



**KEPUTUSAN DEKAN
FAKULTAS KOMUNIKASI & DESAIN KREATIF
UNIVERSITAS BUDI LUHUR
Nomor : K/UBL/FKDK/000/005/02/26**

**TENTANG
KEWAJIBAN DOSEN MELAKSANAKAN TRIDHARMA PERGURUAN TINGGI
FAKULTAS KOMUNIKASI & DESAIN KREATIF UNIVERSITAS BUDI LUHUR
SEMESTER GENAP TAHUN AKADEMIK 2025/2026**

- Menimbang : a) Bahwa untuk meningkatkan kinerja Dosen dalam melaksanakan Tridharma Perguruan Tinggi di Fakultas Komunikasi & Desain Kreatif Universitas Budi Luhur.
b) Bahwa dipandang perlu meningkatkan peran Dosen dalam pengembangan keilmuan dan karya nyata dalam kehidupan masyarakat.
- Mengingat : 1) Undang-Undang Nomor 12/Tahun 2012 tentang Pendidikan Tinggi (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia/Tahun 2012 Nomor 5336);
2) Undang-Undang Nomor 20/Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia/Tahun 2003 Nomor 78, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Nomor 4301);
3) Undang-Undang Nomor 60/Tahun 1999 tentang Pendidikan Tinggi (Lembaran Negara Tahun 1999 Nomor 115, Tambahan Lembaran Negara Nomor 3859);
4) Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 17/Tahun 2010 tentang Pengelolaan dan Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan (Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 2010 Nomor 23);
5) Permendikbudristek Nomor 53 tahun 2023 tentang Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan Tinggi;
6) Statuta Universitas Budi Luhur No. K/YBLC/KET/000/216/06/23;
7) Keputusan Pengurus Yayasan Pendidikan Budi Luhur Cakti No. K/YBLC/KET/000/072/03/23 tentang Pengangkatan Dekan

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MENETAPKAN

- Pertama : Mewajibkan setiap dosen tetap Fakultas Komunikasi & Desain Kreatif Universitas Budi Luhur untuk memiliki *roadmap* penelitian, menyusun rencana atau proposal penelitian, melaksanakan penelitian, dan menyusun karya ilmiah minimal satu karya dalam satu semester.
- Kedua : Mewajibkan setiap dosen tetap Fakultas Komunikasi & Desain Kreatif untuk terlibat dalam kegiatan pengabdian masyarakat minimal satu kegiatan dalam satu semester.
- Ketiga : Mewajibkan setiap dosen Fakultas Komunikasi & Desain Kreatif untuk mengajar sesuai dengan jadwal dan mata kuliah yang telah ditetapkan Ketua Program Studi.
- Kempat : Dalam melaksanakan Tridharma Perguruan Tinggi setiap dosen berkewajiban membuat laporan kepada Ketua Program Studi terkait dan bertanggung jawab kepada Dekan Fakultas Komunikasi & Desain Kreatif Universitas Budi Luhur.
- Kelima : Keputusan ini berlaku sejak tanggal ditetapkan dan akan diubah sebagaimana mestinya apabila dikemudian hari terdapat kekeliruan.

Ditetapkan di : Jakarta

Pada Tanggal : 23 Februari 2026

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Universitas Budi Luhur



Rocky Prasetyo Jati



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Universitas Budi Luhur Semester Genap Tahun 2025/2026

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The Effectiveness of Communication Strategies in Sexuality Education for Preventing Sexual Abuse among Elementary School Students

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of communication strategies used in sexuality education programs in improving elementary school students' understanding of self-protection against sexual abuse. The research was conducted at SDN 1 Bojungkerta Sukabumi, West Java, Indonesia, using a quantitative approach with a one-group pretest-posttest design. A total of 21 sixth-grade students, who completed both the pretest and posttest, were selected through purposive sampling. The data were analyzed using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test with a significance level of 0.05. Only one indicator the ability to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touch showed a statistically significant improvement ($Z = -2.100$; $p = 0.036$), while the remaining indicators, across eight measured indicators, including the ability to refuse uncomfortable touch ($p = 0.480$) and willingness to report to trusted adults ($p > .999$), did not show significant differences between pretest and posttest scores. These findings indicate that the communication strategies applied were only partially effective, particularly in improving students' cognitive understanding of the concrete concepts. However, they were less effective in influencing broader behavioral and emotional aspects, which require continuous reinforcement and repeated exposure. This study highlights the importance of developing sustained and interactive communication strategies in sexual education programs to achieve more comprehensive behavioral change among elementary school students.

