

GOOD TOUCH, BAD TOUCH: IMPLEMENTING LIFT-THE-FLAP BOOK TO ENHANCE EARLY SEXUAL EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN

Siti Fitriana ^{1*}, Ellya Rakhmawati ¹, Suhendri Suhendri ¹, Wiwik Kusdaryani ²

¹ Universitas PGRI Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia

Correspondence Author: sitifitriana@upgris.ac.id

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Abstract : *The lack of an appropriate approach in delivering early sexuality education results in children not fully understanding body boundaries and safe and unsafe forms of touch. This condition increases children's vulnerability to potential sexual violence, requiring developmentally appropriate learning strategies. This study aims to examine the implementation of lift-the-flap books in improving children's understanding of the concepts of good and bad touch, while simultaneously encouraging active engagement in the learning process. This study used a descriptive qualitative approach with 25 children aged 4–6 years as subjects. Data were collected through participant observation and semi-structured interviews, then analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The results showed that the use of lift-the-flap books can improve children's understanding of body boundaries more concretely and encourage active engagement through interactive and fun exploratory activities. Furthermore, this media also helps children express their understanding more openly. These findings confirm that the integration of interactive media in learning not only strengthens cognitive aspects but also creates meaningful, contextual learning experiences that are responsive to the developmental needs of early childhood.*

Keywords : *Early Sexual Education; Lift-The-Flap Book; Children.*

Abstrak : *Kurangnya pendekatan yang tepat dalam penyampaian pendidikan seksual dini menyebabkan anak belum sepenuhnya memahami batasan tubuh serta bentuk sentuhan yang aman maupun tidak aman. Kondisi ini meningkatkan kerentanan anak terhadap potensi kekerasan seksual, sehingga diperlukan strategi pembelajaran yang sesuai dengan tahap perkembangan mereka. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji implementasi buku lift-the-flap dalam meningkatkan pemahaman anak terhadap konsep good touch dan bad touch, sekaligus mendorong keterlibatan aktif dalam proses pembelajaran. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan subjek 25 anak usia 4–6 tahun. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi partisipatif dan wawancara semi-terstruktur, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan teknik analisis tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan buku lift-the-flap mampu meningkatkan pemahaman anak terhadap batasan tubuh secara lebih konkret serta mendorong keterlibatan aktif melalui aktivitas eksploratif yang interaktif dan menyenangkan. Selain itu, media ini juga membantu anak mengekspresikan pemahaman mereka secara lebih terbuka. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa integrasi media interaktif dalam pembelajaran tidak hanya memperkuat aspek kognitif, tetapi juga membangun pengalaman belajar yang bermakna, kontekstual, dan responsif terhadap kebutuhan perkembangan anak usia dini.*

Kata Kunci : *Pendidikan Seksual Dini, Lift-The-Flap Book, Anak-anak.*

INTRODUCTION

Self-protection education for early childhood is receiving increasing attention in learning practices (Daugherty et al., 2022; Sliwka et al., 2024). Children at this stage are still in the concrete cognitive development phase, requiring media that can explain concepts simply and easily (Chinchay et al., 2024). In reality, the delivery of material related to understanding the body and the boundaries of interaction is often not optimal due to limitations in the methods and media used. On the other hand, an overly verbal approach tends to be less effective in helping children understand sensitive concepts (Bradford et al., 2024; Donald et al., 2024; Mushfi et al., 2021). This situation highlights the need for innovation in material delivery that is more adaptive to children's learning characteristics (Fitri, 2022). Therefore, the use of interactive media is a relevant alternative to support a more effective learning process.

One form of media that is increasingly being used is interactive books with an open-and-close mechanism that allows children to learn through exploration. This characteristic of media provides opportunities for children to be directly involved in the process of discovering information, making learning more meaningful (Ge, 2024; Nowlan et al., 2023). The interactions that occur are not only visual but also involve simple motor activities that support conceptual understanding (Jetha et al., 2023). In the context of learning about touch, this type of media can present material in a gradual manner without creating a tense impression (Yolanda, 2024). Furthermore, the use of interactive books also helps teachers deliver material in a more communicative and contextual manner. Therefore, the use of lift-the-flap media is a potential approach to improving the quality of learning in early childhood.

