

Designing Educational Comic About Sexual Self-Regulation for Adolescent

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Abstract: Sexual motivation development processes allow and even encourage sexual expression in adolescence phase. Sexual self-regulation refers to how adolescent regulates their sexuality by building self-control which includes focusing on only necessary behavior, migrate received information, and plan then regulate emotions and behaviors. Educational comic can be used as an alternative educational tool, as it uses interesting form and has structurally arranged pictures with easily understandable words for students to evoke motivation and interest in learning. In order to educate adolescent about the importance of sexual self-regulation, the author does the design of educational comic about sexual self-regulation. This design uses qualitative research methods to collect data about design subject, which includes doing interview, questionnaire, and observation. This design also uses McCloud's Six Steps Path of Creation as the method to design the educational comic. Finally, the author also does the design of secondary media which includes designing promotional media and gimmicks. This method helps the author to design a suitable and appropriate educational comic on sexual topics for adolescent that is attractive, enjoyable, and informative.

Keywords: educational comic; sexual self-regulation; adolescent.

1. Introduction

Sexual motivation development processes allow and even encourage sexual expression in adolescence phase. Starting in early adolescence or roughly during 10-14 years old, corresponding with the onset of puberty, true sexual behaviors began to appear [1, p. 35]. Sexual behavior is influenced by a physiological factor called self-regulation which may prevent the behavior. Sexual self-regulation refers to how adolescent regulates their sexuality by building self-control which includes focusing on only necessary behavior,



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migrate received information, and plan then regulate emotions and behaviors. The ability to regulate sexual self-regulation is vital in adolescents' development. [2, p. 77].

Low self-regulation is tied to risky sexual behavior, such as having unhealthy sexual behavior as an adolescent [3, p. 610]. Pre-marital sex becomes one of the most common characteristics of adolescent's sexual behavior [4, p. 189]. According to Kemenko PMK (2021), SDKI 2017 recorded that 74% men and 59% women have had their first pre-marital sex at 15-19 years old. A comprehensive sexual education can accommodate the transformation from an adolescent to a responsible adult who can positively maneuver their sexual behavior [4, pp. 188, 190].

Comprehensive sex education at school is tied to the decrease of risky sexual behavior. Yet, sex education and school-based tie itself were not enough to fulfill the need of the students [5, pp. 1–2]. There is a lack of interesting media about reproductive health that can be used as a learning tool by teachers, as the currently available tool is textbooks about reproductive system [6, p. 78].

In explaining complicated long and complicated topic, an educational comic can be a choice for the learning media as it allows a more easily understood and memorable explanations [7, p. 68]. Educational comic uses interesting form and has structurally arranged pictures with easily understandable words for students to evoke motivation and interest in learning [8, p. 309]. Therefore, the author does the design of educational comic about sexual self-regulation for adolescents.

This research seeks to answer the following questions: how to design an educational comic about sexual self-regulation for adolescent in Indonesia?

2. Literature Reviews

2.1 Educational Comic

Educational comic contains educational content and information related to the subject, in addition to the general story content and comic narrative. It is suitable for social science learning media as it has the ability to include the values of a character and provide insight. Educational comic allows a more easily understood and remembered explanations of a long and complicated topic of learning [7, p. 68].

Comic can be used as an effective learning medium, improving the teaching and learning process, and making the topic more interesting to learn. Comic can improve learning outcomes in the form of students' positive responses, liveliness, and interest. Through the characters, the topic can be integrated in the values of the characters [7, p. 68].

2.2 Sexual Self-Regulation

Self-regulation is defined as a process on how one manages their mind, emotion, and behavior and it is the core of many sexual delinquency behavior conceptualization. Self-

regulation is heavily influenced by environment depending on the norm, value, and certain standard to behave compelling to community needs especially in risky sexual behavior. Several studies have found that self-regulation is a significant longitudinal indicator whether young people will engage in risky sexual behavior [3, pp. 607; 610].

