qualitative research did not require large number of respondents but through this approach, it can help to gain quality information with focusing on a small sample in one group (Hamzah, 2010). In this research, the main sample was using individual which refers to professionals as the unit of analysis. Since the study was related to perceptions and information of sex education towards disabled students, thus the unit of analysis was referred to those individuals who work closely with disabled children such as non-governmental agencies, police, welfare officers, educators, and psychologist as an informant (Sharma, 2017). In this study about 12 informants were selected through purposive sampling technique and the data was collected through semi-structured interview based on four different section of interview protocol namely section A (Informant background), Section B (knowledge on sexual education towards children with disability, Section C (Resources and Factors influencing the adequacy of sexuality education among children with disabilities and Section D (analyses on the sexual education to reduce sexual crimes among children with disabilities. The thematic analysis had been used in analysing the data. The audio of the interview session was transcribed accordingly and familiar with the data. Then, generate an initial codes and search for the themes.

FINDINGS

Level of knowledge on sexual health education towards children with disability

In gathering the information related to study the level of knowledge on sexual health education towards children with disability, it was divided into three sub-sections. Since the informants have purposely been identified, majority of them shared the information based on their experience in handling disabled children from their job perspectives. They feel the level of knowledge towards this group of children were very important even though the knowledge is varying within the community's environment. The finding on the first objective are as follow:

Professional views on sex education towards disabled children

Majority of the professional views on sex education towards disabled children thought that sex education is important towards disabled children. It is due to the similarity of physical development whether they are disabled or normal children. According to the Informants:

"For the knowledge of disabled students in Malaysia, there are seven categories, mental retardation, developmental disability, down syndrome, autistic, who have communication and language problems, emotional and behavioural problems and also hyperactive and hypoactive. Although they have low cognitive level, but their physical development of puberty is the same as normal students, so the need for sex education is also just as important as normal students."

(R01/ 30 November 2020/ 10:10 am/ Johor)

It is shown that disabled children are having different cognitive level but not for their physical development. There are no exceptions for disabled children for not having changes with their physical. This view also supported by others informant where they believe sex education is important due to the changes that can be seen by their physical. The Informant also had mentioned that sex education will influence the ways disabled children act. As mentioned:

"Sex education for physical disable are easy for them to understand same as well with the one who has studies problem or known as a slow learner. The one that had trouble in understanding sex education is the one that has complex disability such as autism and down syndrome. The mild disability has no problem in understanding but for the complex one, they more to follow their intuition. Even as a teacher we have taught them on do and don't, but they still don't due to they feel like why now cannot do why before this they can do. It is shown that they don't understand."

(R12/ 6 December 2020/ 4:00 pm/ Johor)

Besides, referring to other Informants, they believe that by giving sex education towards disabled children it will help them to understand and behave accordingly. The understanding of disabled children is depending on the type of disables. It is shown that the importance of sex education towards disabled children are same as normal children. Therefore, it is important to give equal exposure to both children. According to the Informant:

"Based on my view, sex education is an important knowledge that needs to be taught equally whether they are disabled or normal. People cannot take it lightly as the disabled children have the disability and expect they can be excluded from having this knowledge. It is due to the perpetrator does not choose their victim. They will do at anyone they want whether it is normal or disable people. Therefore, it is important to give equal exposure about sex education to normal and disabled people."

(R05/ 1 December 2020/ 3:50 pm/ Negeri Sembilan)

Referring to the above interview, it can indicate that everyone can be the victim of the sexual crime whether the person is normal or disables. It is due to the perpetrator does not choose their victim. Therefore, it is the reason the majority view is stressed on the importance of sex education towards disabled children.

Level of knowledge on sexual health towards disabled children

The majority of informant have agreed that the level of knowledge in the community is still low and no exposure. The informant also had mentioned that the people do not consider about disabled children feeling but having a thought that they will not understand sexual education. This can be indicated based on the statement mentioned by the respondent as follows. According to the respondent:

"In our community, the level is still low because they still looked down at disabled children. As we read the news and sharing from a friend, we can say that there are cases that involved parent such as father as perpetrator. It is because they don't feel that their disabled child understands and for the autistic child, they will have the strong urge to react as what they see from the pornography."

(R12/ 6 December 2020/ 4:00pm/ Johor)

It is also supported by others informant where they also have the same perspective towards these issues. They mentioned that:

“Based on experience with my disabled children at school, the level of knowledge is still low. Last year every day we would ask kids especially kids with autism, what to do if people touch their private parts, we even try to demonstrate and sadly they did not know what to react. Same goes to kids with down syndrome and slow learner.”

(R02/ 2 December 2020/ 12:10 pm/ Johor)

“In our community, the level is still low because of the thought that the children still young and does not grow yet. The fact that during my generation we as a kid play cooking but now, they are more advance than us.”

(R05/ 1 December 2020/ 3:50 pm/ Negeri Sembilan)

Here its show that most of our community do not aware of the development of the disabled child. This also has indicated that most of the community do not have good level of knowledge on disabled children. Besides, other informants also have given views that sex education is a difficult topic to talk about. As said by the informant:

“People usually say that children with disabilities have no lust and are related to gender, meaning they do not have the sexual ability. Furthermore, sexuality is a difficult topic and a taboo that is difficult to talk about in some societies.”

(R07/ 2 December 2020/ 4:50 pm/ Pahang)

In relation to that, the difficulties are also faces by the educator to give exposure to sex education. As mentioned by an Informant:

“In my opinion, I'm as a pre-school teacher with a disability can only help them identify the gender whether male or female and it is very difficult to give an understanding to them.”

(R08/ 3 December 2020/ 3:40 pm/ Johor)

Readiness of Malaysian in exposing sex education towards disabled children

The readiness of Malaysian in exposing sex education towards disabled children can be indicated as below verbatim. Some of the informants agree that Malaysian are ready to be exposed on sex education while half of them consider Malaysian are not ready in exposing on sex education towards the disabled student. According to the informants:

“I have read the PDRM statistics whereby during the year 2014 to 2016, it has recorded that about 7892 cases investigated were involving sexual harassment offences regards to children under 18 years old. Based on that statistic, there are also including the children with disabilities. Therefore' I believe, Malaysia is ready to provide a more effective education related to sexual harassment of children with disabilities.”

(R01/ 30 November 2020/ 10:10 am/ Johor)

“Yes and no. Yes, is because many teenager parents that I know will systematically teach sexuality education to their disabled children. No, is because our community still very closure to discuss the matter openly and there are also many conservative parents try to "forget" their children grow-up and sexual health is a natural matter that needs to be discussed.”

(R03/ 3 December 2020/ 1:50 pm/ Johor)

Apart from that, respondent also giving other views on the readiness. They believe that the Malaysian are not ready since Malaysian still having some conservative parents that does not realize their children are growing up and needed sex education. According to the Informant:

“In my opinion, Malaysia not yet ready now. It is because sex education is still new to Malaysian community. In overseas there are very common on this since they have a specific subject that taught on sex education while in Malaysia, we don't have this specific subject but only giving small exposure as part of the knowledge in certain subject. The LPPKN have organized the programme on reproductive system and the participant are under 100 people. It is proof that they lack awareness and community are not ready.”

(R05/ 1 December 2020/ 3:50 pm/ Negeri Sembilan)

In discussing about the suitable age of introducing sexual education towards disabled children, most of the informants gave various opinion but majority of them agree that the age of 10 years old and depended on their type of disabilities is the most suitable time to exposed them with sexual education among the disabled children. The below verbatim described about their views:

“Yes, I'm comfortable with it, because there are disabilities children ages above 10 years old already have desire and menstruation. Therefore, it is crucial to give exposure to them about sex education. As my normal kids aged 12 years already have menstruation and it is same as the disability children. The disability children have the desire, but they don't know how to control it and don't know what to do if there is somebody who wanted to do a bad thing to them.”

