

## Collaborative Communication in Sex Education: A Literature Review on Teacher-Parent Synergy in Secondary Schools

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**Abstract:** Sex education at the junior high school level is an important aspect in shaping the character and self-awareness of adolescents regarding the biological, psychological, and social changes they experience. This study aims to examine sex education as a shared responsibility between teachers, parents, and students by highlighting effective communication patterns in its implementation. The method used is a literature review (library research) with a qualitative descriptive approach. Data was collected through a review of various journals, academic books, and recent research reports discussing sex education collaboration in schools and families. The results of the study show that open and empathetic communication between teachers, parents, and students is a key factor in the success of sex education. Teachers act as facilitators who convey scientific knowledge and moral values contextually, while parents serve as primary educators who instill moral norms and responsibilities at home. The synergy of two-way communication between schools and families has been proven to increase students' understanding of sexuality issues and reduce risky behaviour. This study emphasises that effective sex education must be designed collaboratively, be sensitive to culture and religion, and be oriented towards the formation of healthy and responsible attitudes. The findings of this study are expected to serve as a reference for the development of adaptive and sustainable sex education communication models in formal education and family environments.

**Keywords:** sex education, effective communication, teacher-parent collaboration, adolescents, shared responsibility

**Abstrak :** Pendidikan seks di tingkat Sekolah Menengah Pertama (SMP) merupakan aspek penting dalam pembentukan karakter dan kesadaran diri remaja terhadap perubahan biologis, psikologis, dan sosial yang mereka alami. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji pendidikan seks sebagai tanggung jawab bersama antara guru, orang tua, dan siswa dengan menyoroti pola komunikasi yang efektif dalam pelaksanaannya. Metode yang digunakan adalah kajian literatur (library research) dengan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan melalui

*telaah berbagai jurnal, buku akademik, dan laporan penelitian terkini yang membahas kolaborasi pendidikan seks di lingkungan sekolah dan keluarga. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa komunikasi terbuka dan empatik antara guru, orang tua, dan siswa menjadi faktor kunci keberhasilan pendidikan seks. Guru berperan sebagai fasilitator yang menyampaikan pengetahuan ilmiah dan nilai moral secara kontekstual, sementara orang tua berfungsi sebagai pendidik utama yang menanamkan norma dan tanggung jawab moral di rumah. Sinergi komunikasi dua arah antara sekolah dan keluarga terbukti meningkatkan pemahaman siswa terhadap isu seksualitas dan menekan perilaku berisiko. Kajian ini menegaskan bahwa pendidikan seks yang efektif harus dirancang secara kolaboratif, sensitif terhadap budaya dan agama, serta berorientasi pada pembentukan sikap sehat dan bertanggung jawab. Temuan penelitian ini diharapkan dapat menjadi rujukan bagi pengembangan model komunikasi pendidikan seks yang adaptif dan berkelanjutan di lingkungan pendidikan formal dan keluarga.*

**Keywords:** *Pendidikan seks, komunikasi efektif, kolaborasi guru, orang tua, remaja, tanggung jawab bersama*

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## **Introduction**

During adolescence, particularly at the junior high school level, there is a very complex transition process from childhood to adulthood. Adolescents begin to experience significant biological, psychological, and social changes, including curiosity about sexuality and their own bodies (Ansory et al., 2025). If these changes are not accompanied by proper guidance, many adolescents are at risk of misunderstanding sex, being exposed to pornographic content, and engaging in risky behaviour. Various studies in Indonesia show that adolescents aged 10–14 who have a distant relationship with their parents tend to be more easily exposed to pornographic content. This condition is also influenced by the amount of time spent accessing social media without adequate supervision from parents (Pradja et al., 2025). Therefore, sex education is very important for developing an understanding of one's own body, respecting others, and forming a sense of responsibility from an early age.

Socially and politically, sex education in Indonesia still faces various challenges. One study shows that parents of students in Indonesia are quite reluctant towards sex education in schools, with the majority of respondents having a negative perception of sex education for primary school children. 51.2% rejected it in a study in the Hegarmanah region (Rafi et al., 2024). In addition, studies of parents in Indonesia show that their perceptions of school-based sex education are still not

entirely positive. This situation is exacerbated by the lack of curricular space to discuss sexuality issues in schools and the suboptimal readiness of teachers to deliver material that is sensitive to religious and cultural values. Thus, the urgency of implementing sex education in the context of the family school is very real.

