

Sexual ethics: Teach it in moral, islamic studies

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By **Dr Vishalache Balakrishnan** - December 5, 2017 @ 10:08am

RECENTLY, there were suggestions from a ministry that sex education be included in Moral Education and Islamic Studies.

As usual, there were voices from different parties claiming that other subjects, such as Physical Education (PE), already introduced sex education in Year One.

I was shocked when I saw what was written in the Year One PE book. Its title, *How My Little Brother Arrived*, was focused on human genitals and how conception takes place.

It was so scientific and biological that even a teenager might find the facts difficult to understand, what more a 7-year-old child.

Several weeks ago, I attended a five-hour workshop on how sexual ethics is taught in American elementary and high schools and colleges.

The sexual part was explained by doctors and nurses.

Of course, the curious children and adolescents asked all kinds of questions, but their responses were clear.

Then came the Moral Education teachers.

They started by giving the philosophical aspects of what it means to care for one's dignity.

The students were exposed to the philosophy of the bystander, one who sees what is taking place and carrying out his responsibility by reporting any sexual abuse or injury to another, which is encouraged. Such abuse could happen due to intoxication or desire to seek revenge.

The above philosophy reminded me of the cases of sexual abuse in our country.

More often than not, the sexual abuser is a person known to the victim. But, bystanders, like family members or friends, do not initiate positive action to stop the abuse from taking place.

At times, family members stop a victim from reporting the abuse because of shame and guilt.

Educators and parents shy away from topics such as sexual ethics, because they are taboo subjects, so much so that when a victim is sexually assaulted, the person does not realise the physical and mental damage that has been done.

It is sad to see young girls who are raped or sexually molested.

It is high time our educators took a more proactive role in educating the young about sexual ethics through appropriate subjects, such as Moral Education and Islamic Studies.

We can learn from different programmes conducted in other countries and formulate one that suits our multicultural nation best.

Let us empower our young ones with knowledge of sexual ethics so they are able to carry themselves well, no matter where they are or with whom they associate.

We can champion sexual ethics for a multicultural nation and it would transform our national education system.

DR VISHALACHE BALAKRISHNAN

Director, Centre for Research in International and Comparative Education, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur