

Sexual Behaviour among Young People in Approved Schools: Developing a Framework for Sexuality Education

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Abstract

The issue of sexuality in correctional facilities has been the subject of considerable academic attention, yet research on this phenomenon has been particularly limited. This paper uncovers the prevalence of sexual behaviour among young people in the correctional facilities. Data were extracted from a survey study conducted among 289 male and female young people, aged 12 to 21 years old, in six approved schools in Malaysia. In addition, 18 interviews were carried out with 11 young people and seven correctional staff, comprising both male and female participants. The findings reveal that 34 per cent of young people reported at least one behaviour indicative of same-sex sexual in a month, 15 per cent reported at least one behaviour indicative of bullying others sexually in a month, and 20 per cent reported at least one incident of being victimised sexually in a month. In the interviews, young people confirmed three levels of sexual behaviour in the approved schools, including companionship, consensual same-sex activity and sexual coercion. Young people also identified three circumstances underpinning such behaviours, including monotonous routine, loneliness, and normalizing sexual activities. These findings suggest that sexuality education is useful to empower young people to realize their health, well-being and dignity, and thus control their unhealthy sexual activities in the approved schools.

Keywords: Sexuality in Correctional Facilities, Prison Sexuality, Sexuality Education, Sexual Coercion, LGBT Prisoners.

Introduction

Sexuality is considered as one of the most controversial issues among incarcerated individuals in correctional facilities. It has been identified as an ongoing and serious phenomenon in a range of different countries. For the past 70 years, sociologists, psychologists, and penologists have been studying inmate-to-inmate prison sexuality (Selling, 1931; Ward & Kassebaum, 1964). These researchers have made great strides in advancing the study of prison sexuality. Although many may consider the issue to be deviant, correctional sex researchers have made positive contributions to the study of one of the most controversial issues in corrections.

Hensley and Tewksbury (2002) have reviewed studies about inmate sexual behaviours and the dynamics of institutional sex but also how this field of inquiry has developed and evolved. As a result, they uncovered four primary sections of understanding sexuality in prison, including male and female inmate consensual homosexual behaviour and male and female inmate coerced sexual activities (Hensley & Tewksbury, 2002).

Sexuality in correctional facilities consists of sexual behaviour and sexual coercion either between offenders or between offenders and correctional staff or other persons to whom offenders have access (Hensley & Tewksbury, 2002; Gibson & Hensley, 2013). Sexual behaviour includes sexual intimacy with self and consensual same-sex sexual activity (Pardue, Arrigo & Murphy, 2011). Meanwhile, sexual coercion refers to sexual exploitation, sexual assault, and non-consensual sexual acts (Banbury, Lusher & Morgan, 2016). Much of the research reveals that approximately 10 per cent offenders reported being sexually active while incarcerated (Rowell-Cunsolo et al., 2017; Gibson & Hensley, 2013). Also, approximately 10 per cent reported being sexually coerced in the correctional facilities (Caravaca-Sanchez & Wolff, 2016; Beck et al., 2013). Involvement in sexual behaviours i.e. masturbation and consensual same-sex activities may lead to unhealthy sexual activities, and thus increase risks of poor physical and psychological conditions (Rowell-Cunsolo et al., 2017; Beck, Cantor, Hartge & Smith, 2013). In fact, experiences of sexual coercion increase risk of suicide, genital and internal injury and neurological damage for especially victims (Banbury et al., 2016; Caravaca-Sanchez & Wolff, 2016). Criminologists have long revealed the potential relevance of correctional environment for shaping the behaviour of incarcerated individuals, including sexual behaviour. Sykes (1958) argued that correctional facilities entail deprivations or frustrations that could have criminogenic effects by compelling prisoners to form their own subculture. The loss of heterosexual relationships is one of the deprivations that may force incarcerated individuals turn to alternative methods of achieving sexual gratification, including masturbation, consensual same-sex activity, and coerced same-sex activity (Hensley, 2002). Nonetheless, sexual orientation is found to increase risk of sexual victimization. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender prisoners are labelled as vulnerable and more likely to be sexually victimized in prison (Hensley et al., 2005).