Previous studies have revealed the role of each party in sex education and the communication patterns that influence the results. A national quantitative study in Indonesia showed a significant relationship between sources of information (parents, teachers, peers) and adolescent sexual behaviour ( $p < 0.01$ ), parents ( $p = 0.000$ ), teachers ( $p = 0.003$ ), peers ( $p = 0.000$ ) (Nurkhansa et al., 2024). Other studies have highlighted barriers to communication between parents and adolescents on reproductive health issues, including low levels of parental education, knowledge and attitudes towards issues considered taboo (Susanti et al., 2025). Although studies have been completed, there are still differences in academic opinion regarding the most effective communication patterns and how collaboration between teachers and parents can be carried out synergistically.

Although many studies emphasise the importance of open communication between schools and families, there is a clear discrepancy between the literature and the actual conditions in the field. Many schools do not yet have formal procedures for actively involving parents in sex education, and consistent two-way communication is still rare. On the other hand, existing research tends to focus on only one party, such as the role of parents or teachers separately, without focusing on collaborative communication patterns between teachers and parents of junior high school students. This discrepancy includes a lack of empirical research that maps effective communication patterns within the framework of shared responsibility, particularly in junior high schools in Indonesia.

Based on the above description, this study aims to examine sex education as a shared responsibility between teachers, parents, and junior high school students by highlighting effective communication patterns in its implementation. This study is important because it can contribute to both academic and practical fields: academically, it enriches the literature on sex education communication in the school-family setting in Indonesia, and practically, it can form the basis for the development of a collaborative model that is adaptive to culture and religion. The findings are expected to assist school policymakers, parents, and education practitioners in designing sustainable, open, and empathetic communication strategies, thereby optimising the development of healthy and responsible character in adolescents.

## **Method**

This study utilised a literature review method (library research) that focused on searching, analysing, and synthesising various scientific sources relevant to the topic of sex education at the junior high school level (Hadi & Afandi, 2021). This approach was chosen because the study did not collect data directly in the field but instead sought to examine the results of previous studies to find patterns of effective communication between teachers, parents, and students in the context of sex education. The approach used was descriptive qualitative, which systematically describes the relationships between concepts and findings without using numerical or statistical data.

The research data sources were obtained from various credible scientific literature, including national and international journals indexed in the last five years, academic books discussing sex education and educational communication, research reports, seminar proceedings, and relevant education regulations. The data collection process was carried out through documentation and literature study techniques in several stages (Ardiansyah et al., 2023). First, determine search keywords such as sex education, communication patterns, teacher-parent collaboration, and adolescent education. Search for sources from scientific databases such as Google Scholar, DOAJ, and Sinta, then select literature based on topic relevance, year of publication, and scientific validity.

Data analysis was conducted using content analysis, which consists of four stages (Martono, 2010). First, the identification stage to classify the main themes and variables, such as the roles of teachers, parents, and students in sex education. Second, the data reduction stage is used to select important information relevant to communication patterns and shared responsibilities. Third, the synthesis stage to integrate various research results into a complete conceptual understanding. Fourth, the conclusion stage, which produced final findings on effective communication patterns and their implications for the implementation of sex education in junior high schools.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Results**

#### **The Role of Teachers in Sex Education Communication**

Based on a literature review of various studies, it was found that the effectiveness of communication in sex education is greatly influenced by the role of teachers, parental involvement, and the school's ability to create an open learning environment. The role of teachers in sex education communication has a very important and complex dimension, not merely as conveyors of information, but as facilitators of active dialogue and creators of an open learning environment.

Numerous studies have found that when teachers are able to create warm, empathetic, and two-way interactions—not only answering questions but also listening to students' concerns—teenage students feel safer to express their doubts, experiences, or questions that they have been holding back due to embarrassment or fear. This approach is crucial in sex education for adolescents, as the topic of sexuality is often shrouded in stigma and taboo, making students reluctant to speak openly. Therefore, the effectiveness of teacher communication cannot be separated from parental involvement, as sex education in schools will be more meaningful if it receives support from a supportive family environment.