Several previous studies have shown that the use of visual and interactive media can improve children's understanding of self-protection concepts (Füller et al., 2022). Some studies utilize picture books, educational videos, and storytelling as delivery tools, with results indicating an increase in children's knowledge of body boundaries (Ernst et al., 2023). These studies share a common goal of introducing basic self-protection concepts from an early age (Mulla & Krishnan, 2022). However, most approaches still position children as passive recipients of information. In contrast, this study emphasizes the use of lift-the-flap books, which encourage children's active participation in the learning process. This distinction provides a more exploratory and interactive learning experience. Thus, this research presents a more dynamic approach to early childhood sexuality education.

Based on these conditions, this research focuses on how the use of interactive books can support children's understanding of the concepts of safe and unsafe touch. This focus emphasizes not only the end result of increased knowledge, but also the process by which children construct understanding through interaction with media. The uniqueness of this

approach lies in the integration of visual elements, hands-on activities, and children's curiosity in a single learning experience. This aligns with the needs of early childhood, who tend to learn through exploration and concrete experiences. Therefore, the use of lift-the-flap books is expected to bridge the need for sensitive learning with a child-friendly approach. This focus is crucial to understand how media can optimally support the internalization of concepts.

In practice at the research site, the use of interactive books demonstrated a more lively and participatory learning dynamic. Children were seen actively opening sections of the book, observing illustrations, and responding to questions posed by the teacher. This situation encouraged children to more easily understand the difference between permissible and avoided touch. Furthermore, children also demonstrated courage in expressing simple opinions and experiences relevant to the material. The teacher acted as a facilitator, guiding the discussion without creating a tense atmosphere. These conditions demonstrate that interactive media can create a safe and enjoyable learning environment. Therefore, it can be assumed that the use of lift-the-flap books contributes positively to supporting children's understanding of the concept of self-protection.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative, descriptive design to examine in depth the implementation of lift-the-flap books as a medium for improving understanding of sexuality education in early childhood. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand children's experiences, responses, and interpretations within a natural learning context. Data collection techniques included participant observation and semi-structured interviews, both conducted in simple, child-friendly language. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques, as described by Braun and Clarke, including data recognition, coding, theme determination, and comprehensive interpretation of meaning.

The research subjects consisted of 25 children aged 4–6 years from diverse social, economic, and cultural backgrounds. Participants were selected from 16 early childhood education institutions, including kindergartens (TK) and Raudhatul Athfal (RA) in Semarang City. RA, as an Islamic-based educational institution, has unique learning characteristics, thereby providing a diverse context for conducting the research. All children participating in this study received written consent from their parents or guardians and were accompanied by teachers during data collection to ensure their comfort and safety.

Prior to conducting the research, several preparatory stages were carried out, namely; 1) obtaining official permission from the principal and teachers at each institution; 2) compiling and preparing research instruments in the form of interview guidelines, observation sheets, and learning media in the form of lift-the-flap books; and 3) collecting

consent forms from parents/guardians. The media used were part of the “I Can Protect Myself” module, specifically Series 2, “Learning Sexuality with Family,” which contains material on the concepts of good touch and bad touch. In this study, the researcher did not develop the media, but rather focused on applying the available media in a real learning context.

The implementation phase took place from September 28 to October 18, 2024, in each kindergarten and RA class. The implementation procedure included: 1) providing a brief briefing to teachers regarding the use of lift-the-flap books in learning; 2) interactive reading activities by teachers to children; and 3) interviews with children conducted under teacher supervision. Throughout the process, children were encouraged to interact directly with the book through flap-opening activities to find information independently, thus helping them understand concepts more concretely and contextually.

To ensure data validity, this study adhered to Lincoln and Guba's trustworthiness criteria, namely credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Efforts included data triangulation through a combination of observation and interviews, member checking involving teachers as supporting informants, and researcher reflexivity through repeated evaluations of the research process and findings. Furthermore, the researchers considered the characteristics of children with limited vocabulary and expressive abilities, and used interactive visual media to facilitate children's understanding of questions and their responses.

Data analysis was conducted in stages, from data collection to final interpretation. Researchers organized observational and interview data and coded them to identify emerging patterns. Next, key themes were developed to illustrate how implementing the lift-the-flap book contributed to children's understanding of body boundaries and self-protection. The analysis results are presented in the form of in-depth descriptions to provide a comprehensive overview of the learning dynamics and the effectiveness of media use in early childhood sexuality education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the research findings and their discussion based on data obtained during the implementation of the lift-the-flap book in early childhood learning. Data were collected through participant observation and semi-structured interviews, then analyzed in a stepwise manner using a thematic approach to identify patterns, responses, and meanings in children's interactions with the media. The findings not only illustrate the children's level of understanding of the concepts of safe and unsafe touch but also demonstrate the dynamics of their engagement during the learning process. The subsequent discussion links these findings to the role of teachers, the characteristics of interactive media, and the learning context that supports the creation of meaningful learning experiences.