(R06 / 1 December 2020/ 4:40 pm/ Negeri Sembilan)

“In my opinion, disabled children aged nine years old or ten, they already understand about this sexuality.”

(R01/ 30 November 2020/ 10:10 am/ Johor)

“No specific age. Have to look at the type of disability. Some may not be able to understand forever such as children with severe autism, severe down syndrome, severe cerebral palsy. If normal children such as ADHD, slow learner, Dyslexia, maybe around 10 years and above, also need to look at their level of thinking ability.”

(R02/ 2 December 2020/ 12:10 pm/ Johor)

“Depends on the intellectual development of the disabled children.”

(R09/ 6 December 2020/ 11:10 pm/ Johor)

Even though they were various perception regards to the suitable age of exposing sex education, but in discussing about implementing of this initiative specifically towards disabled children, the Informant has agreed that disabled children have right in learning sex education. They have mentioned that disabled children should be taught the same as normal children being taught. According to the Informants:

“Yes, they have the right to study on sexuality education whether they are disabled or normal. It is because whatever knowledge that the normal people know, they should know too.”

(R05/ 1 December 2020/ 3:50 am/ Negeri Sembilan)

“Yes, they have the right to study on sexuality education because the level of their disability has their own specific teaching method even, they are the disability with study problem. In child protection policy, there is protection for children even they do not have a specific policy for disability but there are inside the scope of child protection law.”

(R06/ 1 December 2020/ 4:40 pm/ Negeri Sembilan)

“Disabled children are always considered weak, less important, and less appreciated. If it can be changed, maybe I want to change how people see them first because people always look at them as they are an alien. Need to change society's perception of the presence of disabled children around. Regarding the perception of sexuality, these children also have the right to be loved, protected, and taken care of properly. Often people take them for granted, if there is a sexual issue to a disabled child it is considered trivial because of the lack of sense of the value of this disabled kid.”

(R02/ 2 December 2020/ 12:10 pm/ Johor)

“Children with intellectual disabilities (ID) can learn and progress, but more slowly master new skills. Don't underestimate them because they need time to learn new skill or subject... Just the process or skill needs to be ongoing and consistent in school or home.”

(R07/ 2 December 2020/ 4:50 pm/ Pahang)

“We need to change in any aspect we can. It is because the importance of sexual education toward disabled and normal people is equally the same. In every generation, we must expose them to sex education.”

(R11/ 6 December 2020/ 2:10 pm/ Johor)

Apart from that, other factor that lack of Malaysian in giving attention towards sex education is also due to the Malaysian mentality and culture. It was found that, the Malaysian mentality towards giving sex education to be taught to either children with disabilities or normal children were very low. According to the Informants:

“It is because of community perception and mentally. It is also because of the Religion extremist that will against the effort of giving sexuality education by against the word use are not appropriate.”

(R05/ 1 December 2020/ 3:50 pm/ Negeri Sembilan)

“Mentality of a Malaysian society are ashamed to say things that are sensitive or censored. This shows it starts from this mentality. Malaysians not ready to spread Sex Education or to receive sex education. If only one group provide the information but the receiver group not ready, it also would be useless.”

(R10/ 4 December 2020/ 5:10 pm/ Pulau Pinang)

Besides, the Informants also had mentioned that society is not willing to talk on the topic since it is sensitive issues. It is also having to indicate that Malaysian does not ready in receiving the knowledge. Referring to others Informant, the culture is also one of the factors that Malaysian are lack in giving attention towards sex education. According to them:

“It is because of our culture and surround condition. It is due to some people they still do not want to talk about the sensitive issues but there also have some parent that wants their child to be taught on what do and don't.”