In correctional facilities, individuals are also exposed to and experience sexual violence and sexual behaviour problems, and further exposing them to communicable diseases and trauma (Caravaca-Sanchez & Wolff, 2016). The consequences of sexual violence or uncontrolled engagement in sexual activities in secure settings follow the individuals into the community upon release, and it has a variety of severe public health consequences. Multiple types of sexual activities and coerced sexual contact also happen in secure settings. In Malaysia, at least 35 per cent young offenders in secure settings reported sexual bullying and 46 per cent reported being bullied sexually in a month (Hassan et al., 2020). Nonetheless, the problem of sexual assault and violence in correctional facilities is not receiving attention from researchers, policymakers, correctional staff, and criminal justice officials. Sexuality in correctional facilities is a very complex problem that requires innovative solutions. Nonetheless, this phenomenon remains one of the least understood issues in the criminal justice system. To provide solutions, further understanding about causal factors behind this phenomenon is needed. Deprivation (Sykes, 1958) suggests that correctional environment is associated with sexual behaviour in correctional facilities. In fact, research has further confirmed some correctional environment factors that shape sexuality (Hefner, 2017; Gibson

& Hensley, 2013). This study primarily seeks to contribute to and extend current understandings of the prevalence of sexual behaviour and sexual coercion among incarcerated young people. Also, it seeks to explore the circumstances in approved schools that underpin sexual behaviour among young people. From these findings, this study suggests a framework for sexuality education for young people in approved schools.

Methodology

Sample

This study was conducted between September 2018 and February 2020 (that was before the COVID-19 pandemic's lockdown). The study collected quantitative and qualitative data using a mixed-method approach. The study comprised a survey completed by 261 male and female young people, aged 12 to 21 years old, in six juvenile approved schools. More than half of the participants were concentrated in the range 16 to 18 years old. Of this category, 59 per cent of participants were male and the rest were female. For the 'Ethnic' variable, more than 90 per cent of both male and female participants were Malay. The large percentage of Malay is due to the fact that Malay is the highest population incarcerated in the approved schools as compared to national population generally. Regarding the marriage status, majority were single, six per cent were single parents and less than three per cent are married. The majority of young people (89.7%) were serving their first correctional sentence and the rest (10.3%) were sentenced more than once. A total of 12 per cent reported history of mental health treatment and the rest reported never. Their convictions ranged from violent crimes (4.6%), sexual crimes (11.9%), property crimes (20%), drug-related activities (42.1%) to status offences (18.4%).

In depth interviews were carried out in two juvenile approved schools after the completion of the survey study. Using a purposive sampling technique, 16 young people who had participated in the survey study were interviewed. Of these, eight were females (obtained from a female institution) and eight were males (obtained from a male institution). Included in in-depth interviewing were eight staff members aged between 28 and 47 years old (four males and four females). Two staff members completed higher school, three were diploma holders, and three more were degree holders. Their position in the current institution was, or can be, related to their educational levels. Included in this interviewing were two security officers, three social workers, a psychologist, a teacher and an administrator. They had been working at their current institutions between three years and 12 years. Ethical approval for the study and the permission to conduct the study in six juvenile approved schools was supported by the by the Department of Social Welfare Malaysia (JKMM 100/12/5/2:2019 / 002). Also, this study was funded and supported by the Incentive Grants for Young Researchers from the National University of Malaysia (GGPM-2018-042).

Measurements

In the survey study, A set of questionnaire was used in the survey study. Included in the questionnaires were participants' personal information and the scale measuring sexual behaviours and sexual coercion. The scale were developed for the purpose of this study in Malaysian Language. The scale used by Gibson & Hensley (2013) was adapted to measure sexual behaviours and the scale used by Wolff and colleagues (2007); Ireland (2005) were adapted to measure sexual coercion. In total, the scale consists of 14 items, and all items are addressed by indicating either 'never', 'rarely', 'sometimes', 'often' or 'always'. The scale can

identify five subscales of different sexual behaviours or activities i.e relationship, solo sex, consensual same-sex, sexual bullying and sexual victimization. The subscales reported high reliability with .72 and .96 alpha Cronbach consecutively.

