

# Sexual Education in Single Parents Families (Study on the Widows Network Community)

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## ABSTRACT

Every child must get guidance regarding sex from both parents to develop according to their nature. However, the family is not always in complete condition because of the parents. Parents who only raise their children have problems, including in terms of sexual education. This study aimed to determine the form of education, the methods used, and the obstacles faced by single parents in applying sex education to their children. This study was a qualitative study with ten informants selected through the purposive sampling technique. Observation, interviews, and documentation collected research data. Data research obtained was analyzed through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and withdrawal/verification of data conclusions. Data validity was checked through the triangulation of sources. The results of the study found: The forms of sexual education applied in single-parent families are; a) introduction to the function and shape of the body or anatomy; b) Self-security; c) Development and changes in body shape (puberty); d) Social relations and adultery, and e) dress etiquette. Education is carried out using lectures, advice, question and answer, and punishment (reprimand). The obstacles in implementing sexual education are, a) Children tend to meet their parents, b) Mothers as single parents share interactions, c) The application of sexual education to boys tends to be forced.

**Keywords:** *Sexual Education, Single Parent, Widows Community.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Having a family is one thing that every adult individual usually experiences. A family generally has members called husband and wife who will give birth to children. But in a family does not always have complete members. In society, many families do not have complete members, such as families with only mothers and children but do not have husbands. In these families, women who no longer have husbands who can be caused by the death or divorce of their husbands are called widows.

One form of women's existence is to be involved in community organizations. Loss of a spouse either due to divorce or death provides a dual role for the spouse left behind. In particular, women (widows) who already have children will act as single parents. Taking care of the household, including providing education to children who only have mothers, especially single parents, will be challenging to educate. The results of research stated that when a child is raised in a single parent or

single-parent family, it is possible that the child will engage in deviant behavior, such as arguing and fighting parents, often using impolite sentences, being naughty and lazy to study [1][2].

Education in the family will undoubtedly be more optimal if complete parents carry it out, especially sexual education for children. That carrying out the role of being a single parent can trigger stress due to adjustments to change, feelings of loss, and feelings of inability to face severe problems [3]. For single parents (widows it will be difficult to provide education, including sexual education, appropriately because of the many additional tasks he will do to survive his family. Taking on the role of a single parent means experiencing changes where this change can cause problems because someone who initially acted only as a mother and father now has to play a dual role[4].

Parents need to provide sexual education from an early age. providing sex education to children to provide knowledge about the function of the reproductive organs by instilling moral ethics. The number of crime cases,

one of which is sexual abuse of children, is why sex education is essential given by children. Providing knowledge about sexual education is very important for children in living life in society [5].

Sexual education is considered something only related to sexual relations and dirty so that parents do not teach sex education to their children. Based on several explanations related to sexual education, it can be concluded that sex education has a broad meaning. Sexual education discusses how the body's biological functions may be devoted to the sexual organs. It also discusses ways to interact with the opposite sex appropriately, discuss their roles, and what not to do.

Sexual education is challenging, especially if it is only done by single parents (widows). So the provision of sexual education may be sometimes neglected. In Makassar City, there is a widowed community. This community is named the Widow Network Community (JJ Community), established in Makassar city, and its members come from every sub-district in Makassar City. Based on the results of initial observations and interviews, it was found that the average community members have children aged between 6 to 25 years. Of course, in providing sexual education to children, pregnant mothers need to have their ways and tricks, especially if their children are of the opposite sex. One of the essential things is that children whose parents are incomplete usually experience problems as teenagers, including problems regarding sexual education and will be a challenge for the single-parent mother. So that sexual education is essential to be given in the family because by providing sexual education, children will be able to avoid problems of free sex, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and so on.