Keywords: communication strategies; sexuality education; sexual abuse prevention; child protection; elementary school students

INTRODUCTION

Sexual abuse against children is a serious global problem that requires effective preventive efforts from an early age. In many countries, including Indonesia, cases of sexual violence against children continue to increase each year. Data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) indicate that sexual abuse cases involving children remain a serious concern in Indonesia and frequently occur in both family environments and educational institutions such as elementary schools. Children remain a serious concern in Indonesia and occur across various settings, including family environments and educational such as elementary schools. This highlights the vulnerability of children and the urgent need for preventive

educational efforts. Children at the elementary school level are still in the early stages of cognitive and emotional development, making them more vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse. At this stage, children may have difficulty recognizing dangerous situations and may lack the ability to communicate negative experiences clearly. Therefore, preventive education is essential to equip children with the knowledge and skills necessary for self-protection.

Sexuality education is widely recognized as one of the most effective preventive approaches to protect children from sexual abuse. Comprehensive sexual education helps children understand body boundaries, recognize appropriate and

inappropriate touch, and develop the ability to seek help when facing uncomfortable situations. International organizations such as UNESCO and the World Health Organization emphasize that early sexual education can increase children's awareness of personal safety and reduce the risk of sexual exploitation (UNESCO, 2021; WHO, 2018). Research also shows that school-based sexual education programs play an important role in strengthening children's knowledge and protective behaviors (Goldfarb & Lieberman, 2021; Finkelhor, 2021).

In the educational context, the effectiveness of sexual education programs is strongly influenced by the communication strategies used during instruction. Communication strategies determine how messages are delivered, understood, and internalized by students. Educational communication that incorporates visual materials, interactive discussions, and experiential learning tends to be more effective for elementary school children because they are in the concrete operational stage of cognitive development. Previous studies indicate that interactive and multisensory learning approaches significantly improve children's awareness of self-protection and abuse prevention (Kenny & Wurtele, 2022; Walsh et al., 2022). However, these studies primarily focus on educational content and learning methods, with limited attention to communication strategies as a structured process in delivering sexuality education. In addition, prior research tends to emphasize cognitive outcomes without thoroughly examining how communication approaches influence students' perceptions and behavioral readiness in preventing sexual abuse. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by specifically analyzing

the effectiveness of communication strategies in sexuality education.

Despite its importance, sexuality education remains a sensitive topic in many schools, particularly in conservative social contexts. Teachers may feel uncomfortable discussing sexuality education topics openly, which often results in limited or inconsistent implementation of such programs. As a consequence, children may not receive sufficient knowledge about self-protection and appropriate responses to potentially abusive situations. Furthermore, many previous studies have focused primarily on the effectiveness of sexual education content, while fewer studies specifically examine the role of communication strategies in the instructional process.

From a communication perspective, effective educational programs require not only relevant content but also appropriate communication strategies that facilitate learning. Bandura's *Social Learning Theory* explains that individuals acquire knowledge and behaviors through observation, imitation, and reinforcement. In the context of sexual education, students require not only information, but also behavioral models and repeated reinforcement that help them internalize protective attitudes and actions. Therefore, communication strategies play a crucial role in ensuring that sexual education messages are understood and translated into protective behaviors.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of communication strategies used in sexuality education programs in improving elementary school students' understanding of self-protection against sexual abuse. In this study, communication strategies refer to planned approaches, including message

delivery, media selection, and interaction techniques used by educators to convey educational content effectively. The research was conducted at SDN 1 Bojongkerta Sukabumi using a one-group pretest–posttest design. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of more effective communication strategies in sexuality education programs and support the implementation of sustainable child protection education in elementary schools.

