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Sex Education in Islam and the West and its Function in the Pure Life of Modern Human

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ABSTRACT

SUBJECT AND OBJECTIVES: The United Nations, has turned its process of sexual education into a model of globalization of family values and culture. There is an attempt to impose a system that forces its interests and political system on the entire world. For example, in the United Kingdom, all primary-aged children are required to learn about relationships and sex education (RSE), including topics around homosexuality. Another example is France, has obligatory sexual education discussions in all public schools whilst also banning wearing headscarf. ***METHOD AND FINDING***: The uncertainty and contradiction that arose in western circles over the issue of sexual education resulted in a moral struggle over the nature of the sexual education curriculum, its contents, who is learning it, who is providing it, and the right age to present topics. On the other hand, the clash of religious beliefs with the new educational system in the west has sparked a fierce backlash among faith-based groups, because western sexual education is based on principles and foundations that are contrary to Islamic teachings. Role or importance towards religious education leading to the question: What is the purpose of sex education, and is religions an impediment? Leads to the finding that religion paves the way for science, and this is the function of sex education based on religious teachings in the pure life of modern man. ***CONCLUSION***: There is no religious prohibition against parents or educators directing and raising a child sexually as a scientific subject, if the education takes place in a calm and purposeful manner, away from the excitement of some methods of application and embodiment, and in an atmosphere of mixing males and females as in western societies. As a result, are left with sexual delight rather than sex education.

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Introduction

The "Great Sexual Revolution" in the United States, which began in 1960, had a devastating effect on the Western World, as premarital sexual behavior is now permitted outside of marriage and in public, furthermore being open to people of all legal ages without limitation. Gay partnerships which were previously illegal, are now regarded as normal relationships in the sake of human liberty.

This western sexuality culture is founded on a number of theories and ideologies, the most notable being Sigmund Freud's "Excitement Sexuality" theory. He believed that life is made up of tension and pleasure, that all tension stems from the build-up of libido or sexual energy and that all pleasure results from its discharge. *(Freud, 2011)*

The Islamic world has been affected by the western world's sexual and mental liberation; where some people have attempted to present the western model as an alternative to religious sex education, prompting many Muslims in Western countries to consider how to address the challenges that face children who have been integrated into Western society, and how to preserve their Islamic identity.

In the shadows of this new educational system that mandates sexual education for children as young as four years old, exposing them to topics and issues they had never heard of before, particularly lessons about LGBTIQ, which stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/ transsexual, Intersex, Queer, and Questioning.

This is what has driven some parents to voice their opposition to the compulsory sex education that is part of the school

curriculum, and they have called for the removal of LGBTIQ-related teachings.

As a result, it was necessary to examine this sexual Education program from an Islamic perspective, based on the Holy Quran, the Prophet's Sunnah, and Ahl al-Bayt Hadiths, in order to regulate individual behaviour, channel instincts and emotions according to the righteous and appropriate rules, in order for people to live in a stable and secure environment free of vice and disintegration, as has been happening in Western nations.

Accordingly, in the present research, the following objectives and goals are examined:

- Definition of some key terms
- How according to the Holy Quran, the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet, and the infallible Imams, sex education is a important topic in religious.
- Sex Education in Western Culture, such as in: UK, France and USA
- How Western and Islamic sex education have different goals?
- Ways on how to cope with children's sex education specifically in the West.

Theoretical Foundations of Research

1. Sexuality Education

This is a broad term that means different things to different people and groups. Sexuality education is referred to by a variety of names, including:

- Sex Education
- Sexuality Education for Everyone (CSE)
- Life and Living Skills
- Holistic Sexuality Education
- RSE (Relationships and Sex Education): Teaches

youngsters about the various physical, social, and emotional elements of growing up, as well as relationships, sexuality, and sexual health. Its goal is to give students the tools and knowledge they need to have healthy, rewarding relationships, take charge of their sexual health, and feel secure and happy in their sexuality. It also aids their resilience, independence, and self-esteem development. *(Relationships and Sex Education Curriculum, 2010)*