Results

The findings identify the nature of sexuality in juvenile approved schools. Data were gathered using the developed self-report instrument to measure sexual behaviours and bullying. Table 1 demonstrates the prevalence of sexual behaviours and sexual in six juvenile institutions, that is, explained in five different forms, including relationship, solo sex, consensual same-sex, sexual bullying and sexual victimization. With regard to 'Relationship,' about 25 per cent reported having intimate relationship in the institutions. About 37 per cent reported solo sex in the institutions with 10 per cent reported frequent solo sex activities in a month. Of this group, 34 per cent reported at least one behaviour indicative of consensual same sex behaviour in a month. Regarding bullying, 20 per cent reported at least one behaviour indicative of bullying others and being bullied sexually in a month.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics of sexuality activities

Sexual activities	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	S.D	Never (%)
Relationship	.00	4.00	.48	.92	74.3
Solo sex	.00	4.00	.71	1.12	63.2
Consensual same-sex	.00	18.00	1.52	3.07	65.9
Sexual Bullying	.00	8.00	.49	1.32	84.3
Sexual Victimization	.00	7.00	.51	1.30	80.5

Table 2

Levels of sexuality among young people in juvenile approved schools.

Themes	Quotes Examples
Companionship	<p>'You need a partner in here. I meant a friend. But, it is more than a friend. It's a bit sweet (romantic) than a friendship. (...) I have a partner. I called her 'baby'. But, we didn't do anything wrong. I love all my friends.' For some young people, having a companion relieves stress, provides comfort and joy, prevents loneliness and isolation, and even strengthens one's status.'</p> <p>(Suki, 16, female, young people)</p> <p>'I have someone takes care of me. He's older than me. He helps me a lot. We do things together. These kids (other young people) thought we are a couple. Crazy! Maybe, because I'm 'soft' (feminine). (...) I do like him. I want him to be by my side all the time.'</p> <p>(Dani, 16, male, young people)</p>
Consensual Same-Sex Sexual Activities	<p>'I do this (sexual activities) only after few months being here. After I met my partner. I never did this before. (...) We do many things. We kiss. We make love-bites. But, we</p>

	<p>do it when no one is around. Some couples are lucky. They stay in the same dorm (room). They can sleep together.’ (Gina, 16, female, young people)</p> <p>Kiss and sleep together are common activities in here. When we sleep together in one bed, then we do things like... (laughing). Many things! (...) My partner loves to do it (sex) with me. (Yuyu, 18, female, young people)</p>
Sexual coercion	<p>‘I do nothing serious. I sometimes touch their private parts. Come on! It’s just for fun. They are laughing sometimes.’ (Rohit, 18, male, young people)</p> <p>‘He want it. We do it then. I thought we agree to do that (sex activities). I don’t know why they need to make a report to the staff. I don’t force him. But, he told everyone I force him. (Awang, 17, male, young people)</p>

In the interviews, young people and staff members seemed to agree that sexual behaviour include three levels (see Table 2), including companionship, consensual same-sex sexual activities and sexual coercion. Some young people agreed that their involvement in sexual relationships was merely for the purpose of companionship. Some young people understood ‘companionship’ as a state of being friends and having a companion seemed to have a huge impact on the survival of young people in the approved schools. In this regard, young people seemed to treat their partner as a friend, but deeper than a friendship. This friendship attraction was not romantic or sexual in nature but was the kind of attraction that they enjoyed being with. Nonetheless, some young people seemed to feel romantic attraction for their companion. Romantic attraction is about the desire to alter the friendship into a couple relationships. Interestingly, some offenders seemed to have sexual attraction for their friend. However, they seemed to refuse any sexual activity and perceived that sex is not essential in the relationship. These circumstances seemed to be related to their moral beliefs. Suki (16, female, young people) explained; ‘Sometimes, we feel like we want to have a kiss. But, no! This can’t happen. She (her partner) doesn’t want either. No way! It’s a sin. I’m not going to do that. For me, holding hands is enough. Sometimes we sleep in one bed.’