Despite the growing body of research on sexuality education and communication strategies, gaps remain in understanding how these strategies function within specific instructional contexts. However, previous studies have not specifically examined how communication strategies function within a pretest–posttest framework in evaluating children’s self-protection understanding in the context of sexual education at the elementary school level.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative approach using a *pre-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design*. It was selected to measure changes in students’ understanding before and after the sexual education intervention without involving a control group. The approach allows researchers to evaluate the effectiveness of the communication strategy used in the educational program by comparing the results of the pretest and posttest scores (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

The research was conducted at SDN 1 Bojongkerta Sukabumi, West Java, Indonesia. The participants consisted of elementary school students who attended a sexual education session conducted by the teacher. A total of 48 students participated

in the educational activity. However, only 21 sixth-grade students who attended both sessions and completed all pretest and posttest questionnaires consistently were included in the final statistical analysis. Given the relatively small sample size ($n = 21$), the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was used as an appropriate nonparametric method that does not require normal data distribution and is suitable for small samples (Pallant, 2020). Therefore, the analysis remains valid for evaluating differences between pretest and posttest results in this study. The sampling technique used in this study was purposive sampling, selecting participants who completed all stages of the intervention and questionnaire. Ethical considerations were carefully addressed in this study. Parental consent was obtained prior to data collection, and students participated voluntarily with permission from the school. The study was conducted following ethical research standards to ensure the protection and confidentiality of participants. Data collection was conducted on May 14, 2025. The teacher involved in delivering the sexuality education session had prior experience in classroom instruction, although no specific additional training was provided for this intervention.

The sexuality education intervention was conducted in a single classroom-based session lasting approximately 60 minutes. The session was delivered by the classroom teacher and included educational materials related to children’s body boundaries, appropriate and inappropriate touch, and the importance of reporting incidents to trusted adults. The communication strategy applied in the learning process included visual media such as illustrations and cards, group discussions about risky situations, and

structured simulation activities to practice refusing inappropriate touch and seeking help.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of eight indicators related to children's self-protection. The questionnaire was developed based on guidelines from the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020) and UNICEF (2021) concerning child protection from sexual abuse. The indicators measured in this study included: (1) knowledge of private body parts, (2) the ability to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touch, (3) courage to refuse uncomfortable touch, (4) willingness to report incidents to trusted adults, (5) comfort in communicating with teachers, (6) previous experiences of receiving information about self-protection from teachers, (7) perception of safety at school, and (8) curiosity about self-protection knowledge.

The instrument used a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Prior to data collection, the instrument was reviewed through expert judgment by two experts in communication and child education to ensure content validity. Reliability testing was conducted using *Cronbach's Alpha* through SPSS version 25. The reliability test produced a *Cronbach's Alpha* value of 0.82, indicating good internal consistency and suitability for use in social research

(Pallant, 2020).

Data analysis consisted of two stages. First, descriptive analysis was performed to examine the distribution of pretest and posttest scores across the eight indicators. Second, inferential analysis was performed using the *Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test* to determine whether there were significant differences between the pretest and posttest scores. This statistical test was chosen because the data were ordinal and the sample size was relatively small, which did not meet the assumptions of normal distribution. The level of significance used in this study was 0.05. All statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS version 25.

Ethical considerations were carefully addressed in this study. Permission was obtained from the school authorities prior to data collection. Parental consent was secured for all participating students, and participation was voluntary. All data were collected anonymously to ensure the confidentiality of the respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicate changes in students' self-protection understanding, as reflected in the differences between pretest and posttest scores across all measured indicators. The comparison of mean scores is presented in Figure 1.

