

Sex Education as Viewed by Islam Education

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Abstract

This study aimed to study sex education in light of Islamic Education views. It sought to answer the following questions:

- 1) How does Islam Education view toward sex education?
- 2) Is the concept of sex education in Islam Education different from that in western cultures?
- 3) How does Islam view sex in different development stages?
- 4) What are sex education's main aspects as seen by Islam Education?

The study concludes that Islam Education did not neglect sex education. On the contrary, much attention and direction has been provided for in accordance with its teaching and regulations. The study also concludes that Islam Education viewed libido as being coherent with human nature, indicated ways in which it can be achieved and explored that are different from those in western cultures, and provided precautionary and remedial plans to deal with sexual problems that child and adolescent face. In addition, the study indicates that the main aspects of sex education in Islam Education are developmental, humanistic and integrated in nature. It recommends that further comprehensive studies for curricula be carried out, and the inclusion of sex education concepts, in curricula, that are in accordance with Islamic Education and regulations.

Keywords: Sex Education, Child, Islamic Education.

Introduction

Research involving crucial issues, such as sex education, in light of Islamic teachings compromises a huge responsibility due to its ethical and scientific sensitivity. Such responsibility becomes even greater when children are involved as many people do not see the young's need for sex education which is probably one of the most important things that children and adolescents should receive.

Sex education has its own terms, ethics, controls and mechanisms that require a lot of wisdom and premeditation considering the fact that it's widely ramified. However, if not well educated, it could have serious implications. The aim of any Muslim parents is the right and high quality education of their youngsters so that they can develop into conscious adults recognizing what is right and seeking it, and that which is wrong and avoiding it (Al Ashraf, 2009).

When Islam first descended, Pre Islamic Arab communities, both rural and urban, were open, liberated and engaged in different sexual activities. Islam did not condemn sex not it rejected it in the same way some cultures and religions did. On the contrary, there was a positive attitude towards sex from the part of Islam that can be traced in both The Holy Quran and Hadith. Islam not only respected the importance that Arabs placed on sex, but also added to its meaning new social, humanistic and psychological concepts. Many verses in the Holy Quran discuss sex, which indicates the importance of sex in human life and explains those importance aspects such as: reproduction, pleasure, companionship and peacefulness. This holistic view of the concept does not appear to be contradictory with idealistic and scientific concepts related to the status of sex in life especially those concerning the legitimate male – female relationship. It also deals with basic needs and instincts of a human being starting at adolescence, and until one achieves a husband – wife relationship based on caring and love in an attempt to build a family that has its value in an Islamic society (Al Ajlouni, 2007).

Study Problem

In Muslim society, Sex problems are currently taking new dimensions. These include: abnormal deviations in privileged children on the one hand, and homosexuality on the other. Many people (i.e. teachers, parents and educators) use western theories in educating the young sexually while abandoning sex education from Islam's point of view, which organizes and disciplines sexual behavior. Those involved in the process of education could have benefited from anatomical and psychological facts discovered by modern science since such benefit is rendered crucial in Islamic curriculum. Instead, they used western theories that sometimes encourage liberation from chastity, bashfulness and purity of the sentiment which can never form alternatives for Islamic rules that governs and disciplines sexual behavior (Adan, 1995).

The problem lies that sex education must have its roots in the life of adults before that of the youngsters so that parents can identify Islamic ground rules that organize and discipline sexual activity because a number of risks is related to sexual abnormality among adolescents, juveniles and privileged children on the doorsteps of puberty. Many people do not have a clue about the ground rules of sex education in Islam and cannot cope properly with sexual situations. For example, not being accustomed to asking for permission before entering a room or a house may result in awkwardness feelings for one's self and others. Another example appears when not accounting for the proper basics of sexual congress which may result in providing sexual stimuli for the young and the pursuit of reckless sexual adventures that may have serious disadvantages. Adults, and specially parents, must keep in mind that their children are undergoing a state of development and sexual maturity so that they can monitor their children's behavior (Adan, 1995).