During puberty, sexual aspects are developing rapidly along with the children's mental state. Good sexual cognition will result in healthy sexual behavior and correct sexual attitude. Sexual adaptation is an important piece of this development. It means that adolescents can accept their sexual changes happily and consciously constrain and adjust their desires and behaviors with social and cultural norms appropriately. Sexual adaptation consists of identification of their own gender, adaptation to social, moral, and cultural norms, and being able to regulate and control their sexual behavior and activities. Sexual adaptation itself is influenced by genders and family environment. Girls' overall sexual adaptability was found to be more susceptible to various dimensions from family environment [9, p. 191].

Stability in self-control has an important factor in influencing the sexual behavior in adolescent to early adult phase. Adolescent with effective regulation level will have a decided goal which is to prevent sexual behavior. In order to achieve this, adolescent have to develop a strategy such as deciding the line between what kind of behavior is allowed and not allowed in a relationship and rejecting sexual behavior invitation from their partner. Adolescent who is able to resist such temptation and act toward a goal can control their sexual behavior to avoid negative sexual consequences that can ruin their goal in the long term, such as postpone doing sexual behavior in order to complete school without having unplanned pregnancy [3, pp. 609–11].

2.3 Six Steps Path of Creation

Six Steps Path of Creation is a model explained by McCloud in his book, *Understanding Comic* (1994). This model is tied to the purpose and can be used to decide what a creator wants out of art. This model contains of six steps which are Idea/Purpose, Form, Idiom, Structure, Craft, and Surface [10, pp. 169–70].

The first step, Idea/Purpose, is said to be the core of art, where the creator gathers impulses, ideas, emotions, philosophies, and purposes of the work in order to form the work's content. This step can also be seen as the goal, resulting in turning art as a tool with powers of ideas within. The second step, Form, is where the form of art will be decided. In order to discover the capabilities of the art form, the creator is pushed to explore the form of expression. As the ideas take over and shape the work, the choice of form can help build those ideas. The third step, Idiom, is to decide the colour of styles or gestures or subject matter then the genre of the work. This step is an important step for creator to create a unique identity, to showcase their work in a new light through an innovative new technique [10, pp. 170, 176, 179, 183–4].

The fourth step, Structure, is to compile together what to include and to leave out, how to arrange, and how to compose the work. This is where the creator develops the beneath of

craftsmanship and scripting, in order to understand the pacing, drama, composition, thematic development, and more. In comic creation, this can help to understand comic storytelling better through the principles of comic composition and storytelling. The fifth step, Craft, is to apply skills, practical knowledge, invention, and problem-solving to construct the work itself. This may cover the process of drawing techniques like anatomy and perspective. The last step, Surface, is related to the superficial exposure to the work created by production values. The surface of an art is the most easily appreciated part of an art. This can also be the reason why an individual may be interested in the art itself [10, pp. 170–1, 173, 175–6].

2. Research Method

The data collection method used by the author is the qualitative research method. Qualitative research is based on a going exploring concept that includes in-depth and case-oriented study or several cases or a single case [11, p. 35]. The techniques used were interview, questionnaire, and observation.

Interview was done with adolescent psychologist, Fiona Valentina Damanik, M.Psi., Psikolog. Fiona explained that sexual desire is a form of energy. She also explained the concept of delayed rewards or delayed gratification, which is vital for sexual self-regulation. Fiona mentioned the importance of context while talking about the topic and gave advice to insert social contexts and examples in the media so that adolescent may understand the information better.

The author spread an online questionnaire to adolescent aged 12-15 years old in Jawa Barat within SES B economic class. From the questionnaire, it can be concluded that most respondents have yet to develop physical and/or sexual attraction which can be viewed in positive light but raised concerns about how they will deal with it later in the future. Most of them have no knowledge of sexual self-regulation before and want to improve their ability on it. Most of them are positively interested in an educational comic book about sexual self-regulation and preferred it in printed format.

Table 1 Result of Questionnaire.

	Questions	Answers	Percentage
1	Have you ever felt sexual desire towards someone?	Yes	30.5%
		No	69.5%
2	In your opinion, is sexual self-regulation ability important for adolescent to have?	(1) Very not important	1.7%
		(2)	0%
		(3)	6.8%
		(4)	8.5%

		(5)	18.6%
		(6) Very important	64.4%
3	Will you be interested if there is an educational comic book about sexual self-regulation?	(1) Very not interested	5.1%
		(2)	6.8%
		(3)	10.2%
		(4)	22.0%
		(5)	30.5%
		(6) Very interested	25.4%

Observation was done through existing study and reference study. Existing study was done to *Puber Tanpa Baper* (2024) and *Hamil di Luar Nikah* (2018). The study showed that appropriate approach is important regarding this topic. Reference study was done to *Habitat* (2013). From this study, the author observed the use of composition and framing to create dynamic and interesting flows of comic.