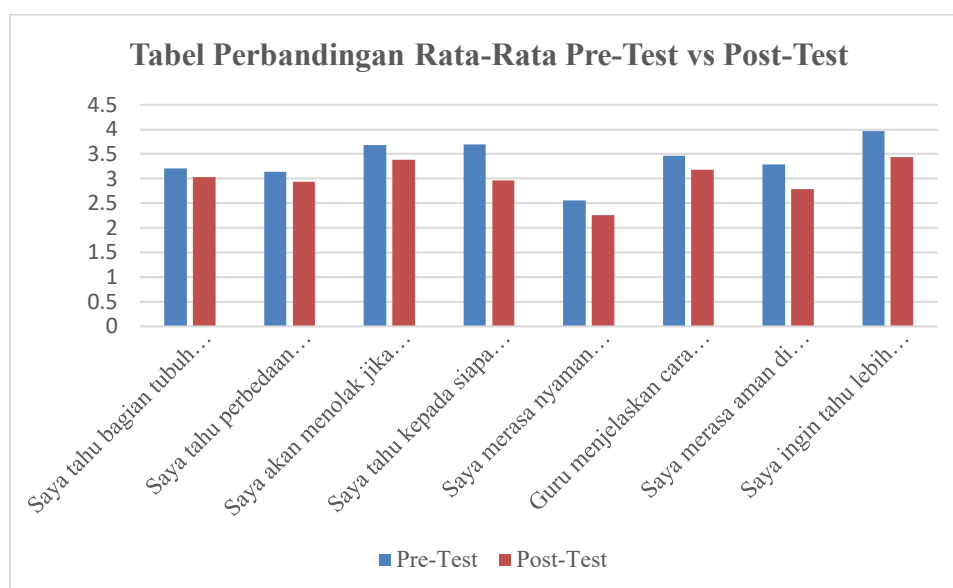


Figure 1. Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Mean Scores Across Indicators
Source: Processed research data (2025).

Figure 1 presents variations between pretest and posttest mean scores across all indicators. While some indicators show a decrease in mean scores, others indicate slight improvements. Importantly, a statistically significant improvement was observed in the indicator related to students' ability to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touch, as reported in the statistical analysis. The most notable decrease is observed in the indicator related to students' knowledge of reporting uncomfortable situations, whereas smaller differences are found in basic knowledge indicators such as recognizing private body parts and distinguishing appropriate and inappropriate touch.

These findings suggest that although students were exposed to sexuality

education materials, the intervention did not lead to an overall improvement in measured understanding. Instead, decreases in some scores may indicate challenges in knowledge retention, comprehension, or internalization of the material.

To further evaluate the effectiveness of the communication strategies used in the educational intervention, statistical analysis was conducted by comparing pretest and posttest scores across eight indicators of self-protection. The analysis employed the *Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test*, a nonparametric statistical method suitable for ordinal data and small sample sizes. The level of significance used in this study was 0.05.

The results of the statistical analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test Results for Pretest and Posttest Scores (n = 21)

Source: Processed research data (2025).

No	Indicator	Z Value	p Value	Interpretation
1	Knowledge of private body parts	0.000	1.000	Not significant
2	Ability to distinguish appropriate and inappropriate touch	-2.100	0.036	Significant
3	Ability to refuse uncomfortable	-0.706	0.480	Not significant

	touch			
4	Willingness to report to trusted adults	0.000	1.000	Not significant
5	Comfort in communicating with teachers	-0.655	0.512	Not significant
6	Previous explanation from teachers about self-protection	-0.741	0.458	Not significant
7	Feeling safe at school	-1.414	0.157	Not significant
8	Curiosity about self-protection knowledge	-0.336	0.739	Not significant

The results presented in Table 1 indicate that only one indicator showed a statistically significant difference after the educational intervention, namely students' ability to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touch ($p = 0.036$). This finding suggests that the communication strategy applied during the sexual education session was effective in improving students' understanding of concrete concepts related to personal safety.

During the educational session, the teacher used visual materials such as illustrated cards and situational examples to explain different types of physical contact. Visual communication strategies help children understand abstract concepts through concrete representations, particularly when supported by interactive and structured learning approaches (Kholis and Pranoto, 2022).

However, the results also show that the remaining seven indicators did not demonstrate statistically significant differences between the pretest and posttest scores. These indicators include knowledge of private body parts, courage to refuse uncomfortable touch, willingness to report incidents to trusted adults, comfort in communicating with teachers, prior exposure to self-protection information, perception of safety within the school environment, and curiosity about self-protection knowledge.