## 2. METHOD

This type of research is qualitative research using a descriptive approach. In this study, taking the location in Makassar City, precisely on members of the Widows network community in Makassar City, the instrument in this study was the researcher himself. The stages of research carried out in this study in outline are the pre-research stage, the research stage, and the final stage. The primary data source used is the primary data source. The primary data collection in this study was conducted by interviewing the research subjects, namely members of the Widows Network Community (JJ) in Makassar City. Then secondary data sources Secondary data is used as complementary data or supporting primary data related to research purposes. Secondary data is also referred to as supporting data [6]. The number of informants as many as ten people was selected using a purposive sampling technique, namely taking informants with specific considerations. Data collection techniques with interview and documentation methods. I was checking the validity of the data using source

triangulation techniques. Data analysis techniques include data reduction, data presentation, and concluding [7].

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 *Forms of Sexual Education in the Family of Makassar Widows Community Members*

Sexual education is applied in the family, which parents, of course, deliver. Families that have incomplete members, of course, their functions will be played by members who are still there, or their functions may not work at all in single-parent families, such as in the Makassar Widow Community, where the father figure as the leader and head of the family no longer exists. Delivering or educating children regarding sexual education must be carried out by the mother (widow) alone as the leading educator in her family. In conveying sexual education, of course, knowledge about sexual education is essential to the mother (widow).

#### 3.1.1 *Introduction to the function and shape of the body or anatomy*

Based on the data obtained from the interviews described previously, the forms of sexual education conveyed by mothers (widows) to their children. First, the introduction of the function and shape of the body (anatomy). Informants who are members of the Makassar Janda Community also apply sexual education in their families. The introduction of body shape to children is essential to be given to children. In the delivery process, informants usually explain the names, functions, gender differences between men and women to children.

In line with the research, sex education is an education-related to providing information and forming attitudes about sex or gender, gender identity, inter-sex relationships, and greater intimacy [8]. To closeness. When bathing a child and dressing a child, usually the child will pay attention to his body and start asking his mother about the difference in body shape. The informant said that usually, when the child was at a young age, around the age of 3-5 years. In the socialization theory, George Herbert Mead explained that this stage is called the preparatory stage, where individuals will begin to receive information from outside themselves and sexual education information given by their mothers regarding body anatomy [9].

Then, the mother also explained the differences in gender more broadly and how the shape and function of the body, including sexual organs, to the child.

Applying sexual education in a single-parent family must be done by the mother (widow). Being a leader in his family is undoubtedly a challenge in raising and educating his children.

### *3.1.2 Second, self-security.*

Sexual education is not only related to gender. Children can be taught to guard and protect themselves, including sexual crimes such as sexual harassment and abuse. Teaching this means already applying sexual education to children.

Based on the interviews conducted, the informant said that he gave understanding and always encouraged his children to take care of themselves outside the home; the mother (widow) explained how to make children recognize sexual crimes that usually occur outside the home. Many people have the intention of committing crimes, especially sexual crimes. Therefore, the informant told the children to refuse other people's intentions, such as when they wanted to touch their body parts or sexual organs, ask them to go away, and shout when someone wanted to be rude.

It is stated that children are the hope for the progress of the country; moreover, our children are a priceless treasure from God who has been bestowed upon us, therefore, this shows that the need for real action to protect them with education about sexuality that is given from an early age to be able to provide information and introduce to children how to protect and protect their organs from people who have bad intentions against them [10][11]. The figure of the mother (widow) needs to be more assertive in educating children. Informants stated that the delivery of taking care of themselves to children in the social environment is essential. This should be conveyed and instilled in children from an age that has begun to receive information from outside themselves, namely at the age of 3-12 years. In this phase, if it is associated with Mead's Socialization theory. A single-parent family without a father as a vital figure in the family, the mother figure must take that role in leading the family alone. Of course, this will be a challenge for single-parent life.

### *3.1.3 Development and changes in body shape (puberty).*

Sexual education has a comprehensive scope and is related to body shape recognition, as discussed earlier. Sex education means sexuality education, which is education about sexuality in a broad sense. Sexuality discusses various aspects related to sex, namely in terms of biology, orientation, sociocultural and moral values, and behavior.