- Reproductive Health and Sexuality *(Mohammad Aftab Khan et al, 2020)*

CSE is a rights-based and gender-focused approach to sexuality education, whether in or out of school, according to the United Nations Population Fund, the UN's sexual and reproductive health agency. *(United Nations Population Fund, 2016)*

2. Islamic Sexuality Education

Refers to the teaching of age-appropriate knowledge of sexuality and sexual health in accordance with Islamic beliefs and principles. The goal is to teach Muslims about Islam's moral nature and its rules. *(Mohammad Aftab Khan et al, 2020)*

Sexual Education from an Islamic Perspective

Many blessings have been bestowed upon God's believers. One of these blessings is religion, which guides human in all parts of daily life including sexual education which also encompasses in all aspects of Muslim life.

Sexual education is acceptable in Islam as long as they are carried out within the confines of religious beliefs, which aims at educating and advising children

about this topic from a religious and moral point of view while also ensuring to protect them from the ideologies that are incompatible with religious beliefs.

As a result, we can conclude that sexual relationships that take place only within the context of a lawful marriage are permissible.

The Holy Quran, Prophet Muhammad, and Ahl al-Bayt are regarded as the ideal model for politely discussing the many aspects of sexual life; where they discussed and still till today enlighten us about the issues and matters that concern sexuality, through establishing rules and controls for sexual relationships that have become general laws and principles that Muslims have followed through all eras.

The Holy Quran recognizes sexual desires, as God Almighty has revealed in His Glorious Book:

> *"The love of desires, of women and sons, of the hoarded wealth of gold and silver, of well-bred horses and cattle, and tilth, is made to appear fair to men; this is the provision of this world's existence, and Allah is He Who is the good aim of life". (Quran, 3: 14)*

Allah says in His noble book that Islam highlights human beings' natural sexual needs and does not call for their suppression; instead he encouraged marriage as a good deed and strongly opposes celibacy and monasticism:

> *"Marry the unmarried among you and the righteous among your male slaves and female slaves. If they should be poor, Allah will enrich*

them from His bounty, and Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing". (Quran, 24: 32)

He further stated:

"Whosoever likes to follow my tradition, then he should know that marriage is from my tradition". (Hurr Amili, 2008, Vol. 14: 3)

As the Great Islam taught us, progeny is a blessing from God that should not be disregarded. This can be seen in Surat "Kahf":

"Wealth and children are the adornments of the worldly life, but the everlasting good deeds are far better with your Lord in reward and in hope". (Quran, 18: 46)

When the Holy Quran speaks of sex, it does it in the context of chastity rather than pleasure, as is the case in Western civilization today.

God Almighty has stated in His Noble Book that individuals who are unable to marry due to poverty or other reasons should seek chastity for what God has forbidden until He enriches them from His bounty and facilitates their marriage, Which can be inferred from Surat "Nur":

"And those who do not have the financial resources to marry should remain chaste until Allah blesses them with His bounty. And if any of your slaves ask for a letter (of liberation), give it to them if you know they're good and trustworthy. And from Allah's riches, which he has bestowed upon you, give something to them. If your maids seek chastity, do not drive them into prostitution so

that you might profit from the perishable goods of this world. But if someone forces them into prostitution, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful (to those women, He will pardon them because they were forced to commit the wicked conduct against their will". (Quran, 24: 33)

In this regard, the Austrian Ofseld Schgadz corroborated this, saying: Consciousness is a sexual virtue. *(Ref: Mousawi, 2007: 83)*

As we can see from this magnificent verse, chastity is the finest way to soothe the sexual drive and avoid doing what Allah, the Almighty, has forbidden. This is accomplished by increasing one's faith and proximity to Allah, the Holy Quran further mentions the story of Joseph, in which some of the events revolve around sexual chastity, with the goal of educating and encouraging people to imitate God's prophet's actions and words in order to overcome lust and desire.