(R12/ 6 December 2020/ 4:00 pm/ Johor)

“Because of culture. Malay people tied to the culture of shame and do not discuss sex in general because it was thought that sex education is the education of the relationship between men and women. But its scope is wider. Perhaps if its name is not sex education, all parties will be more open to discussing this issue. For example, personal safety education or personal well-being education or something without the word ‘sex’”.

(R02/ 2 December 2020/ 12:10 pm/ Johor)

To identify available resources and factors influencing the adequacy of sexuality education among children with disabilities

Next finding is about the resources that had been provided especially by the government regarding the sexuality education for the disabled children. It also to monitor the factors influencing society to accept sexuality education. Referring to the finding, all Informants that consist of the professionals agreed that the available resources are from the school's syllabus. However, it is not directly about sexuality education. Current syllabus of sexuality education only had been discussed or explained indirectly as the subtopic in the Physical Education and Health Education (PJPK). Below verbatim support this statement:

“ There are a lot of resources such as from a certain subject, but it is inserted in the small subtopic. There are no specific books or subjects that are touched on sexuality education.”

(R12/ 6 December 2020/ 4.10 pm/ Johor)

“The educational resources available in KSSR are just not comprehensive, the acceptance factor in the children themselves, understand or not, the level of acceptance of children is different....”

(R01/ 30 November 2020/ 10.20 am/ Johor)

The majority of professional have agreed that they are comfortable in exposing sex education towards disables children. As in the finding on the professional view shown that importance of sex education towards disabled student is high. The comfortability can be indicated through this verbatim:

“To me it was comfortable, and indeed needed to have sex education since at a lower level.”

(R01/ 30 November 2020/ 10:10 am/ Johor)

“Yes, I'm comfortable with it. It should be started at primary school so when they at high school it will help ease the learning process. It is because when they start to have the interest, they need to know whether the action is wrong or not but if there is exposure they will think before reacting”.

(R11/ 6 December 2020/ 2:10 pm/ Johor)

“Yes, I'm comfortable with it but for the special education they are not able to clean their self at primary stage and they will need help from the teacher. If the sex education wanted to be implemented in primary school, it needs to start with basic such as do and don't and the limitation between girls and boy.”

(R12/ 6 December 2020/ 4:00 pm/ Johor)

As been reported by the Informants, some of the disabled children are slow learner. Therefore, the repetition process is needed to explain to them regarding this issue. Below verbatims support this finding:

"In the field of education, as a teacher, I give explanations continuously and consistently maybe by indirectly, while teaching we give exposure to them, what should be done, what is not should be done."

(R01/30 November 2020/ 10.23am/ Johor)

Besides, the finding also reveal that the repetition of words will help disabled children understand better. It will make them remember what should be done and what should not be done. This had been agreed by respondents R10 & R11 as follows:

"Based on my experience, it can be said that repetition advice is useful to them but if they had explored it by themselves, they would risk receiving wrong knowledge."

(R10/ 4 December 2020/ 5.20 pm/ Pulau Pinang)

"We will use the chart, play role and mannequin. The disabled child will be more understand if they have visual because they will not understand if we only talk to them."

(R11/ 6 December 2020/ 2.20 pm/ Johor)

To analyze how sexuality education will help to reduce sexual crimes among children with disabilities
Nowadays, the sexual crimes towards the disabled children had become worst. Hence, this research also had been done to figure out the professionals' views whether sexuality education can reduce sexual crimes or not especially regards to disabled children. All of them agreed that sex education will give positive impact to the disabled children. This is because it will provide them with knowledge and expose them about social limitation. This information is important for them to avoid any bad incidents that happen to them.

" , when the disabled children have that knowledge, they know how to take care of themselves. For example, the taught on do and don't will help them more. Other than that, the practical is need not only in theory. Therefore, they will understand how to protect themselves."