Taking into consideration what have been mentioned earlier, the current study attempts dealing with this problem in accordance with Islam teachings by answering the following questions:

- 1) How does Islam Education view toward sex education?
- 2) Is the concept of sex education in Islam Education different from that in western cultures?
- 3) How does Islam view sex in different development stages?
- 4) What are sex education's main aspects as seen by Islam Education?

Study Purposes

This study aims at examining the preparation of privileged children sexually in accordance with Islamic conception, and the provision of such ideas to adults since they are the main and only channel through which knowledge is transmitted so that they can help their youngsters overcome difficulties related to stages of sexual eruption and behavioral fluctuation that they face while developing.

Study Limitations

- This study only examined some aspects of sex education from Islam's point of view as mentioned in the study questions.
- The study dealt with the young through different developmental stages of childhood.

Study Terms

For purposes of this research and after reviewing educational literature, researchers defined some of the terms used here as follows:

The child: In Arabic language, it means the young of any thing. The young of people is a child. The young of animals is a child, and even when the night is young it's referred to in Arabic as a child (Al Razi, 1950)

Childhood in Islam begins at birth and ends by the beginning of puberty. The estimation of a specific age that marks the end of this stage compromised a controversy among scientists. The majority agreed on 15 as its end while Abu Haneefah pointed out that it's 18 for males and 17 for females. Ibn Hazm Al Thaheri, however, stated that it is 19 for both. (Raslan, 1996).

In sociology, childhood stretches from birth to 18 years old (Ghaith 1979). Whereas in psychology, childhood has a more comprehensive concept as psychologists think it begins with the formation of an embryonic stage and ends at puberty, which has different aspects in males and females (Zaidan, 2004).

Another definition of a child comes from The Child Rights Agreement "The First International Document" in its first article where it states: "a child is every human being under 18 years of age unless considered otherwise prior to that age by the laws enforced upon him/her". (Bondok, 2004).

Hence, it's clear that defining a child differs across different domains and cultures. In this study, the researchers will deal with childhood as stretching from birth to the age of 18 for both males and females.

Sex Education: Fredrick states that "sexual education is an educational process involving righteous knowledge about biological, sexual and reproductive function, correct attitudes towards personal hygiene, and reasonable behavior related to sexual activity (Abdultawab, 1988).

Berge (1982), on the other hand, sees sex education as being an education towards sexual functioning and the installment of proper methods that aims at facilitating its best use which depends on reproductive instincts to maintain the practice of this natural function not only preserve the specie but also for the sake of the group. Whereas, Bebe (1999) defines sex education as all educational arrangements that may assist the youth in preparing for life problems especially those that have sex instinct or libido in their core.

Zahran (1977) sees this type of education as the provision of scientific data, righteous experiences and adequate attitudes towards sexual issues in a way that improves individual's physiological, psychological, emotional and mental development in accordance with a religious framework, social standards and prevailing values to achieve consistency in facing sexual situations and problems in the present and future that leads to mental health.

Elwan (1981) points out that sex education is the process of informing, increasing awareness and having open discussions with the child about issues related to sex, instinct and marriage so that he/she those is capable of leading a life in accordance with Islamic Education and avoids deviating from the righteous path.

Other definitions emphasized the ethical aspect of sex education. For example Gordon (1976) cited in (Abdultawab, 1988) defined sex education as "the process in which one acquires health knowledge related to sex functions in his/her life which helps develop health attitudes and ethical values related to sexual motive".. "However, sex education is also closely related to family education which is a process that may achieve ethical sexual behavior in children and adolescents as well as educational attitudes towards using sex in its desires framework"(Abdultawab, 1988).

In light of the previous definitions, the researchers define sex education as preparing and guiding the individual, based on his/her age and through early stages of development, to gain knowledge related to sex and sexual instinct, and the forming logical and desired attitudes towards these issues in accordance with Islamic Teachings to overcome any possible problem in this domain which eventually leads to achieving sexual consistency and harmony, in specific, and psychological harmony, in general.