The lack of significant improvement in these indicators suggests that a single-session educational intervention, may not be sufficient to influence broader aspects of children's awareness and protective behavior. Previous studies indicate that effective educational programs require continuity and reinforcement to achieve meaningful learning outcomes (Bright et al. 2020).

These findings are consistent with previous studies which indicate that short-term educational interventions tend to have limited impact on children's behavioral change without continuous reinforcement and structured learning processes. Previous research has shown that effective sexual education programs require repeated exposure, interactive engagement, ongoing communication between teachers and students to strengthen both understanding and behavioral responses (Maisah & Kholis, 2023).

From the perspective of *Social Learning Theory*, behavioral change occurs through observation, imitation, and reinforcement. For instance, indicators such as refusing uncomfortable touch or reporting incidents to trusted adults involve not only cognitive understanding but also emotional readiness, confidence, and interpersonal trust. Behavioral changes of this nature typically require repeated practice and reinforcement over time,

particularly in the context of child protection education (Vosz et al., 2023).

Another important factor that may influence the effectiveness of sexuality education programs is the social and cultural context in which the education is delivered. In many communities, discussions related to sexuality and personal safety are still considered sensitive topics. As a result, students may feel uncomfortable discussing issues related to their bodies or personal experiences in a classroom setting. This cultural sensitivity may influence how students perceive and respond to sexual education messages delivered by teachers.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research indicating that school-based sexual abuse prevention programs are most effective when implemented as continuous and structured educational programs. Walsh et al. (2022) found that repeated sexual abuse prevention education significantly improved children's knowledge and protective behaviors. Similarly, Kenny and Wurtele (2022) reported that effective child protection education requires interactive teaching methods and sustained reinforcement over time.

In addition, Goldfarb and Lieberman (2021) argue that comprehensive sexuality education programs should be integrated into school curricula rather than delivered as isolated educational sessions. When sexual education becomes part of a continuous learning process, students have more opportunities to discuss sensitive topics, develop trust with teachers, and practice protective behaviors in a supportive environment.

In line with these findings, the role of teachers as communicators is crucial in

delivering effective sexuality education, as teacher–student interaction significantly influences students' understanding and behavioral responses.

These findings also highlight the important role of teachers as communicators in the educational process. Teachers act not only as information providers but also as facilitators who create a safe and supportive learning environment. When students feel comfortable communicating with teachers, they are more likely to ask questions, express concerns, and report uncomfortable situations. However, the absence of significant change in the indicator related to communication comfort with teachers suggests that building such trust requires long-term interaction rather than a single educational session.

From a communication perspective, effective sexuality education programs should incorporate various communication strategies, including visual learning materials, storytelling, interactive discussions, role-play activities, and experiential learning. Multisensory communication approaches allow students to engage more actively in the learning process and improve their ability to retain information.

Furthermore, the results suggest that sexuality education programs should not be implemented as isolated educational interventions. Instead, they should be integrated into a broader child protection framework that involves teachers, parents, and school administrators. Parental involvement is particularly important because reinforcement of protective behaviors at home can strengthen the effectiveness of educational programs delivered at school.

Overall, the findings of this study

demonstrate that communication strategies play a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of sexual education programs. While the intervention successfully improved students' understanding of one specific concept, broader changes in awareness and protective behavior require more sustained educational efforts. Future programs should therefore adopt continuous, participatory, and interactive communication strategies in order to enhance children's ability to protect themselves from sexual abuse.

Another important aspect that needs to be considered is the duration and continuity of sexual education programs implemented in schools. The results of this study indicate that a single educational session may provide limited impact on students' overall awareness of self-protection. While the intervention successfully improved students' ability to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touch, broader behavioral and attitudinal changes require continuous reinforcement. Educational psychology research suggests that behavioral change among children occurs gradually through repeated exposure to information and practice over time.