Apart from chastity, the prophet Muhammad also mentioned fasting when he said:

"Get married, young men, if you can support a woman. It truly reduces the gaze and protects chastity. Those who are unable to do so must fast in order to curb their passions". (Kulayni, 2015 Vol. 4: 180)

Islam established a standard of etiquette, and there are numerous testimonies to support this healthy sexual education, such as:

- The differentiation in beds, as the prophet Muhammad says:

  "The boy and the boy, the boy and the girl, and the boys and girls

arrange their beds to sleep separately from the age of ten." (Hurr Amili, 2008, Vol. 2: 231)

- The etiquette of asking permission before entering a room has been encouraged in order to keep children from looking at what sexually provokes them, or from preoccupying their minds with sex-related issues for which they have no explanation due to it not being suitable for their thinking at this age, in addition to their lack of experience in these matters.

- The etiquette of asking for permission is mentioned in the Quran, and God defines when it is permissible to do so and when it is not. He said:

"And when your children attain puberty let them ask to leave to come to you like their elders used to ask leaves. Thus, does Allah clearly explain to you His signs. He is All-Knowing, All-Wise". (Quran, 24: 59)

- The etiquette of gazing; God Almighty said in His Glorious Book:
"O Prophet, Tell the believing men to drop their sight and guard their chastity. That is purer for them. Surely Allah is All-Aware of what they do". (Quran, 24: 30)

Furthermore, Imam Ali highlights:

"The eye is the reporter of the heart and the messenger of mind". (Majlisi, 1983, Vol. 104: 41)

This is further emphasised when Imam Ali also states that:

> *"The eyes are Satan's snares". (Majlisi, 1983, Vol. 77: 294)*

The prophet Muhammad also talks about this when he mentions:

> *"Avoid unnecessary excess looks as they grow lust in your hearts and make you heedless". (Ibid, Vol. 72: 199)*

This Quranic verse, as well as the noble Hadiths, demonstrate that Islam has specific regulations regarding what is and is not permissible to gaze at.

It's important to note that Islam provides useful practical guidance in all aspects of life, including human sexual relations. This is due to the large concern about human morality, therefore, these topics are considered to being part of the very important Islamic tasks of the educational process as its plays a significant role in shaping the human personality according to special guidelines and rules. For this reason, following these Islamic teachings is a blessing, a mercy from God, further aiding in keeping people away from deviance and disintegration.

Sexuality Education in the Western Societies

While sexuality education is mandatory by law in nearly all the countries of the European Union, the content and quality vary. Every country's sex education system has defects, but there is a variation in the outcomes, with some being more serious and harmful than others. As a result, it is important to take a look at how sex education is carried out in some western societies; Such as UK, France and USA.

1. United Kingdom

From September 2020, the Department of Education has made Relationships and Education (RSE) compulsory for all primary students and secondary students. Furthermore, beginning in September 2020, all schools will be required to teach Health Education. *(Government Response, 2020)*

When this curriculum was approved, some parents raised their voices, and the issue of teaching homosexuality in sex education lessons caused a great uproar and many demonstrations by parents of primary school students from various religions and social groups, and the subject is still open within the responsible educational authorities between those who insist on teaching these subjects and those who refuse because it is not appropriate for the student's age, due to many arguing that this will lead to the loss of many of their children's innocence.

However, they justify this by stating that their purpose is to help all young people be happy, healthy and safe, as well as to properly prepare the child to live a positive life in society.

2. France

Sexual education is mandated in all French schools, with curricula focusing on biological sexual maturity, reproduction, STD prevention, and contraception *(Baecher et al, 2009)*

The distribution of condoms and contraception to teenagers in France is based on sex education programs and official legislation. In France, national health insurance covers all reproductive health services, including condoms, which are freely distributed to anybody under the age of 18, and abortion is legal and free until

the tenth week of pregnancy. *(Berne and Huberman, 1999)*

3. USA

As part of the Adolescent Family Life Act or AFLA, comprehensive sex education and abstinence-only sex education are taught in the United States. Where around 750,000 teenagers become pregnant in the United States every year, however with up to 82% of those pregnancies being unwanted. Young adults aged 15 to 24 account for 25% of all new HIV infections in the United States and over half of the, over 19 million new STD infections diagnosed each year in the United States. *(Sexuality Education-Advocates for Youth, 1980)*

It is important to emphasize that the western sexual revolution, which had immediate negative consequences on society, undermined spiritual, psychological, and moral ideals. Leading to the removal of restraints and norms furthermore pushing more people toward obscenity and immorality.