Although concepts differ among Western and Eastern cultures, they all agree on that sex education is an educational process that involves informing the individual and providing him/her with experiences related to sexual issues based on his/her age and developmental stage, and in accordance with his/her ethical and religious framework to achieve sexual harmony, face sexual problems and eventually achieve mental and sexual health.

Literature Review

Allah created man and provided him/her with all capabilities, tendencies and instincts to lead a normal life. Allah also directed man to the ways in which those capabilities can be used. Sex instincts are probably the most important instincts that help preserve human life if used in accordance with Allah's teachings. One way to satisfy those needs and instincts legitimately is marriage which was indicated in the Holy Quran " And among His Signs is that He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you affection and mercy. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect" (30:21). In another verse the Holy Quran says "And Allah has made for you from yourselves mates and has made for you from your mates sons and grandchildren and has provided for you from the good things. Then in falsehood do they believe and in the favor of Allah they disbelieve? (16:72).

Through marriage, one finds peace with his/her spouse, and satisfies sexual needs and instincts, a venture that ultimately results in affection, compassion and peace as well as the pleasure of having of springs. Hence, Islam forbids aversion from marriage, even for purposes of providing one's whole time for worship, especially if the Muslim is both physically and financially capable of getting married. This appears clearly in the prophets (PBUH) words when he stated:"O, young men, these of you who can afford marriage, Let them do so, for it restrains eyes, and preserves chastity; but he who cannot afford it, he should observe fasting for it works like castration (Bukhari:5065).

Also, Anas bin Malik narrated:" A group of three men came to the houses of the wives of the Prophet asking how the Prophet worshiping Allah, and when they were informed about that, they considered their worship insufficient and said, " where are we from the Prophet as his past and future sins have been forgiven". Then one of them said, "I will offer the *Salat* (prayer) throughout the night forever." The other said, "I will observe *Saum* (fast) throughout the year and will not break my *Saum* (fast)." The third said, "I will keep away from the women and will not marry forever." Allah's Messenger came to people who said so-and-so? By Allah, I am more submissive to Allah and more afraid of Him than you; yet I observe *Saum* (fast) and also do not observe *Saum* (fast), I do offer *Salat* (prayer) and also do sleep and I also marry women. So he who does not follow my *As-Sunna* (legal ways) in religion, is not from me (not one of my followers)".

This Hadith clearly explains how does Islam view sex, and how it recognized it as well as emphasized it. In addition, Islam considered satisfying sexual needs by means of legitimate acts, such as marriage, an act of good faith that deserves Allah's forgiveness and reward.

In addition, Abu Dharr reported: Some people said to Messenger of Allah (PBUH): "O Messenger of Allah, the rich have taken away (all the) reward. They observe *Salat* (prayers) as we do; and give *Sadaqah* (charity) out of their surplus wealth." Upon this he (the Prophet (PBUH)) said, "Has Allah not prescribed for you (a course) following which you can (also) give *Sadaqah*? In every declaration of the glorification of Allah (i.e., saying *Subhan Allah*) there is a *Sadaqah*, and in every *Takbir* (i.e., saying *Allahu Akbar*) is a *Sadaqah*, and in every celebration of praise (saying *Al-hamdu lillah*) is a *Sadaqah*, and in every declaration that He is One (*La ilaha illallah*) is a *Sadaqah*, and in

enjoining of good is a Sadaqah, and in forbidding evil is a Sadaqah, and in man's sexual intercourse (with his wife) there is a Sadaqah." They (the Companions) said: "O Messenger of Allah, is there reward for him who satisfies his sexual need among us?" He said, "You see, if he were to satisfy it with something forbidden, would it not be a sin on his part? Similarly, if he were to satisfy it legally, he should be rewarded"(Sahih Muslim).

Islam compels his followers to discipline their children, and educate them in every aspect of their lives including: how to eat, how to sleep and even how to pleasure one's self. It's becoming undoubtedly clear that sex education is more important than any other type of education. Sons and daughters alike must receive adequate amounts of sex education that corresponds to their age, developmental stage and level of culture and awareness, and that corresponds to society's traditions, customs and norms. The more knowledge people have about sex issues, the less problems and burdens they will face in expressing their legitimate rights.