The phase of child development when entering adolescence will certainly experience puberty. For girls, it is usually marked by a body shape that has begun to

take shape and has already experienced menstruation. For boys, changes in voice and others usually mark it. This phase usually occurs at the age of 9-12. Children will begin to recognize feelings of liking with the opposite sex, characterized by biological changes [12][13].

Based on the data obtained in the interview process, it was found that in single-parent families in the Makassar widow community, sexual education related to child development at puberty was applied. For girls, the informant conveyed things related to menstruation when the child began to experience it. The informant explained to the child when the child asked because he was surprised and unfamiliar with the condition he was experiencing. So, the mother in the family explained what to pay attention to when experiencing menstruation, such as maintaining genital hygiene, diligently changing sanitary napkins.

### *3.1.4 Social relations and adultery.*

The rise of promiscuity in today's era makes parents need to educate their children well on how to get along healthily. Children can do social relationships such as friendships if they do not get a good education.

Teaching sex to children is not just teaching how to have sex, but rather an effort to provide knowledge or understanding to children, according to the child's ability, regarding the functions of sexual organs and instinct problems [12]. Naturally, that begins to arise, guidance on maintaining and maintaining their intimate organs. Besides that, it also provides an understanding of healthy social behavior and the risks related to sexual problems. It is hoped that children can protect themselves and avoid sexual harassment, and teenagers are more responsible for using and controlling their sexual desires. The results of his research obtained information that proper sex education can prevent free sex behavior, unwanted pregnancy, abortion, sexual harassment/rape, and prevent the transmission of HIV/AIDS, which is currently increasing in frequency in Indonesia.

Based on the data obtained related to the delivery of social relations, informants from the Makassar Janda Community stated the need to convey to children how to maintain the boundaries of their social relationships. The informant also said how important it was to convey this to his family, which incidentally was fractured. Usually, children from incomplete families will have higher pressure than children from complete families. So, the mother (widow) needs to pay more attention to her child.

Telling children how to maintain boundaries in socializing is very important in this family. Although the father's role can no longer run optimally in educating

children, members of the Makassar widow community must act as father and mother figures for their children. This information is essential always to be mentioned by parents to children from an early age until the child begins to enter adolescence to consider every behavior in the scope of social interaction.

### *3.1.5 Dress Ethics.*

Teaching children how to dress modestly in a social environment is a way to prevent children from being sexually assaulted and abused—familiarizing children to wear decent clothes to take care of themselves and how children wear clothes that suit their gender. Teaching this means that parents have implemented sexual education for their children.

The application of sex education in children's daily life could be applied such as habits of dressing, separation of bedrooms, ways of socializing with the same sex as well as with the other sex, and matters relating to the care of the genital organs. How to dress is a form of sexual education [14][15].

The results of interviews conducted by researchers showed that in the process of implementing sexual education in single-parent families, especially in the Makassar Widow Network Community family, it was found that the delivery of how to dress to children was a form of sexual education.

Similarly, in interview data related to the form of sexual education applied in single-parent families, the Makassar Widow Community, five forms of sexual education were found, and four of them were based on research by Ratnasari, namely the introduction of body functions and forms or anatomy, self-security, development and changes in shape. Body (puberty), and, social relations and adultery. At the same time, the form of sexual education in the form of the application of dress ethics to children is a form that appears when the author conducts research.

## ***3.2 Methods of applying sexual education in the families of Makassar widows community members***

Sexual education delivered in single-parent families must be carried out by the mother (widow) as a leader in the family without a father figure. Methods in educating children need to be considered under the needs and conditions of the family, including in implementing sexual education in single-parent families. In the Janda Makassar community, interviews were conducted regarding the methods mothers (widows) used in educating their children, including the delivery of sexual education in their families. The following is an explanation of the methods obtained in the interview;

### *3.2.1 By way of lectures.*

Lectures are generally carried out in monologues that are listened to by listeners. In educating children, the lecture method is also often used, including in single-parent families. From the results of interviews with members of the Janda Makassar community, information was obtained that they often lectured to their children in educating their children. On average, members of the Makassar Janda Community sometimes convey sexual education in an angry tone. This they associate with his status as a widow. The separation experienced by the informants made them more emotional, including in educating their children.