Several studies confirm that this method of communication has been proven to help students deepen their understanding of sexuality issues more comprehensively. Research (Putri & Andriani, 2022) highlights the synergy between parents and teachers in sex education. The study found that regular parenting activities conducted via Zoom and WhatsApp enabled both teachers and parents to interact openly, evaluate student development, and jointly establish a stigma-free foundation for communication.

However, this synergy between teachers and parents will not work optimally without the support of adequate professional capacity for teachers to understand and deliver comprehensive sex education. In addition, research on teacher empowerment in sex education programmes integrated with the primary school curriculum shows that very few teachers have received special training on sex education or have adequate knowledge about sexual abuse and self-protection. As a result, Year 5 primary school students in Surakarta still have low self-protection skills (Wulandari dkk., 2021). This emphasises that for sex education communication to be effective, teachers need more than just to 'teach'; they need to be equipped with pedagogical competence, a dialogical approach, and sensitivity to the emotional context of students.

Based on these findings, it is clear that efforts to strengthen sex education in schools must begin with strengthening teachers' communication and empathy skills towards students. The success of sex education communication is largely determined by teachers' ability to build empathetic, open, and stigma-free interpersonal relationships. Teachers need to be equipped with pedagogical skills that not only emphasise biological aspects but also foster students' moral, social, and emotional understanding so that sex education becomes a transformative and sustainable learning process.

### **Communication between Parents and Children at Home**

Communication patterns within families play an important role in the success of sex education for adolescents. However, in many Indonesian families,

discussions about sexuality are still considered taboo and inappropriate to talk about openly, so adolescents often seek information from unreliable sources. Research results (Munawaroh, 2023) found that shame, a lack of parental understanding, and socio-cultural norms are the main obstacles to providing sex education at home. As a result, adolescents are vulnerable to misinformation and risky behaviour due to a lack of proper guidance from their families.

Other studies confirm that parental communication style greatly determines the effectiveness of sex education. A study (Insiyah & Hidayat, 2020) states that open, honest, and empathetic communication helps children healthily understand the concept of sexuality, while an authoritative approach tends to create emotional distance and fear. This is reinforced by (Raufika et al., 2023) who found that dialogic communication, rather than mere prohibition, enables parents to instil moral values and responsibility more effectively. Therefore, sex education in the family should be positioned as a process of moral guidance, not just the delivery of biological information.

The consistency of these research findings is also reflected in the guidelines provided by international institutions, one of which is the World Health Organisation (WHO), which emphasises that sex education should ideally be provided from an early age, involving the family and tailoring the message to cultural and religious values. Family communication that is responsive to religious and cultural contexts can reduce the risk of deviant sexual behaviour among adolescents (Pahlevi et al., 2025). Thus, the synthesis of the literature review shows that the success of sex education in Indonesia is largely determined by the ability of parents to establish open, loving, and morally valuable communication, so that adolescents gain a comprehensive, healthy understanding that is in line with cultural values and religious teachings.

### **Synergy between Teachers and Parents in Schools**

Synergy in communication between teachers and parents in the school environment plays an important role in the success of sex education and the formation of positive behaviour in adolescents. Research by (Insiyah & Hidayat, 2020) shows that open and personal parent-child communication supports the effectiveness of sex education in primary school children, particularly through language, openness of information, and emotional closeness. Although the study focused on families, the implications of interpersonal communication are also relevant in teacher-parent relationships at school, as the same communication patterns (open, empathetic, cooperative) enable dialogue and mutual reinforcement between home and school (Masrufa et al., 2023).

Several studies in Indonesia confirm that teacher-parent partnerships through two-way communication channels and collaborative programmes can strengthen their shared role in educating students. For example, a study on 'Analysis of teacher and parent partnerships in shaping children's character' by (Handayani & Hasrul, 2021) shows that structured collaboration between teachers and parents, including regular meetings, consultations, and a shared vision, contributes positively to the development of students' character. In the context of sex education in schools, this means that in addition to the educational material provided by teachers, success is highly dependent on the support and reinforcement of parents through continuous and consistent communication.