Islam holds both parents accountable for discussing and explaining sex issues with their youngsters as well as religious duties that result from such understanding. This type of discussion between parents and children must start at an early age, and proceed gradually eliminating any false or questionable information they may receive from unreliable sources, such as the internet. Parents are also cautioned from engaging in misbehaviors in front of their children (e.g. display careless sexual implications molded in jokes and laughter) without taking into consideration the developmental stage of their youngsters are experiencing which may result in motivating the latter's imagination and eventually engage in forbidden reckless sexual acts.

Islam accepts human beings with all their defects. At the same time, it seeks the supremacy of humanity over other living beings through restricting, organizing and holding responsibility of satisfying needs and instincts. In addition, Islam encourages marriage, forbids monasticism, and allows divorce when there's a lack of mutual understanding and peace. It also allows, in some cases, the marriage of one man to up to four women. However, Islam is extremely decisive towards issues of perversion, and punishes, to the extremes, crimes of adultery, deviation and rape (Al Fangari, 1996).

By reviewing The Holy Quran, Sunnah and Islamic Jurisprudence books (Fiqh), one can say that sex education did not only target adults, it also trained the young to adapt to sex situations from the very first moment they recognize it, which was not accurately defined due to individual differences related to their mental and physical development, and which parents and educators can identify through their interaction with children. In the Holy Quran, Allah said:

"And when the children among you reach puberty, let them ask permission [at all times] as those before them have done. Thus does Allah make clear to you His verses; and Allah is Knowing and Wise"24:59).

Also Abu Dawud narrated: Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, " Command your children to perform Salat (Prayer) when they are seven years old, and beat them for (not offering) it when they are ten, and do not let (boy and girls) sleep together" Hadith Number:495.

From two previous verse and Hadith that followed focused on mental recognition and awareness to a certain extent on the one hand, and on commitment to training on not only acquiring sexual behavior, but also on all types of Islamic behavior on the other. It also emphasized punishment as one of the educational methods that compel the young to acquire Islamic habits (i.e. physical punishment as described by the legislator and deprivation from incentives).

Sex education is a continuous educational and conscious process through which educators provide accurate information, righteous experiences and attitudes related to sex issues depending on the developmental stage of the learner, which are:

- **Early childhood (3-6):** during this stage, the child recognizes his/her natural role as male or female. Sex education also begins at this stage as simple as possible in an attempt to build a sex identity without pointing out organic differences.
- **Intermediate to late childhood (6-12):** here, the child is able to differentiate between sexes, learns to ask for permission, the manners of seeing, manners of purity (i.e. Tahara) and Awrah (i.e. private parts) keeping and not exposing.

- **Early adolescence** (12-15): at this stage, many females reach menstruation and some males their first ejaculation. Islam directs both males and females to deal with indications related to this aspect of biological maturity with ease without confusion or panic. It also educates them about the ground rules related to these events that relate to touching the Holy Quran, praying and fasting. Both males and females are introduced to the procedures of purity (i.e. washing up or Ightisal), and how to deal with their private parts.
- **Late Adolescence** (16-18): during this stage, maturity peaks up, and sex education, for both males and females, is directed towards saving sexual energy for matrimonial relationships, and the preparation for forming new families using the many directive examples found in The Holy Quran and Hadith.

Educators can answer the young's questions related to sex issues in light of the following rules and regulations:

- 1) Questions must be age appropriate and stated in a simple accurate and honest fashion
- 2) Answering questions when asked, and not postponing the answer unless necessary.
- 3) Given information should not solely be about anatomical and physiological information. It should include other aspects of sex using examples from Hadith and Quran (e.g. how one is rewarded for meeting sexual needs using legitimate methods such as marriage, and how one is punished for doing otherwise).
- 4) Maintaining a continuous sex education agenda using different varied methods which may include: answering questions, explaining some Quranic verse related to sex education, providing age appropriate reading material, cassettes, lessons and/or lectures.
- 5) Answering questions should proceed in calm discussion sessions where the child is able to sense the educator's understanding and determination to help him/her grasp the true dimensions of sexuality, and to reach a stage of sexual maturity and health in accordance with our comprehensive Islamic perspective.