Continuous sexual education programs allow students to revisit previously learned concepts and gradually develop deeper understanding. Through repeated exposure, students can strengthen their confidence in applying self-protection strategies in real-life situations. For instance, repeated role-play activities or classroom discussions about personal safety can help children develop stronger communication skills and the courage to report uncomfortable situations to trusted adults.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of

sexual education programs is also influenced by the learning environment created by teachers. Teachers play a crucial role not only as information providers but also as facilitators who shape students' perceptions of safety and trust within the classroom. When students perceive the classroom environment as supportive and non-judgmental, they are more likely to actively participate in discussions and express their concerns regarding sensitive topics.

Previous studies have emphasized that the integration of sexual education into the broader school curriculum significantly increases the effectiveness of child protection programs. For example, Walsh et al. (2022) found that structured and long-term school-based prevention programs were more effective in improving children's protective behaviors compared to one-time educational interventions. Similarly, Kenny and Wurtele (2022) highlight that interactive teaching methods such as storytelling, group discussions, and simulation activities provide more meaningful learning experiences for children.

In addition to the role of teachers, parental involvement is another important factor in strengthening children's awareness of self-protection. Parents who communicate openly with their children about body safety and personal boundaries can reinforce the educational messages delivered in schools. When children receive consistent messages both at school and at home, they are more likely to internalize the knowledge and develop protective behaviors.

From a communication perspective, these findings suggest that sexual education programs should adopt a multidimensional communication strategy. Such strategies

may combine visual communication, interactive learning, experiential activities, and supportive interpersonal communication between teachers and students. This approach not only improves students' understanding of the topic but also encourages active participation in the learning process.

Overall, the findings of this study emphasize that communication strategies play a critical role in determining the effectiveness of sexual education programs for elementary school students. Educational interventions should therefore be designed as continuous and integrated programs rather than isolated sessions. By combining effective communication strategies with sustained educational efforts, schools can create a safer learning environment and strengthen children's ability to protect themselves from sexual abuse.

A more detailed examination of each indicator measured in this study provides additional insights into how elementary school students understand and respond to sexual education messages. Although only one indicator showed statistically significant improvement, the patterns observed across the other indicators reveal important information about children's perceptions of personal safety and communication within the school environment.

The first indicator examined students' knowledge of private body parts. The results showed no statistically significant change between the pretest and posttest scores. This finding suggests that many students already possessed basic knowledge about body privacy before the educational intervention was conducted. In many families and communities, children may receive informal guidance about body boundaries from parents or caregivers.

However, such knowledge may still be limited to basic understanding and may not necessarily translate into effective self-protection behavior.

The second indicator, which showed a significant improvement, measured students' ability to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touch. This improvement likely resulted from the visual and situational communication strategies used during the learning session. The teacher used illustrated cards and scenario-based explanations to demonstrate different forms of physical contact that children may experience in daily life. For elementary school students who are still in the *concrete operational stage* of cognitive development, visual and contextual learning methods are particularly effective in helping them grasp abstract concepts such as personal boundaries and inappropriate behavior.

The third indicator examined students' ability to refuse uncomfortable touch. Although some improvement was observed, the statistical analysis did not show a significant change. This result may be explained by the psychological and social factors that influence children's behavior. Refusing physical contact from adults or authority figures may be challenging for children due to cultural norms that encourage obedience and respect toward elders. As a result, children may understand the concept of refusing inappropriate touch but may still feel hesitant to apply it in real-life situations.

The fourth indicator focused on students' willingness to report incidents to trusted adults. Similar to the previous indicator, no significant change was observed after the educational intervention. Reporting sensitive issues such as

inappropriate touch requires a high level of trust and emotional confidence. Children must believe that the adults around them will respond supportively and take their concerns seriously. Therefore, developing a reporting culture within schools requires consistent communication between teachers, students, and parents.

The fifth indicator measured students' comfort in communicating with teachers. Although teachers play an important role in child protection, the results of this study suggest that students may still perceive a psychological distance between themselves and authority figures in the school environment. Building strong communication relationships between teachers and students requires time and repeated interaction. Teachers who encourage open dialogue and create supportive classroom environments can gradually increase students' willingness to share personal concerns.