These findings indicate that the success of comprehensive and continuous sex education at the school level is not only determined by what teachers convey, but also by how schools and parents work together as partners through open, empathetic, and systemic communication. This partnership enables the delivery of accurate information that is culturally and religiously appropriate at school and at home, and creates an educational ecosystem that supports healthy adolescent development. Therefore, strengthening teacher-parent communication should be a strategic priority in the development of sex education and parenting programmes in schools.

### **Effective Communication Models in Sex Education**

Open communication is an important component in an effective conceptual model of sex education. Research by (Wiendijarti, 2011) shows that interpersonal communication patterns between parents and children in the context of adolescent sex education in Yogyakarta are greatly influenced by trust, empathy, and mutual respect; children who feel heard and understood tend to be more open to asking questions than those who experience closed communication. This condition underlines that in order to reach adolescents effectively, teachers and parents need to build a dialogical atmosphere that is not only informative but also supports emotional and relational aspects. It is this open communication that forms the basis for effective collaboration between schools and families in delivering comprehensive sex education.

Collaboration between schools and families through a balanced division of roles is the second element that should not be overlooked. An experimental study in Boyolali on 'KIS-E' training for teachers and parents showed a significant improvement in communication skills related to sex education after joint intervention by the school and parents (Hidayatillah et al., 2024). These findings confirm that a collaborative model, in which teachers and parents work together to convey information and instil moral values, is more effective than when each party

works separately. However, the effectiveness of this synergy cannot be separated from the surrounding cultural context and social values.

Cultural contextualisation is the third important component in the sexual education communication model. Studies discussing sexual education and Indonesian cultural norms reveal that communication that is sensitive to local cultural and gender identities is more likely to be accepted by adolescents and parents (Situmorang, 2024). Therefore, an effective communication model in sex education for adolescents at the secondary school level must integrate three components: open communication between teachers, parents, and students; collaboration between schools and families; and a contextual approach to local culture and religion as a strategic framework for shaping healthy, responsible, and adaptive adolescent character.

## **Discussion**

### **The Role of Teachers in Sex Education Communication**

Teachers play a strategic role in establishing effective and ethical communication about sex education in schools. In the context of lower secondary education, teachers not only function as conveyors of information, but also as facilitators of dialogue that encourages students to actively participate in healthily understanding issues of sexuality. The success of sex education communication is largely determined by the teacher's ability to manage empathetic, open, and contextual learning interactions. According to (Ikhsan et al., 2024) teachers who are able to integrate moral, ethical, and spiritual values into the learning process will be more effective in shaping the character and social awareness of students. This view is in line with the theory of educational communication put forward by (Littlejohn & Foss, 2010), which places teachers as communicators and facilitators who bridge scientific and moral values in the classroom.

When compared to Bandura's social learning theory (Abdullah, 2019; Sabililhaq et al., 2024), the role of teachers is not only to convey information but also to serve as role models for students. Through observation and interaction, students learn to internalise the moral and social values demonstrated by their teachers. The combination of educational communication theory and social learning theory shows that effective communication in sex education cannot be separated from the aspects of role modelling and reciprocal dialogue that build trust between teachers and students. In the context of sex education, a participatory and two-way approach allows students to play an active role in constructing their understanding of sexuality based on religious and cultural values. This is in line with the view (Rahayu, 2023), which emphasises that effective learning communication requires emotional and intellectual engagement between teachers and students so that messages can be

understood deeply. Teachers who are able to manage dialogic communication will foster students' confidence to ask questions and engage in open discussions on topics that are often considered taboo. Thus, sex education communication is not merely a means of conveying information, but a process of forming a humanistic and reflective moral awareness.

Nevertheless, a number of studies show that teachers in Indonesia still face limitations in delivering comprehensive sex education. As stated (Wulandari dkk., 2021) It was found that most primary school teachers had not received adequate training on sex education and child protection, so the material presented was often partial. This condition shows a gap between the ideal role of teachers as moral communicators and the reality in the field, which still lacks professional training support. Within the framework of communication competency theory (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984), The effectiveness of sex education communication depends on three aspects, namely the knowledge, skills, and motivation of teachers in conveying sensitive messages appropriately and empathetically. Therefore, improving teachers' professional competence must be directed at strengthening these three aspects.