As a result, one of the most fundamental causes that adolescences and young adults in Western countries are suffering from is the immense rush to satisfy sexual desires and the moral collapse of the principles of chastity and modesty.

For this reason, school systems have legalised and welcomed long-term national sexuality education programs that focus on a specific aspect of the curriculum, such as how to properly get rid of a fetus or baby, or how to establish a sexual relationship free of pregnancy or HIV/AIDS.

On the other hand, according to studies conducted in several European countries, the lessons provided to students in order to enjoy good sexual health in their daily lives have resulted in

a decrease in teenage pregnancies and abortions, as well as a decrease in rates of sexually transmitted infections (STI) and HIV among young people aged 15-24 years.

Objectives of Western and Islamic Sex Education and its Function in Modern Human Life

The intellectual ideologies which are adopted by Western nations and modern civilizations is materialistic thinking, which is far away from spiritual and moral principles and mainly oriented on human needs. Therefore, in order to avoid responsibility and pursue enjoyment, people are increasingly devoting time away from marriage, family formation, and childlessness.

So, in the west, sexual education is used to be based on these concepts and educational programs, which had negative impacts on society, such as increase in the spread of sexual diseases, epidemics, family dissolution and unwanted teen pregnancies.

As a result, they have had to make changes to their educational programs in order to avoid these problems. One of these changes includes, that Relationships education is now required for all primary-aged students due to the large number of children having many sex-related questions that they need to be answered with accurate medical information that is appropriate for their intellectual level and so, will be useful to them throughout their lives.

It's important to note that the purpose of western sexuality education is to teach young people how to handle sexuality in a healthy way. It also aims to establish beneficial behaviors such as the use of contraceptives, particularly condoms, which not

only prevents unwanted pregnancies but also STDs and HIV/AIDS.

This however gave rise to many questions for parents such as: Is it safe to teach LGBTIQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/ transsexual, Intersex, Queer, and Questioning) lessons?

The major goal of sexual education is divided into two parts: the scientific part and the religious part. In terms of science, it's about educating children about the various physiological and psychological changes that occur in their bodies, particularly during adolescence, and helping them deal with these changes in a more rational and effective manner.

As for the religious part, the Islamic educational theory (Pure Life) covers all parts of human life, even sexual education, where according to the Quran, the prophet's sunnah, and the imams' hadiths.

Starting with a marriage with a lawful relationship and raising children with an Islamic education based on what God permits and prohibits, has lead to Islam establishing sound and deviation-free sexual education rules, where if we follow them, we will grow educated generations who understand what is wrong and how to avoid it, as well as what is right and how to seek it. Furthermore aided in Islam in creating foundations and controls for the upkeep of both the person and society, also rules that keep people from going astray.

However, in addition to embracing sexual freedom, the West has its own ideas and goals in the process of sexual education, which are based on gratifying desires and needs without constraints and in proportion to their interests. These concepts contrast with

the principles and purposes of sexual education promoted by the Islamic religion, which instead accepts Islamic teachings as a belief and a way of life in order to raise a morally upright generation.

Methods of Dealing with Children in Relation to Sexual Education

Contrary to popular beliefs, Islam has made several rules regarding sexual education topics due to the fact it is a crucial aspect of human life. Scholars, guidance counsellors and even people in our day-to-day life should all be responsible in educating younger audiences and answering any relevant questions. Parents must also take responsibility for their children's religion, guiding them down the proper path and teaching them what pleases and displeases God.