Children tend to ask questions about almost everything. Questions related to sex issues (e.g. Where did I come from? How did I get into mommy's belly, and How did I get out) should be answered with a rational simple manner using a language that the child understands. These questions should not be postponed or evaded.

Asking such questions is natural. Some psychologists see that the father should explain answers to male children while the mother explains to female children. Others say that it is the mother who should explain for both, especially during early childhood, since children are more emotionally attached to their mother and the fact that she is more tolerant than the father.

Some parents feel that discussing sex issues with children is not appropriate, and that parents and educators must not point the child's or adolescent's attention to them. These issues will be understood during the course of their growth by themselves. However, ignoring sexuality and other related issues is a serious flaw in the child's educational preparation process. What is not appropriate is ignoring these basic instincts and their relationship to worship practices. In Sahih Al Boukhari, Aisha narrated that "Asma Bint Abi Baker came to the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) asking him about how to wash up after menstruation".

Fields of Sex Education

Fields of sex education refer to those academic disciplines that are related to sexuality and to sex behavior through which the goals of sex education can be achieved (e.g. science, Islamic education ...etc). For instance, in science, the child acquires basic facts about the physiology of human reproduction where as in Islamic education, the child is taught the ground rules related to sexuality, sexual behavior, the legitimacy of marriage...etc through which the child recognizes the legitimacy of sexual behavior in his/her life (Abdultawab, 1988).

Some researchers defined primary and secondary fields of sex education. They pointed out that these fields differ in relation to different educational stages. Vincent (1976) indicated the following to

be fields of sex education: sexual growth aspects related to different stages, sexual values, human reproduction, marriage and sexually transmitted diseases.

Maddock (1976) pointed the following to be sex education fields: biological sex functions, opposite sexes relationship dynamics, sexual behavior psychological and social growth aspects and sexual problems and diseases.

The latter clearly indicates that fields of sex education focused on studying sexual instincts and sexual behavior through different stages of development as well as studying the social, psychological, health and moral aspects related to sex behavior, and the appropriate sexuality framework in light of society's standards and values.

As a result, the following fields of sex education can be defined for primary and secondary education:

- 1) Sexual growth aspects through different developmental stages.
- 2) Biological changes related to adolescence (i.e. emotional and social maturity, opposite sexes healthy relationships and adolescence problems)
- 3) Eliminating fear related to psychological and social changes accompanying sexual growth.
- 4) The physiology of human reproduction (i.e. human reproduction system organs and functions, fertilization and aspects of pregnancy and delivery)
- 5) Hormonal and genetics role in reproduction.
- 6) Introduction to sexual deviations and disorders (e.g. over masturbation, homosexuality addiction and prostitution); their causes, their effects and possible precautionary methods.
- 7) Introduction to sexually transmitted diseases; their causes, symptoms, risks and precautionary methods through a comprehensive rational study away from intimidation.
- 8) Sexual relationships as an aspect of humanity that requires an adequate level of honor, decency, mutual and equal appreciation from both parties involved in matrimony.
- 9) Introducing adolescents to the basics of selecting a soul mate in a way that achieves stability related to personal, psychological, social and health aspects of matrimony.
- 10) Focusing on the fact that matrimony is a multi-faceted relationship that involves emotional, mental, psychological and social participation from both parties, and that is affected by personality patterns, values and mutual interests.
- 11) Help adolescents achieve emotional satisfaction through cultural, social and sport activities, and developing hobbies and other tendencies as well as organizing their free time (Zahran, 1977).

The basic aim of sex education is contributing to personality development morally, socially, mentally and physically to enable the individual from carrying out his/her duties in accordance with Islam's teachings (Madkor, 1995).