The sixth indicator examined whether students had previously received explanations from teachers about self-protection and body safety. The lack of significant change suggests that sexual education has not yet been systematically integrated into the regular school curriculum. In many educational institutions, discussions about body safety and sexual abuse prevention are delivered sporadically rather than through structured programs. As a result, students may receive fragmented information that does not fully equip them with comprehensive knowledge about self-protection.

The seventh indicator measured students' perception of safety within the school environment. Most students reported feeling relatively safe at school both before and after the intervention. This perception may reflect the positive school

climate and the trust students place in their teachers and peers. However, feeling safe does not necessarily mean that students are fully prepared to recognize or respond to potentially harmful situations. Therefore, preventive education remains necessary even in schools where students perceive the environment as safe.

The final indicator assessed students' curiosity about self-protection knowledge. Although curiosity is an important component of learning motivation, the results indicate that curiosity alone does not automatically lead to behavioral change. Educational programs must provide opportunities for students to actively explore questions, discuss sensitive topics, and practice protective behaviors through interactive learning activities.

The findings of this study have several implications for the design and implementation of sexual education programs in elementary schools. First, the results highlight the importance of adopting communication strategies that are appropriate for children's developmental stages. Visual materials, storytelling, and interactive learning activities can significantly enhance students' understanding of complex topics related to personal safety.

Second, sexual education programs should be implemented as continuous learning processes rather than one-time interventions. Repetition and reinforcement play crucial roles in helping children internalize protective behaviors. Through repeated educational sessions, students can gradually build confidence in applying the knowledge they acquire during classroom discussions.

Third, schools should consider integrating sexual education into broader

child protection policies. Collaboration between teachers, school administrators, counselors, and parents can create a comprehensive support system that strengthens children's awareness of personal safety. When children receive consistent messages from multiple sources, they are more likely to internalize the knowledge and apply it in real-life situations.

From a policy perspective, the results of this study emphasize the need for systematic implementation of sexual education programs within elementary school curricula. Educational policymakers should consider developing standardized guidelines that support teachers in delivering age-appropriate sexual education. Training programs for teachers are also essential to ensure that educators feel confident and prepared to discuss sensitive topics with students.

In addition, collaboration between educational institutions and child protection organizations can strengthen the effectiveness of prevention programs. Partnerships with psychologists, counselors, and child protection experts can provide schools with additional resources and expertise in addressing cases of sexual abuse and promoting child safety.

Although this study provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of communication strategies in sexual education, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study used a pre-experimental design without a control group, which limits the ability to establish causal relationships between the intervention and the observed outcomes. Second, the sample size was relatively small, consisting of only 21 respondents who completed both the pretest and posttest questionnaires.

Future research is recommended to employ more rigorous experimental designs with larger sample sizes in order to obtain more comprehensive findings. Longitudinal studies may also provide deeper insights into how continuous sexual education programs influence children's knowledge, attitudes, and protective behaviors over time.

Another important aspect that can be highlighted from the findings of this study is the role of communication strategies in shaping students' awareness and perceptions of personal safety. In educational settings, communication does not only function as a tool for transferring knowledge but also plays a crucial role in influencing attitudes and behavioral intentions. The way educational messages are delivered can determine how effectively students understand and internalize information related to sensitive topics such as sexual abuse prevention.

In the context of elementary school education, communication strategies must consider the developmental characteristics of children. Students at this age tend to respond more positively to learning approaches that involve visual elements, storytelling, and interactive activities. These methods help transform complex concepts into more understandable forms that children can easily relate to their everyday experiences. Therefore, the communication strategy used in sexual education should prioritize clarity, empathy, and student engagement.

The findings of this study indicate that visual communication strategies were particularly effective in helping students understand the concept of appropriate and inappropriate touch. Visual illustrations and scenario-based explanations provided concrete examples that allowed students to

imagine real-life situations. This supports the idea that experiential and contextual learning approaches are more suitable for elementary school students compared to purely theoretical explanations.

In addition to visual learning, participatory communication also plays a significant role in enhancing the effectiveness of educational programs. When students are actively involved in discussions, simulations, or role-play activities, they become more engaged in the learning process. Active participation allows students to express their thoughts, ask questions, and practice responses to potentially harmful situations. Such experiences can strengthen both cognitive understanding and emotional readiness.