These findings confirm that the success of sex education in secondary schools is highly dependent on teachers' ability to combine theory and practice of empathetic communication based on moral and religious values. Teachers not only act as messengers, but also as drivers of value transformation that shapes students' self-awareness and social responsibility. By strengthening their pedagogical capacity, communication literacy, and synergy with parents and the school environment, teachers can become the main pillars in creating a civilised, adaptive, and sustainable sex education ecosystem. This discussion forms the basis for the research conclusion that the success of sex education cannot be separated from the quality of teachers' humanistic and transformative communication.

### **Communication between Parents and Children at Home**

In the context of sex education, communication between parents and children acts as a mechanism for moral internalisation, self-identity reinforcement, and preventive social control against risky behaviour. Recent studies confirm that the quality of communication interactions within the family has a direct influence on adolescents' sexual decisions and behaviour (Hurst et al., 2022). Literature studies indicate that parents who establish open communication using age-appropriate language, acknowledge feelings of embarrassment, and set appropriate boundaries demonstrate more positive results in improving their children's sexual knowledge. For example, (Insiyah & Hidayat, 2020) found that three critical aspects of effective communication are language that is clear and appropriate for the child's developmental stage, openness of information, and personal closeness between

parents and children. In Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory of development perspective in (Tong & An, 2024), The family functions as the microsystem that most influences the development of children's values and behaviour. Family communication not only transfers information, but also shapes children's perceptions and internal social control through consistent and meaningful interactions (Ainiyah et al., 2025; Askoning & Hosna, 2024; Azizah et al., 2025). Conversely, according to Fitzpatrick and Ritchie's theory of family communication, the quality of communication within the family is influenced by conversation orientation and conformity orientation (Aurelia, 2024). Therefore, parents are not only providers of information, but also facilitators of discussion who support children in understanding and critically evaluating the messages they receive from their environment.

Nevertheless, various studies indicate that parents' capacity to discuss sexuality openly remains limited. These barriers are generally caused by limited sexual literacy, socio-cultural sensitivities, and the perception that sex education is the responsibility of schools. Research (Santoso, 2022) noting that most parents avoid discussion due to embarrassment and anxiety about facing questions from children that are considered taboo. This situation indicates an urgent need to strengthen parental literacy, particularly in the areas of interpersonal communication and the contextual delivery of sensitive information.

Regular and responsive communication between parents and children can prevent risky sexual behaviour in adolescents. As explained by (Maulida & Safrida, 2020), Regular and responsive communication between parents and children can prevent risky sexual behaviour in adolescents. As explained by (Maulida & Safrida, 2020), parents who employ a warm, open communication style that incorporates value-based guidance reduce their children's tendency to seek information about sexuality from unreliable sources. An ideal home communication strategy includes setting aside special time, adopting a supportive and non-judgmental attitude, and choosing words and contexts that respect the family's cultural and religious values. This makes parents significant educational partners in their children's sex education.

### **Synergy between Teachers and Parents**

Synergy between teachers and parents is an important prerequisite for the success of sex education in schools. Harmonious collaboration between these two parties not only strengthens the continuity of learning, but also ensures consistency between the values instilled at home and at school. In the framework of values education, synergistic communication between teachers and parents becomes a medium that enables the consistent delivery of moral, social and religious messages. Emphasised (Feranina & Komala, 2022) that targeted, two-way communication

between teachers and parents plays a significant role in building students' character, as it involves emotional, cognitive and spiritual dimensions in the educational process. Therefore, sex education delivered at school will have a stronger influence if it is reinforced by open dialogue with parents, so that students receive consistent messages between home and school.

The application of synergy between teachers and parents in the context of sex education requires an effective, sustainable communication system that is adaptive to social change. Explained (Sun'iyah, 2020) Active parental involvement in learning activities, whether through communication forums or regular consultations, contributes to the increased effectiveness of imparting religious values in primary schools. These findings can be adapted in the context of sex education, where communicative collaboration between teachers and parents acts as a preventive mechanism against risky adolescent behaviour. Through planned communication, teachers and parents can align their perceptions, clarify moral boundaries, and formulate approaches that are in line with the cultural and religious values of the family.