This method is usually used when the child does something wrong or when things are seen as inappropriate, such as in the child's association, which is usually explained by the mother (mother). Informants also said that they are more comfortable when talking without being interrupted in teaching children about something by giving lectures.

### *3.2.2 The Advice Method.*

Advising children usually occurs when the child does something that is considered wrong. Then that is when advice is usually given.) A piece of advice explains the truth with the aim that the person being advised can avoid harm and direct him to a path that can make him happy and beneficial. Education using this advice needs to pay attention to two sides: directing to the truth by preventing people from committing a crime. When the child has been able to understand both, the role of advice is needed. Because basically, the child's reasoning power still needs guidance so that it is right in concluding what he sees. Advising children, including in their teens, with volatile emotions, advice is crucial to use. In the life of a single-parent family, the child will usually be challenging to manage because of incomplete family functions, in this case, the father's role.

Based on the interviews, the frequent scolding of children is also a reason for mothers (widows) to use the advice method because there is a concern that children will be depressed if they are scolded too often and are not gently advised when they make mistakes, so that in single parents' families also often advise in the process of educating children.

### *3.2.3 By way of question and answer.*

This method is usually characterized by giving each other responses in the form of answers and questions. In families, including single parents, question and answer provide space for families to be closer and communicative. Of course, this starts with a questioning process that the parents or the children can start.

In the Makassar Widow Community family, they usually ask questions when the child has a problem then

it is submitted to the mother, and the mother will explain and ask questions related to her child's problem, or the child made a mistake then the mother will ask the child about the child's mistake. Matters related to sexual education are often applied through the question-and-answer methods relate to social relations, such as friendships and child dating relationships.

#### *3.2.4 By way of punishment (reprimand).*

Reprimanding or reprimanding a child because of a mistake made usually makes the child reluctant to repeat the mistake, even more so if it is added with punishment. Giving punishment according to Islamic education has no other purpose than to provide guidance and improvement [16]. In the family members of the Makassar widow community, the informant stated that sometimes he scolded or reprimanded his child and would also reduce the child's pocket money which can be said as punishment. This is done when the child becomes difficult to regulate or does something that is considered a mistake by the mother.

In the description of the previous method, there are four methods in [17][18]namely the lecture method, discussion, advice, and question and answer. However, in the research process only, the discussion method does not appear in the field. Based on statements from informants, the discussion method was not used because it was said to be uncomfortable in doing so. Then the researchers found a new method that emerged in the field, namely the method of punishment (reprimand). This method often appears in the exposure of research informants who are considered capable of giving children a deterrent effect when they make mistakes. Based on the discussion of the results of interviews related to sexual education methods for members of the Makassar Widow Network community, four methods were obtained, namely; 1) lecture; 2) advice, 3); question and answer, and 4) punishment (reprimand).

### ***3.3 Obstacles in the Implementation of Sexual Education in the Family Members of the Makassar, Widow Community***

Family life is certainly not free from problems, including divorce. Being a single parent is one of the impacts that the occurrence of divorce will experience. Children who are in the family will be the target of these problems. Given that, of course, education will be more optimal when both parents give it. However, it was only given by one person. In this case, it was given by the mother. Problems in the family due to the lack of functioning in implementing education for children will be an obstacle in the smooth acceptance of sexual education from parents.

The father usually carries out the head of the family as the leader and the primary breadwinner, but it must be the mother's responsibility (widow) in the

family. Being a single parent will be a challenge in itself in taking care of his family. In the Makassar widow community, there were several obstacles in the single-parent family, including providing sexual education.

#### *3.3.1 Children from single-parent families tend not to accept the situation, ignoring their parents' advice.*

A single-parent (widow) family without a father figure is the head of the family or a leader. Of course, sometimes, the role is not optimal. Being a mother who is responsible for raising children alone makes mothers need to be mother and father figures for their children. Educating children in the family allows getting problems in terms of educating children.