It is also believed that sex education aims differ according to culture which might be the result of the fact that social standards and moral values are key ingredients in defining sex education concepts in any culture. The Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) define sex education aims as follows:

- 1) Informing individuals on biological, emotional and mental issues related to sex
- 2) Help individuals eliminate fear and anxiety related to sexual growth and compatibility.
- 3) Developing adequate attitudes towards the opposite sex in every aspect.
- 4) Help individuals gain insights on the adequate relationship between sexes.
- 5) Provide individuals with sufficient information on disadvantages of sexual deviation so that they can adapt to their sexual roles in life (Abdultwab, 1988).

UNESCO (1988) also define a number of sex education objectives that focus on:

- 1) Help individuals gain adequate information about sex as a mean of human reproduction and ensuring the continuity of life.

- 2) Help individuals realize their responsibility towards society and the dangers resulting from sexual freedom on both the individual and the society.
- 3) Correct any misinformed ideas or practices related to sexual behavior.
- 4) Establish adequate sexual relationships that are based on awareness related to personal and social responsibility of sex behavior.

Study Questions and Discussion

- 1) How does Islam Education view toward sex education?

Islam Education view libido realistically due to the fact that Allah created man and bestowed upon him/her those instincts and other life motives. Many verses of the Holy Quran that are recited by Muslims all over the world in every prayer provide evidence on Islam's realistic view of libido. The Holy Quran said: " Beautified for men is the love of things they covet; women, children, much of gold and silver (wealth), branded beautiful horses, cattle and well-tilled land. This is the pleasure of the present world's life; but Allah has the excellent return (Paradise with following rivers) with Him" (3:14). " And if you fear that you shall not be able to deal with justly with the orphan-girls, then marry (other) women of your choice, two or three, or four; but if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one or (the slaves) that your right hands possess. That is nearer to prevent you from doing injustice" (4:3). " Your wives are tilth for you, so go to your tilth, when or how you will, and send (good deeds, or ask Allah to bestow upon you pious offspring) for your own selves beforehand. And fear Allah, and know that you are to meet Him (in the Hereafter), and give good tidings to the believes (O Muhammad)" (2:223).

These verses illustrate that sexuality does not contradict with human nature and modesty. On the contrary, sex is life requirement that ensures the continuity of life. Islam adopts this view, directs it to its righteous path and shapes it within a moral and mannerly framework (i.e. matrimony).

As Islam takes into account all human needs, it viewed libido as being natural and a physiologically given right. Attempts to suppress these instincts is a deviation from Allah's well. Suppressing these instincts may result in serious psychological complications and great mental, behavioral and nervous disorders as well as sever deviations that cannot be treated (Al Taheri, 1990).

Quranic verses include many of the healthy sexual relationship secrets stated in an understandable language. These verses discussed all aspects of sexual instincts, matrimonial sexual intercourse and sexual needs in a respected language that each Muslim, male or female, understands (Al Ajlouni, 2007).

The Holy Quran descended as a cure for human soul. It provided for means through which sexual instincts can be met by honoring matrimonial enterprise and forbidding homosexuality and adultery. As a result, sexual needs are view as equally important to other biological need (e.g. food, drink and even air). However, these needs are bound by legislative controls that cannot be broken, and which prudently organize meeting those needs.

- 2) Is the concept of sex education in Islam Education different from that in western cultures?

Some claim that Islam may suppress sexual instincts although they are part of human nature. Islam does not contradict human nature. It is an instinctive religion by its own nature. The purpose of human life according to Islam is the worship of Allah as The Holy Quran said: " And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me" (51:56). Also to become vicegerent of Him on earth (Caliph), as The Holy Quran said" And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority."..(2:30). This purpose cannot be achieved unless life continues on earth. As a result, Allah provided man with instincts and psychological motives that helps survival. Sexual instincts are one of the most vital needs that require meeting under specific controls. Islam takes on a middle stance. It does not forbid sex, encouraging monasticism, nor does it allow its release in all forms and ways (e.g. adultery, homosexuality, masturbation...etc). As a

result, marriage surfaced as the only legitimate resolution for meeting sex needs, and a mean through which human survival is guaranteed in the form of the family enterprise that nurtures and encourages social sentiments such as love, loyalty and altruism. Hence, unless directed properly, sexual instincts will affect the life of human beings which leads to complex problems and serious deviations.