However, this synergy often faces obstacles in the form of limited communication, differences in perception, and minimal interaction time between teachers and parents. This situation emphasises the need for institutional strategies that can effectively bridge two-way communication. Schools need to provide formal platforms such as parenting forums, collaborative counselling, and the use of digital media as adaptive means of communication. In line with the findings (Handayani & Hasrul, 2021), The effectiveness of synergy between teachers and parents can be realised when there is a shared commitment to the vision of education, a proportional division of roles, and a mutually supportive communication pattern. Therefore, the synergy between teachers and parents in sex education should be positioned as a pedagogical partnership oriented towards character building and the prevention of risky behaviour among adolescents.

### **Model Komunikasi Efektif dalam Pendidikan Seks**

An effective communication model in sex education requires open dialogue, messages that are relevant to the psychological development of adolescents, and messages that are consistent with cultural and religious values. Explained (Bustomi, 2024) Effective educational communication is not only oriented towards the transfer of information, but also towards the development of participatory interactions between teachers and students. In the context of sex education, this means that the success of communication is not determined by the amount of material presented, but rather by the quality of interpersonal relationships and the ability of teachers and parents to create a safe and stigma-free space for dialogue. Therefore, the ideal

communication model must integrate instructional, empathetic, and reflective approaches in every learning process.

In addition to openness, the effectiveness of communication models also depends heavily on their ability to adapt to social contexts and technological developments. Research (Sholicha et al., 2015) found that the implementation of child-friendly, transparent, and socially interactive communication patterns contributes to improving children's understanding of sexuality and self-protection. In the context of adolescents, this adaptation can be realised through the use of digital educational media, group discussions, and case simulations that encourage students to think critically about moral values and reproductive health. Thus, an effective communication model not only serves as a means of education, but also as a process of internalising values and shaping character in a sustainable manner.

The contextualisation of culture and religion is the final aspect that strengthens the communication model in sex education in Indonesia. Society's acceptance of sex education is highly dependent on the extent to which the approach used respects social norms and local cultural identities (Sipahutar et al., 2025). Therefore, teachers and parents must become agents of socialisation of values who are able to harmonise the demands of modernity and religious moral norms. By integrating the principles of openness, collaboration, and cultural sensitivity, the communication model for sex education in schools can function as a preventive instrument that shapes the moral awareness and healthy behaviour of adolescents.

## **Conclusion**

This study confirms that sex education at the junior high school level is a collective responsibility between teachers, parents, and students, requiring open, empathetic, and contextual communication patterns that respect cultural and religious values. Based on a review of the literature, it was found that two-way communication between teachers and students based on empathy, openness, and moral exemplary behaviour has been proven to increase adolescents' understanding and awareness of sexuality issues in a healthy manner. On the other hand, responsive and loving family communication acts as a mechanism for internalising values and strengthening children's moral identity. When these two areas of communication are synergised through systematic collaboration between teachers and parents, a more comprehensive, adaptive, and sustainable model of sex education is formed.

Theoretically, this study confirms and expands on previous findings regarding the importance of interpersonal communication in sex education. This research provides new conceptual contributions through a synthesis of three

approaches: empathetic communication by teachers, moral communication by parents, and institutional synergy between schools and families as the basis for forming a model of sex education communication based on shared responsibility. This model enriches scientific perspectives by positioning communication not merely as a tool for transferring information, but as a transformative means of shaping healthy and ethical character in adolescents.

This study has limitations because it is a literature review, so it is not yet able to empirically describe the dynamics of sex education communication in the field. The analysis also still relies on secondary data from various studies with different social and cultural backgrounds, so generalisation of the results needs to be done with caution. Therefore, further research is recommended using a mixed methods approach that combines quantitative surveys and in-depth interviews to directly capture the patterns of communication between teachers, parents, and students. In addition, it is necessary to develop a collaborative intervention model in schools that integrates gender-sensitive communication training for teachers and family-based sexuality literacy programmes.

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