In approved schools, consensual same sex activities are relatively common, yet are never openly discussed among young people. Nonetheless, young people who engaged in same-sex sexual activities are looked upon as ‘weirdo’ in the approved schools; however, they can be welcomed to other young people. Like Gina (16, female, young people), for some young people, their involvement in same-sex sexual activities began in the approved schools. It was a situational or natural reaction (Van Wormer, 1984) to overcome the loneliness they experienced during incarceration. The circumstances surrounding whether they assumed the butch role or the active role of the femme depends on the agreement with their partner.

Nonetheless, they maintained a conception of themselves as heterosexual, which means they will return to participating in heterosexual relationships upon release. Tyra (16, female, young people) is an exception. She said, ‘I am lesbian. Even before I came here. I really think

I am a man. I dress like a man, behave like a man. I'm not interested in any man.' This dispositional or 'true' homosexuality (see Van Wormer, 1984), therefore, encouraged some young people to continue engaging in same-sex sexual activities during incarceration as they developed such behaviour before coming to the facilities. In fact, they seemed to actively engage in sexual activities. Like Tyra, some young people admitted to enjoy sexual activities and perceived the facilities as an appropriate place to practice homosexuality. Some correctional staff also reported that young people were often caught in bed together or even in the bathroom. Zana (32, female, correctional staff) explained, 'they sometimes use some tools for something that is not right. For sex! They use deodorant bottle. Yea... it can be used for sexual activity.' Wanie (34, female, correctional staff) further explained, 'these kids (young people) are active. That's why we became strict. We don't allow them to keep deodorant, lotion or any beauty products in a bottle. They can use all these as a tool. You know what I mean?' To control these unhealthy sexual activities, some correctional staff separated the couples in different dormitory/room. This is justified with reference to the need to maintain the young people's health and well-being.

Most of young people agreed that sexual harassment occurred, but very rarely. Nonetheless, the survey study reveals that about 16 per cent of participant reported at least one behaviour of harassing someone sexually and slightly less than 20 per cent of young people reported one incidence of being sexually harassed during the one month period. Sexual scripts are articulated by the wider culture and are similar to blueprint; they shape, direct, and focus sexual conduct by providing sexuality with its effective and cognitive boundaries (Simon & Gagnan, 2011). In the context of this study, it can be explained that this thought was much influence by religion beliefs and values that designate the cognitive limits of sexuality by indicating appropriate and inappropriate sexual partners. In this respect, people grew up by gender-roles preferences and construct their sexual feelings (Troiden, 1989), and therefore, influence their personal forces in shaping sexual conduct. Aron (15, male, young people) explained, 'I would never do such a thing. It's so weird. It's a sin'. Dani (16, male, young people) further stressed, 'those who do it are desperate. Bloody desperate! I don't know what they feel.' For female young people, same-sex sexual activities were more likely to be accepted in the community. It seemed that there was increasing acceptance and tolerance of the label 'lesbian' in female facilities due to the disclosure of lesbian identity over time to at least some members of providing series of audiences. Driven by the pleasure of the outcomes and the experience of less stigmatized (Troiden, 1989), therefore, affected the formation and expression of 'lesbian' identity among female young people. Participants reported that those same-sex sexual activities, which occurred, were always based on consent or mutual interest. Suki (16, female, young people) explained, 'she has been my partner for three months. I like her. She likes me. If she wants to stop this, it's fine. No force. I am not going to force her. I will find someone else then.' Tyra (16, female, young people) added, 'there's no pleasure if you force them. You feel no love, no care. I want someone to care about me. It is not only for sex!' A mutual interest from both parties is important in regard to sexual activities, and in contrast, sexual harassment was viewed as counter-productive. Nonetheless, some of young people perceived sexual harassment as being connected to attention and attractiveness, and therefore, they felt free to act in a sexually coercive manner.