Ways and which we can educate youngers about the topics of sexual education:

1. The most essential thing is to work to immunise the child from a young age, both internally and spiritually, so that he can develop an immunity that will keep him from being caught up in various forms of sins. Instead of closing the child's eyes and constructing barriers around him, it is more efficient to enlighten and strengthen his heart and intellect from within. This way he will no longer be fearful of being tainted by society's arrogance and corruption if he has self-immunity.
2. Lots of parents in Islamic societies avoid dealing with many important issues, including topics that

revolve around sexuality which if properly addressed can help correct children's behavior. This is mainly due to many parental traditions for example if a child asks sensitive questions about their private body parts, it is often regarded as shameful leading to unanswered questions which shouldn't be the case no matter how embarrassing they are. Instead of dismissing the topic, we must be open and educate them about these issues in a way that is age-appropriate.

3. Muslim teachers and scholars should be swift to adapting to the subject of sex education so they can educate doubtful children in a way that is appropriate for their age group according to our Islamic vision. This aims to protect our society from the dangers of sexual perversion and moral pollution as it is prevalent in western culture and education that calls for the right of sexual freedom between adolescent girls and boys without any restrictions.

This freedom seems wrong; because we reject the western concept of freedom which is based on a material foundation in which man/women have no interest in anything else other than satisfying their desire and obtaining pleasure. Of course, the west was able to elevate the level of freedom, but to the point where it surpassed all other human moralistic values.

On the bright side, the parenting of children in Islamic countries substantially aids in the

development of their personalities in a sound manner based on religious principles and teachings and away from forms of deviation in order for them to become excellent individuals.

On the other hand, western societies have a lack of religious controls and the inclusion of compulsory educational programs such as LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer) places greater responsibility on parents, scholars, and Islamic organizations in dealing with students on these issues.

Here are some steps to take in this regard:

- Enrolling in Islamic schools in the West, where children can study the teachings of the Holy Quran, Islamic principles, and good morals that will benefit them in their daily life. This, therefore can help in approaching sexual education from a religious and moral standpoint.
- Encouraging children to go to mosques and Islamic centers to hear lectures which can helps them to keep their religious identity and move away from imitating the west, which can further aid in preventing them from making mistakes that occur currently in modern societies which disregard sex-related morality, that can result in sexual dysfunctions and deviations.
- Through western policies which support religious freedom this has benefitted Muslims in opening religious schools that teach Arabic and Islamic subjects during the holidays. Therefore enrolling children in these institutions will aid in contributing towards the consolidation of religious

teachings and knowledge of halal and haram concerns, particularly in connection to sexual issues.

- Parents should always be a point of referral for their children in regards to sexual education, which is just as necessary as any other part of Islam. Highlighting the importance of parents educating themselves on this sensitive subject in order to gain experience for teaching young and adolescent children the correct information about sexual education, instead of them falling into sexual perversion and moral decay in the West.
- Sexual education programs for children and teenagers must be developed by religious and educational institutions and organizations.

Conclusion

The human life cycle begins at birth and ends when the soul departs the body, these stages vary depending on biological and social circumstances. Each stage has its own unique characteristics and needs which have a unique approach, style and pedagogical discourse. As a result, it is not permissible to mix or skip any of the phases.

The first stage of development which occurs before puberty and adolescence is when the child starts defining his/her sexual identity, therefore, causing him/her to become curious about their sexuality and start doubting what little information has been given to him/her.

As a result, it is illogical to expose young children to such matters as it can awaken a hidden desire which can drastically influence a young child's attitude in the future.

These stages of sexual education must be addressed in the context of comprehensive religious beliefs and teachings that derive their rules from the provisions of Islamic sharia, with the prophet Muhammad and his Ahl al-Bayt, regarded as the highest and most useful model of perfection. Islamic principles have proved that they can deal with the challenges of Western globalisation in the areas of family, culture, values and sexual relations due to its comprehensive and integrated approach.

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