(R05/ 1 December 2020/ 4.20 pm/ Negeri Sembilan)

"The effect is that the student himself will better understand, he knows what sexual harassment is, it means they are more exposed to the knowledge, and it is necessary for them."

(R01/ 30 November 2020/ 10.30 am/ Johor)

In discussing about sexual crimes, all Informants believe that it can be reduced if the sex education had been educated at the early stage but with a few considerations. It must not only rely on the teachers and need to depend on the level of the understanding for the disabled children too. Sex education also very important to protect the disabled children because some people took advantage from the weaknesses of the disabled children. All this finding can be seen by the verbatim from the Informants as follows:

"Yes and no. It really depends on the level of understanding of the disabled individual, sometimes they may understand but they feel like doing it and in other situation, they may not understand the action it is wrong."

(R03/ 3 December 2020/ 2.10 pm/ Kuala Lumpur)

“Yes, they know how to protect their body & safety. Know there are bad people out there that could harm them and need to always be careful.”

(R02/ 2 December 2020/12.30 pm/ Johor)

“Yes, at my place when I was in form 5, there was a case related to sexual intercourse between grandfather and grandchild. The grandfather raped the child by manipulated the child. He manipulated the situation by giving 50 cents to the child for him to rape the child. Finally, the child was pregnant.”

(R04/ 1 December 2020/ 3 pm/ Johor)

Apart from that, the finding also reveal that the community need to be exposed more to make them aware about the sexual crimes that happened among the disabled children. Their issues usually had been taken lightly as people think that they are just a minority community in society. Other than that, according to the Informants, half of them which is six respondents confident that sex education can help to prevent unwilling pregnancy among the disabled children. Their views are as follow:

“Yes, something needs to be done than nothing.”

(R09/ 6 December 2020/ 11.30 am/ Johor)

“Yes, absolutely can. When they know how to protect themselves, they are automatic can avoid from being harm.”

(R05/ 1 December 2020/ 3.25 pm/ Negeri Sembilan)

“All parties from various roles need to take the initiative to help curb this problem, then there are possibilities for this issue to be controlled and reduced.”

(R02/ 2 December 2020/12.33 pm/ Johor)

The respondents also been asking regarding government initiatives toward disabled children. Besides law, many other initiatives have been highlighted by the Informants such as NUR hotline, programmed by National Population and Family Development Board (LPPKN) and curriculum education. There are programmed that had been provided for the sexual crime prevention, but most of the programmed do not focusing on the disabled community. Some of the Informants agreed that there is no specific Act that had been implemented for the disabled children. This will make them become an easy target to be the victims. The verbatim are as follows:

“People thought that children with disabilities are an easy target. In this new era, parent supervision is important and needs to be enhanced.”

(R05/ 1 December 2020/ 3.30 pm/ Negeri Sembilan)

CONCLUSION

Based on the finding, it was revealed that sexuality is a sensitive topic to be talked about and discussed as it is considered as an inappropriate topic. This study emphasizes the need for future interventions to overcome the barriers at each obstacles level to ensure that the proposed strategies can be implemented successfully. It is suggested that comprehensive module of sexual education need to be applied as a guide for those who get involved with implementing knowledge towards the children with disabilities such as collaborative effort including stakeholders, health care practitioners, school educators, and social care services to overcome the obstacles and support parents in delivering sexual education to

their children. To improve the quality of sexual education, various authorities and stakeholders should play their respective roles. One of the suggestions is for the school to include parental involvement in the sexual education curriculum for person with disabilities. Parental cooperation may facilitate the delivery of sexual education from home to school. Previous research has shown that implementing sex education to students with disabilities is difficult to accomplish without active or passive parental participation. The increasing of coverage and quality of sex education are also the other recommendation. Currently the exposure of sex education on the primary school especially for disabled children are still lacking. Therefore, by enlarging the coverage of exposing sex education to primary school and disabled children will help in raising awareness towards the importance of sex education.

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