Table 3

Circumstances underpinning of sexuality among young people in approved schools

Themes	Quotes Examples
Monotonous routine life	‘You need a partner in here. I meant a friend. But, it is more than a friend. It’s a bit sweet (romantic) than a friendship. (...) I have a partner. I called her ‘baby’. But, we didn’t do anything wrong. I love all my friends.’ For some young people, having a companion relieves stress, provides comfort and joy, prevents loneliness and isolation, and even strengthens one’s status.’ (Gina, 16, female, young people)
Loneliness	‘In here, you need a partner to live. With her (her partner), I don’t get bored. I don’t feel lonely. Even, she sometimes pisses me off. Because, she has her own ‘head’ (personality). At least you feel the time flies fast. The problem is when you get bored and feel lonely in here.’ (Rani, 18, female, young people)
Desensitization	‘Couple (having a partner) is normal here. All of them want to have a partner in here. I follow the others. They do that, I do that as well. (...) you know life is boring inside here. When you have a partner, you feel a bit relieve. So, it’s like a culture to have one.’ (Suki, 16, female, young people)

Regardless of the forms of sexual behaviour, majority of young people hold positive beliefs about their involvement in same-sex sexual relationships and activities in the approved schools. Some of young people agreed that sexual activities make their life in the approved schools more meaningful and endurable. In the interviews, young people identified three circumstances underpinning their involvement in sexual behaviour (see Table 3). First, it has been identified that monotonous routine life in the approved schools shape young people’s sexual behaviour. Most of young people seemed to agree that the approved schools have made conscious efforts to help them overcoming their behavioural problems by making a break by making a break from anti-social peers, places and situations that trigger the urge for them to slip back into old, destructive habits. Nonetheless, some young people frustrated with their life in the approved schools as they perceived the facilities as redundant and immutable, and the routine was tedious. Bima (19, male, young people) said, ‘we wake up as early as 5 o’clock for pray. 6 o’clock we go for breakfast. After that, roll call and then marching, and then roll call again. Then, we do the cleaning or gardening or anything they (staff) ask. Then, we do nothing. (...) Everyday, we do the same thing. Seriously, I fed up!’ Like Bima, some young people perceived that everyday conditions are easy to tolerate, but everyday frustrations that related to feelings of boredom are resentfully endured. Television, food, sport, visitation and all entertainments are no longer desirable in their everyday life. Gina (16, female, young people) explained, ‘no fun in here. No TV. No outdoor activities. No nothing! (...) Most of the time I get bored. I feel stress doing the same thing back there. But, I feel better when I have Kiki (her partner). It’s fun. I love her. And I feel the time flies fast.’

Most young people experienced the correctional routine as unpleasant and discomforting. They argued that the corrections itself play a role as a push factor that leaves them no choice but to sidestep its means. Therefore, some young people involved in same-sex relationships. For them, performing sexual activities might distract them from the deprived environment because such activities can be functional, or have anesthetizing effects. Gina (16, female, young people) said, 'If I get bored, I need to do something different. Then, I break the rules. (...) I keep sharp objects, do piercing, cut my hair, tattooed. I am lesbian here. I have a 'girl' here. Yeah, we sleep in one bed. Sometimes we do those sex things (laugh). Some correctional staff agreed that correctional life is meant to be uncomfortable, and to be much less desirable than life on the outside. This includes retrospect of dreariness, feelings of boredom and a future perspective of redundancy and emptiness, and therefore, they always struggled to contain their feelings when they felt frustrated. Abie said:

'I know these kids get bored staying here. But, they have no choice. We (staff) also have no choice. The routine will always be like that. They (young people) have to understand that sometimes we don't have enough manpower to run the activities. Staff also got their own duties. Their own problems. Too much workloads. (...) Maybe these kids do that (sexual activities) because they get bored. If we provide them with activities, maybe they will be less likely to misconduct.'