The interview results show the difference when the family is still equipped with a father figure. Of course, the process of educating children will at least be lighter because the role of educating children can be divided based on the time of the father and mother. However, after the separation, mothers have to face the challenge of educating their children alone. Some informants also admitted that they became more emotional and irritable after the separation, which could impact their children. The separation in parents can also make children become frustrated and tend to deviate so that what is conveyed by the mother tends to be ignored. Including in conveying forms of sexual education to children who have started to know courtship, then being taught by their mothers how to choose a good partner tends to be a consideration for informants to convey, or children do not respond well to their mother's delivery. This is due to the perception of the mother or child towards her household life, which is pretty cracked.

Batmalo states that the impact of divorce will attack the child's psyche so that later the child will grow up having feelings of shame, sensitivity, and low self-esteem, which can make the child withdraw from the environment [19][20]. Children who are victims of their parents' divorce usually grow up to be teenagers who have emotional instability because they feel that there is family dysfunction, where parents cannot function according to their roles properly.

### 3.3.2 *Second, mothers as single parents will find it difficult to divide their duties.*

Dividing time to educate and earn a living sometimes has difficulties. Parents as single parents must carry out a dual role in the family for their family's survival, especially for a mother who runs her family dysfunction in educating her children [21][22]. Having a dual role due to separation from husband, informants must start thinking about making a living independently. On average, those who have jobs have to earn additional income.

The dual role of single parents due to social dysfunction will cause the existing family system to adjust to this dynamic situation [23]. The role of being a single parent requires the wife to carry out the functional role of both mother and father in the family and change the regularity of a mother's system in the family to be more dynamic to changing circumstances. Single parents carry out a role that includes two aspects: the domestic role in the form of taking care of the household and taking care of children. Second, the role of the public in the form of earning a living and their role in society.

Before the separation, the husband becomes a reliable figure in making a living for the family, and the informant will focus more on his household affairs or educating his children. However, due to the separation, the informants have to make a living independently, and the time they spend together and educate their children will be reduced.

### 3.3.3 *The application of sexual education to boys tends to be awkward.*

The delivery of sexual education for a mother (widow) who has a son of a different gender from herself will undoubtedly be a challenge in explaining—explaining things that have a different role with her as a woman becomes awkward to convey, such as sex education in the realm of sexual relations with the opposite sex to boys who have started to enter adulthood.

An informant member of the Makassar Widow Network Community who has a son who is already a teenager and has entered adulthood stated that conveying sexual matters to a boy who is already a teenager makes it awkward and embarrassing to share. Giving forms of sexual education such as talking about how to have a good and healthy sexual relationship is considered better if it is delivered by a father who has the same sex.

Based on the discussion of the research results above, the data obtained related to the obstacles in the family life of members of the Widow Community in Makassar City are, 1) Children from single-parent families tend to ignore parental advice 2) Mothers as

single parents will find it challenging to share their duties, and 3) The application of sexual education to boys tends to be awkward

## 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded: There are four forms of sexual education applied in single-parent families in the Makassar Janda Community, namely; a) introduction to the function and shape of the body or anatomy; b) Self-security; c) Development and changes in body shape (puberty); d) Social relations and adultery, and e) dress etiquette. Methods of sexual education for members of the Makassar Widow Network community obtained five methods, namely; a) lectures; b) advice; c) question and answer; and d) punishment (reprimand). Constraints in the family life of members of the Widow Community in Makassar City are, a) Children from single-parent families tend to ignore parental advice b) Mothers as single parents will find it challenging to share their duties, and c) Application of sexual education to children boys tend to be clumsy.

## AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

1. A. Octamaya Tenri Awaru as the head of the research implementer is responsible for coordination and research ideas and Corresponding author
2. Muhammad Syukur as a member I, acted as the initial problem analysis at the research site and helping data analysis and finalizing article manuscripts
3. Sri Erni Herawati as member II acts as a data collector in the field and writing report
4. M. Ridwan Said Ahmad as member III acts as a data collector in the field
5. Hasni as member IV acts as a data collector in the field

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