Another important factor influencing the success of sexual education programs is the level of trust between students and teachers. Trust is essential for creating a supportive learning environment where students feel comfortable discussing sensitive topics. If students perceive teachers as approachable and supportive figures, they are more likely to seek guidance and report uncomfortable experiences. Therefore, teachers must adopt communication approaches that encourage openness, respect, and empathy.

The role of schools as protective environments for children should also be emphasized. Schools are not only places for academic learning but also important spaces for social and emotional development. Educational institutions have the responsibility to ensure that students feel safe and supported within the school environment. Implementing comprehensive sexual education programs can contribute to building a culture of awareness and prevention that protects children from potential harm.

Furthermore, collaboration between schools and families is essential in strengthening children's self-protection awareness. Parents play a fundamental role in reinforcing the messages delivered in school-based education programs. Open communication between parents and children about body safety and personal boundaries can significantly enhance children's confidence in recognizing and responding to inappropriate behavior.

When schools and families work together, children receive consistent messages about personal safety from multiple sources. This consistency helps children internalize protective behaviors more effectively. Therefore, educational programs should encourage parental involvement and provide guidance for parents on how to discuss sensitive topics with their children in an age-appropriate manner.

Overall, the findings of this study highlight that the effectiveness of communication strategies in sexual education cannot be measured solely by immediate cognitive outcomes, but must also consider the continuity, reinforcement, and contextual delivery of the educational process. While the use of visual and interactive communication strategies proved effective in improving students' understanding of concrete concepts, such as distinguishing appropriate and inappropriate touch, the absence of significant changes in other indicators indicates that deeper behavioral and emotional aspects require more sustained intervention. This also reflects the principles of instructional communication, where effective learning is influenced by message delivery, interaction, and reinforcement within the educational process.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings partially support *Social Learning Theory*, which emphasizes that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and reinforcement. In this study, students were able to acquire initial understanding through observational learning; however, the lack of repeated exposure and reinforcement limited the development of broader behavioral responses. This suggests that communication strategies in educational settings must not only focus on message delivery but also on instructional processes that facilitate repetition, interaction, and engagement.

Furthermore, these results reinforce the view that communication in educational contexts functions as a dynamic instructional process, where teachers play a central role as communicators who shape understanding through structured interaction, feedback, and trust-building. Therefore, effective sexual education programs should be designed as continuous, structured, and participatory processes that integrate communication strategies with repeated learning experiences. Strengthening the role of teachers as instructional communicators is essential to ensure that educational messages are not only understood cognitively but also internalized and translated into protective behaviors among students.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of communication strategies used in sexual education programs in improving elementary school students' understanding of self-protection against sexual abuse. The findings indicate that the educational intervention conducted in a single learning session produced a

statistically significant improvement in only one indicator, namely students' ability to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touch. This result demonstrates that visual and situational communication strategies can effectively enhance children's understanding of concrete concepts related to personal safety.

However, the intervention did not produce statistically significant changes in the other seven indicators related to behavioral courage, communication with trusted adults, perception of safety in the school environment, and curiosity about self-protection knowledge. These findings indicate that short-term educational interventions may be insufficient to influence broader aspects of children's awareness and protective behavior. Behavioral and attitudinal changes require continuous and reinforced learning processes and supportive learning environments.

From a communication perspective, the results highlight the importance of using interactive and participatory communication strategies in sexuality education programs. Visual media, role-play activities, storytelling, and group discussions can help students better understand sensitive topics and actively engage in the learning process. In addition, the role of teachers as communicators is essential in creating a safe and supportive environment where students feel comfortable discussing issues related to personal safety.

This study also suggests that sexual education programs should not be implemented as isolated interventions but rather integrated into broader school-based child protection initiatives. Collaboration between schools, teachers, and parents is

necessary to strengthen children's protective awareness and behavior. Future research is recommended to be conducted on long-term educational interventions with larger sample sizes to better understand the impact of communication strategies on children's self-protection knowledge and behavior.

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