(Abie, 47, male, correctional staff)

Secondly, young people identified the loneliness to underpin sexual behaviour in the approved schools. Loneliness is common among incarcerated individuals as they are isolated from their family and loved ones. In fact, feelings of loneliness have an impact on depression, hopelessness and suicidal behaviour among incarcerated individuals (Brown & Day, 2008). As explained before, having a romantic partner seemed to have a huge impact on the survival of young people in the approved schools. Some young people agreed that having a partner in the approved schools relieves stress, provides comfort and joy, and prevents feelings of loneliness and isolation. Like Rani, some of young people argued that the primary function of having a romantic partner is to provide risk-free social company and to affirm pro-social self-perceptions. In other words, their priority is everyday interaction with people with whom they could 'talk and laugh.' They suggested that having many friends is less important, this being a result of the complexities of maintaining friendships in the facilities. In secure settings, most young people seemed to be driven by feelings of distrust. Guru (17, male, young people) said, 'I don't want to get close with any of these kids (young people). I don't know. I don't trust them. I've only one friend here. You can't have many friends in this school (the facility). It's hard.' Since close or genuine friendships appeared to be rare, most young people reported that they tended to limit their involvement with other young people in the approved schools. Indeed, they picked their partner carefully.

Most of young people seemed to pick someone who share similar behavioural styles and attitudes as their partner. For this reason, they can rely on their partner to take them through difficult periods during their sentence, including protecting them against loneliness and isolation. Aman explained: 'Tell me who doesn't like sex? We all do. Sometimes, I feel like I want to do it. I feel stress. Living in here is very lonely. You can't smoke. You can't take drugs. You can't go out. All you can do is to have fun with all those 'jambu' (good-looking young people). It's fun! They also having fun.' (Aman, 19, young people).

Thirdly, sexual behaviour could be understood in relation to the desensitization effects. Some young people perceived that same-sex relationships are reinforced by the correctional environment that is accepting sexual behaviours. It is assumed that the correctional environment where sexual activities occur so frequently that it is normalized contributes to desensitization to sexual behaviours. Such desensitization may promote beliefs and attitudes, which are likely to encourage same-sex sexual activities. Like Suki, some young people perceived sexual activities as 'normal' or as a 'non-problem' behaviour. It is tolerated in the facilities and therefore staff members often ignored to solve the problems. Bima (19, male, young people) explained: 'In the school (the approved school), we have to follow the crowd. If they do that, then, we can do that. Those sex activities are common in this school (the facility). But, usually they do it as they like each other. It is up to them (...) Staffs do nothing about it. They can't do anything. These kids (young people) won't stop.'

Discussion & the Framework of Sexuality Education

This study reveals that sexual activities are common in the juvenile approved schools. Within a month, approximately 25 per cent of young people reported to engage in same-sex relationships, 10 per cent reported frequent solo sex activities, 34 per cent reported at least one behaviour indicative of consensual same sex behaviour, and about 20 per cent reported at least one behaviour of harassing someone sexually and one incidence of being sexually harassed. Young people identified three levels of sexual behaviour, including companionship, consensual same-sex sexual activities and sexual coercion. Also, young people justified circumstances for their involvement in such behaviours, including monotonous routine, loneliness, and normalizing homosexuality. In approved schools, 'the world of the delinquent is the world of the law-abiding turned upside down and its norms constitute a countervailing force directed against the conforming social order' (Sykes & Matza, 1957, p. 664). In this study, homosexuality seemed to be accepted by most young people as to make their life more meaningful and endurable in the facilities. Although homosexuality is regarded as a wrong conduct, most young people accepted the function of same-sex sexual acts as a viable solution to the poor living conditions in the facilities. Incarcerated individuals are at-risk population for having poor psychological health because of the distress associated with incarceration (Toch, 1977). Nonetheless, romantic relationships between inmates have proven to be beneficial for the inmates' interpersonal and psychological state (Carcedo et al., 2011).