Materialists have an extrinsic view towards morality. They do not acknowledge its consistency with human common sense, different religious teachings or even with common innate taste. Materialism views sex as a mere biological process that has nothing to do with morality. Freud states that "human beings do not achieve self esteem apart from their sexuality. Any form of control participated by any religion or moral controls or tradition is in fact void, a waste of human energy and an illegitimate suppression.

By placing moral controls on instincts, Islam regulates the way through which human needs are met in light of its knowledge of human organic, psychological, spiritual and physical needs. Sexual instincts are one of those needs that require satisfaction within a specific framework in the same way all other instincts do. Hence, the importance of marriage appeared as they only mean through which these sexual instincts can be satisfied. It restores self balance, removes anxiety, and helps achieve self esteem and satisfaction which leads to a healthy stable life of matrimonial partnership.

Some western sex theories concentrate only on anatomical and biological facts disregarding some of the basics that are related to aspects of human dignity. As a result, they, intentionally or unintentionally, promote nudism as a mean of exploring human anatomy. Although these facts are equally important in Islam, they come in short unless moral considerations, which emphasize child's humanity, are integrated into them.

This particular issue came into attention when a number of prestigious doctors in Sweden presented a memo to the king and parliament in 1964 demanding more decisive measurements to control the sexual chaos that threatened the nation at that time. In 1962, the Russian president, Khrushchev, pointed out that the future of Russia is endangered by the lustful actions and attitudes of the country's youth. At the same time, the American president, John F. Kennedy, stated that the future of the United States is in danger as its youth are consumed by lust, and lack a sense of responsibility towards their country. He also stated that out of 7 recruits, 6 are ineligible for military service due to the fact that they are not psychologically and sexually fit (Elwan, 1981).

3) How does Islam view sex in different development stages?

In its early beginnings, Islam recognized the importance of sex in affecting human behavior, and that sexual emotions are inherent in human nature. It also recognized that sex is one of the major drives of human emotions and behaviors as well as problems. Sexual problems may intervene with human mental, emotional, social and psychological behaviors which lead to major sexual and psychological disorders (Qutob, 1983).

Islam as a holistic religion that aims at solving all human problems, and contributes to human prosperity and well fair, Islam recognized sexual power and its effect, and set out regulations that maintain its importance and role in life. Some of these regulations are:

- Lowering gaze: one of the ethics encouraged by Islam due to the fact that sight is one of the most important senses that stimulates sexual emotions. The Holy Quran says: " Tell the believing men to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what they do. And tell the believing women to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof and to wrap [a portion of] their headcovers over their chests and not expose their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their women, that which their right hands possess, or those male attendants having no physical desire, or children who are not yet aware of the private aspects of women. And let them not stamp their feet to make known what they conceal of their adornment. And turn to Allah in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed" (24:30-31)

There are many Haiths indicating the importance of this Issue. Jarir b. 'Abdullah reported: I asked Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) about the sudden glance (that is cast) on the face (of a non-Mahram). He commanded me that I should turn away my eyes.(5372 sahih Muslim). Also Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying, Allah fixed the very portion of adultery which a man will indulge in. There would be no escape from it. The adultery of the eye is the lustful look and the adultery of the ears is listening to voluptuous (song or talk) and the adultery of the tongue is licentious speech and the adultery of the hand is the lustful grip (embrace) and the adultery of the feet is to walk (to the place) where he intends to commit adultery and the heart yearns and desires which he may or may not put into effect.(Sahih Muslim,6422).

The Previous Hadiths confirm that gazing is forbidden by Islam for both, male and female, to prevent the stimulation of sexual emotions. The purpose of this ruling is, as Qutob (1983) states, the formation of a society free from lust through the maintenance of healthy stimulation with in legitimate channels.