Lastly, the method and procedure of this design used Six Steps Path of Creation from McCloud's Understanding Comic. This is tied to the purpose, to decide what the author wants out of art. The model used in this design has several steps which includes Idea/Purpose, Form, Idiom, Structure, Craft, Surface, and Test.

3. Result

The design process began with Idea/Purpose step which was to collect the data as explained in the previous section. In Form step, the author decided on the outcome media which are comic book as primary media and promotional media along with gimmicks as secondary media. In Idiom, the author created a mindmap to compile the ideas. The author then decided on several keywords which later formed the big idea "Awkward Bloom." The author then created a moodboard based on it. This helped the author to set the tone and mood for the media.

In Structure, the author developed the story of the comic, including rough character and environmental design, page thumbnails, and table of content. In Craft, the author chose a color palette, typography style, and illustration style. The used color palette in this design is to represent the freshness, awkwardness, and typical adolescent's sudden outburst which result in vibrant, bright, and bold colors. The chosen typography style also has a sense of fun, playful, and clean to suit adolescent.

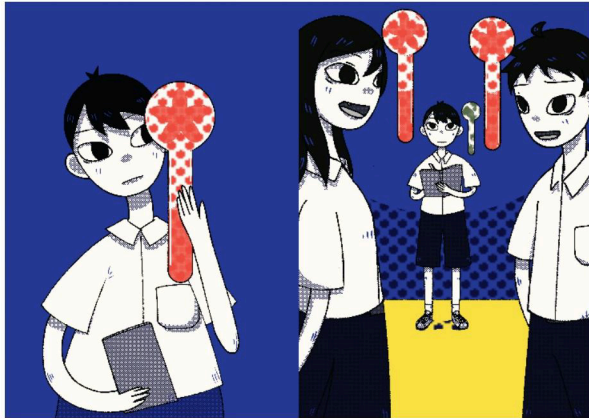


Figure 1 Key Visual

For this design, the illustration style is simple, funny, and slightly funky to give a clean but fun look. The style took a loose inspiration from *Tahilalats*, which often features character with either blank expression or dramatic expression to deliver comedic punch line. This visual style is chosen as it suits the topic and may help to cover sexual topic to adolescent without making it overly vulgar. Later, the author began the layout and sketch process of the book, including drawing the comic and designing the layout for the book, then digitalizing them.



Figure 2 Primary Media

In Surface, the author created the secondary media. Secondary media is composed by promotional media and gimmicks. These included promotional media such as poster, Instagram Story advertisement, and point of purchases, and gimmicks such as bookmark, sticker sheet, and notebook.



Figure 3 Secondary Media

After that, the author tested the media using Alpha Test through specialist counseling with a comic expert and Beta Test with the design subject. Beta Test participants had positive feedbacks, enjoyed the book, understood the presented information, were easily engaged during the reading, liked the illustration style, and can easily followed the flow of comic.

4. Discussion

To test the effectiveness of the comic, the author has done specialist counseling and beta testing. From the test, it was found that design subject enjoyed the book, was easily engaged throughout, and said that they gained new information. They were interested in buying the book if it was available at stores because many adolescents at their age are interested in sexual topic and the visual of the book is attractive. But, the readability of some texts needed to be adjusted. Storytelling wise, the story and visual direction were deemed interesting, which excited subject to follow the story. But, the initial title for the book were deemed slightly inappropriate considering the age of subject and has gone through several revisions after the research was concluded. Related to that, the cover design has also been revised.

4. Conclusion

Sexual self-regulation defines how adolescents regulate their sexual emotions. But there is a lack of learning media for adolescent to be introduced to this topic, which still being perceived as slightly taboo. Using comic, this information can be delivered in a fun way that does not feel as awkward. In this design process, the author realized that more in-depth researches should have been done to ensure that the comic is capable of fulfilling its educational purposes.

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