In Malaysia, as a predominantly Muslim country, homosexuality and LGBT practices are illegal and punishable. In Islam, homosexuality is forbidden and intolerable. Nonetheless, in the approved schools, homosexuality seemed to be accepted. Surviving approved schools is more important than obedience to the faith. Same-sex sexual relations reflect habits acquired by young people as members of a correctional society, through which these members perceive homosexuality as normative. Although some young people imported homosexuality traits into the facilities, most young people seemed to agree that their involvement in same-sex relations are more likely to be shaped by the culture within the facilities. Thus, some young people alter their behaviour, values and aims within the corrections to conform to this normality, which is widely understood as a process of adaptation.

Penologists have long discovered that incarceration likely exposes individuals to both acute and chronic stressors (Sykes, 1958; Toch, 1977) that cause frustration, social loneliness, feelings of marginalization, and boredom. Having social support can be quite helpful in

ameliorating distress among young people in the approved schools. Nonetheless, Desmond (1991) argues that external social support is less like to decrease frustration. In fact, internal social support has been found to associate with lower levels of loneliness as well as frustration while incarcerated (Carecedo et al., 2008). The findings from this study suggest that having a romantic partner in the facilities provides social support and promotes young people's psychological health. Basic interpersonal needs theory (BINT) posits that human need is not only friendship-like relationships, but also pleasurable body contact and intimacy (intimate interpersonal relationships; see Carcedo et al., 2008). Fulfilling these needs is necessary for the individuals' health and well-being. Nonetheless, more research is needed to clarify the interpersonal needs and psychological health in the correction context. Research into post-incarceration sexual behaviour is also needed. Mindful that inmates experienced homosexuality while incarcerated are 52 times more likely to change their sexual orientation (Gibson & Hensley, 2013).

Sexual behaviour appeared to be one of the important aspects of, not just adjusting, but also functioning in the approved schools. While adjusting can be conceptualised as the manner in which the individual deals with stressful situations and negative emotions, functioning is related to meeting the demands of the environment. For most young people, it seemed that adequate functioning is to engage in sexual activities. As the heart of the approved schools, correctional staff have to play a role in controlling the unhealthy sexual activities as well as sexual coercion. To address these, therefore, educating young people could be the best solution. It can be done by educating them about the nature of sexuality and its severe consequences, including sexually transmitted diseases, sexual injuries and psychological problems. Young people might be ignorant about what constitutes unhealthy sexual behaviours. Education of this nature, in particular, can raise young people's awareness of the risks of their actions and thus decrease the likelihood to engage in such unhealthy sexual behaviours. Similar to young people, correctional staff have to be educated about sexuality in the approved schools and how to control sexual activities among young people. Also, policies to control sexual risks should be put in place to help contribute to a more consistent responses institution wide.

Framework for sexuality education in approved schools

Based on the findings of this current study, there are six key concepts can be included in the framework for sexuality education. These six key concepts are also aligned with UNESCO's International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (UNESCO, 2018). Table 4 demonstrates a framework of sexuality education for young people in juvenile approved schools. The primary aim of this framework or sexuality education is to promote healthy lifestyle behind bars and to combat sexual coercion in approved schools. Sexuality education does not encourage children and young people to have sex. In fact, this education aims to develop and strengthen the ability of children and young people to make conscious, satisfying, healthy and respectful choices regarding relationships, sexuality and emotional and physical health (UNESCO, 2018). Scholar suggests that comprehensive sexuality education may help prevent sexual violence and intimate violence among young people (Makleff et al., 2020).

Table 4 Framework for sexuality education in juvenile approved schools

Key Concepts	Topics	Outcomes
Relationships	Friendship, respect & sense of belonging	Overcoming issues of companionship & loneliness
Values & Rights	Rehabilitation	Re-focus on rehabilitation, reframe irrational thoughts (e.g. monotonous routine)
Gender	Understanding Gender	Sexual identity/orientation acceptance, promoting resiliency
Security	Violence, consent privacy and integrity	Reduce sexual coercion, empowering coping mechanisms, reduce normalization of sexual coercion
Health	Risk of STIs, HIV & AIDS stigma	Reduce normalization of sexual activity, reduce unhealthy sexual activities, encourage help-seeking behavior, promoting mental health
Support	Finding help & support, Care & treatment	Therapy for sexual identity/orientation issues, overcoming loneliness, therapy for victims, reduce aggression

Sexuality education is a curriculum-based process of teaching and learning about aspects of sexuality. Referring to the framework, the first key concept is relationships. The aim of this concept is to teach them about taking responsibility for oneself and others, and to help them identify the needs of love, cooperation, mutual caring, mutual respect, trust, empathy and solidarity for healthy relationships. Secondly, young people should be exposed to values and rights. The aim is to educate young people about the important to know his or her own values, beliefs and attitudes in order to adopt sexual behaviours that are consistent with them. Also, young people should be acknowledge that some of their values may be different from their parents/guardians or their culture/religion. Thirdly, we should educate young people about gender, including the construction of gender and gender equality. In this regard, young people will learn to identify how gender norms shape identity, desires, practices and behaviour and how gender norms can be harmful and can negatively influence people's choices and behaviour. Fourth is the security. This is crucial part where young people will learn to acknowledge that bullying and violence are wrong, and are never the victim's fault, including violence that is carried out by a family member or other adult. Also, they will be trained to demonstrate safe actions that they can take to respond to bullying or violence among their peers. Fifth, young people should be thought about the lifestyle of being healthy. This includes the skills in comparing and contrasting positive and negative ways that peers can influence sexual decisions and behaviour as well as comparing and contrasting advantages and disadvantages of choosing to delay sex or to become sexually active. Most importantly, young people must learn about the risk of Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV, as a result of having sex. Lastly, we need to educate young people about how and when to seek help. Indeed, this framework can be used as a guideline for juvenile justice system to start sexuality education in juvenile approved schools in Malaysia. Also, this framework can be useful for anyone involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of sexuality education programmes in approved schools.

Conclusion

As explained at the beginning, it was hoped that by exploring the phenomenon of sexual behaviours and bullying in approved schools would generate the kinds of knowledge that may significantly contribute towards improving future practice. In particular, referring to the framework, such knowledge can inform interventions, approaches and practices that may

help in reducing the frequency and prevalence of same sex activities and sexual coercion in approved schools. This study identified, in Malaysian welfare run institutions, efforts to address same sex activities and sexual coercion concentrating principally on controlling and preventing the occurrence of same sex activities and sexual bullying. This research suggests that this phenomenon does not occur in isolation and both the cause and the required responses are multi-faceted and intertwined. As explained previously, sexual activities and coercion were maintained when young people rationalized such behaviours and when key conditions increase individuals' vulnerability to engage in such activities. To address these, therefore, sexuality education for young people could be the best solution. It can be done by educating them about the six key concepts. Education of this nature, in particular, can raise young people's awareness of the wrong of their actions and thus decrease the likelihood to engage in misbehaviour (Vreeman & Carroll, 2007). Indeed, the information about unhealthy sexual activities and coercion outcomes may reduce the neutralization or rationalization of such behaviour (Barlow et al., 2013). Also, information about victimization may increase victims' awareness of being sexually coerced or abused as well as information on the supports available to them. Knowing this, they may be more likely to report incidence of being victimized without feeling afraid. Apart from this, the prevalence of unhealthy sexual activities and sexual coercion in the approved schools can be related to poor safeguarding and staff cultures. This research found that some staff members were less likely to trust reports of those being sexually victimized. Staff members need to be involved in sexuality education, and learn especially ways to control unhealthy sexual activities in the schools. Indeed, the implementation of sexuality education requires efforts from both micro and macro levels, and these should be practiced by correctional staff and officers, juvenile justice systems, and the policy makers. In so doing, policy makers have to play an important role in order to promote sexuality education in juvenile approved schools.

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