At one point in time, it was acceptable and common to exchange talks and sexual humor between sexes which were considered a mean of loosening sexual pressure and prevent suppression. Those, who held such ideas, disregarded the fact that tendencies of males towards females, and vise versa, are inherent in human nature. It increases as stimuli increases which results in accumulating pressure. Hence, the safest way to keep this tendency with normal and acceptable range is to decrease the intensity of stimuli (Elwan, 1981).

- Train adolescents to respect and appreciate values related to sexual issues.
- Develop spiritual and religious satisfaction methods and explain their relationship to sexual issues.
- Present Muslim youth examples of people who were capable of restraining their sexual instincts and control them.
- Inform adolescents about the personal, social and medical effects of negative sexual practices.
- Exercise different sports that shape one's behavior and ethics such as swimming and horse riding ...etc.
- Develop chastity and purity in adolescents.
- Protect adolescents from sexual stimuli that are provided through different types of multimedia such as magazines, books, photographs, movies and websites containing pornography.
- Teach children habits of asking for permission before entering their parents room during their sleep or relaxation time.
- Conduct workshops, seminars and lectures to discuss sexual issues with specialized medical, religious and psychological specialists to explain the wrong use of sexual instincts and their effects.

4) What are sex education's main aspects as seen by Islam Education?

Sex education traits in light of the Islamic Education perspective are:

- a) Sex education is divine: this means that its regulations and directs are of a divine source as it is for other fields such as economic, politics, management...etc. Hence, sex education regulations are not based on personal efforts that are vulnerable to trail and error. Taking into consideration this fact, Muslim educators attempt establishing a relationship between sexual behaviors and worship. The Muslim individual achieves tasks related to worship as part of demonstrating his/her faith. Thus, all types of behavior, including sexual ones, are considered with in the worship framework of the Muslim. As a result, children should be trained to understand the intimate relationship between adequate sexuality and worship which highlights the spiritual and moral aspects of sex.
- b) Sex education is humane: Islam places great importance and value on human dignity and respect. It does not allow gazing at children's private parts, even by their parents, even while carrying out their duties such as helping the child change clothes or the process of

- bathing. Although most parents will not do so, except in few perversion instances, Islam takes on extreme precautions to prevent the possibility of abuse.
- c) Sex education integrative: educators teaching children the basics and rulings of sex education. Questions asked by children are not to be neglected, and explanations must be provided for basics and rules simultaneously. Basics and rulings complete each other; one cannot indicate the importance of one while neglecting the other. Hence, the fruits of sex education in Islam Education are harvested only by means of providing a complete and integrated education.
 - d) Sex education is a continuum: sexual activity requires continuous control due to its accompanying emotional effects. Thus, sex education must continue at all life stages, which ensures the success of educating individual Muslims. Continuity is not specific to sex education, it is a general notion engraved in every Islamic educational perspective, plan, program and/or application.
 - e) Sex education is realistic: sex education stems from realistic needs and aims. It starts from scientific facts about sexual instincts and human anatomy which results in forming adequate conceptions. Islam bases its rulings and basics that are related to sex and its associated psychological and physiological changes on solid scientific grounds.
 - f) Graduation in sex education: Islam Education gradually educates children in sex related issues. It is based on task completion (i.e. no new tasks are provided unless old ones are completed), and age and developmental stage appropriateness in accordance with Islamic Perspectives.

Recommendations

In light of the study at hand, researchers provide the following recommendations:

- 1) Conduct research studies that involve parents and teachers in an attempt to identify their role in children's sex education at different developmental stages.
- 2) The inclusion of sex education concepts in school textbooks that are age appropriate.
- 3) Support schools educational advisors' roles in dealing with students' sexual problems especially during adolescence.
- 4) Conduct seminars and discussion sessions that involve teachers, parents and students on issues related to sexuality and its importance.
- 5) Invite media to discuss different sex education topics with the help of specialists in accordance with Islamic perspectives.

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