Thus, this section focuses not only on data presentation but also on providing a comprehensive interpretation of the field results.

1. Results

a) Improving Children's Understanding of the Concept of Safe and Unsafe Touch

The research results showed an increase in children's understanding of safe and unsafe touch after learning through lift-the-flap books. This improvement was evident in changes in how children recognized body boundaries and in their ability to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable forms of interaction. Children were not only able to answer simple questions but also began to demonstrate contextual understanding through responses to situations presented in the media. This process occurred as children engaged in exploratory activities that gradually allowed them to discover information. Thus, the use of interactive media helped children transform previously abstract concepts into more concrete and understandable ones.

Table 1: Improving Understanding of the Concept of Good Touch and Bad Touch through the Lift-the-Flap Book

Interview / Observation Data	Description	Code
Class Teacher: <i>"After using this book, children will start to be able to name body parts that other people should not touch."</i>	Improving children's ability to recognize personal body boundaries	Body Awareness
Child: <i>"If someone touches this part (pointing), I said no."</i>	Children's ability to identify and respond to unsafe touch	Protective Response
Classroom observations show that children are able to point to illustrations and differentiate between safe and unsafe situations in books.	Contextual understanding through interactive visual media	Contextual Understanding
Teacher Assistant: <i>"The children now understand better which touch is good and which is not, especially after seeing the pictures and opening the book section."</i>	Internalization of concepts through direct interaction with media	Concept Internalization
Observations show that children actively open flaps and discuss the contents with friends and teachers.	Exploratory processes help build gradual understanding.	Exploratory Learning

Table 1 shows that children's increased understanding of the concepts of good and bad touch is evident not only in the final results but also in the gradual learning interaction process. The data presented indicate changes in how children recognize, understand, and respond to information related to body boundaries. This

demonstrates that the use of lift-the-flap books is not merely an aid but also a tool that creates a more concrete and meaningful learning experience. These findings point to several important aspects that explain how children's understanding develops during the learning process, as follows;

First, increased awareness of private body parts (body awareness). Data shows that children are beginning to recognize and name body parts that should not be touched by others. This ability does not emerge spontaneously but rather through repeated exposure to visual aids in books. The illustrations presented help children connect information with concrete representations, thus facilitating understanding. Furthermore, the teacher's role in providing simple explanations helps strengthen children's understanding of these concepts. Thus, awareness of body boundaries lays the foundation for understanding self-protection in early childhood.

Second, the development of children's ability to respond to unsafe situations (protective response). Children not only understand cognitively but also begin to demonstrate the ability to respond to situations they consider uncomfortable. This is evident in children's statements, such as saying "no" when faced with certain illustrations or simulations. This response indicates an early internalization process, in which children not only know but can also apply it in simple contexts. Learning experiences involving direct interaction with media provide a space for children to practice courage in expressing their attitudes. Therefore, this ability is an important indicator of learning effectiveness.

Third, the formation of contextual understanding through visual media (contextual understanding). Observations show that children can connect illustrations in books to real-life situations they might encounter. Visual media helps simplify abstract concepts by presenting them in more understandable terms. Children can distinguish between safe and avoidable conditions based on the images and narratives presented. This process demonstrates that learning is not simply rote learning but also involves interpreting context. Therefore, the use of interactive visual media is key to helping children develop deeper understanding.





Fourth, concepts are internalized through direct interaction (concept internalization). The act of opening flaps, observing hidden content, and discussing information with teachers and peers encourages children to gradually internalize concepts. This interaction creates an active and reflective learning experience, not a passive one. Children learn through discovery, not simply receiving information. This strengthens memory and understanding because children are directly involved in the learning process. This strengthens the internalization of concepts and has the potential to persist over a longer period.

Fifth, the development of exploratory learning processes as a basis for understanding (explorative learning). Observational data show that children actively interact with books, both individually and with friends. Exploratory activities such as

opening, pointing to, and discussing the contents of books create a more dynamic learning environment. This process allows children to construct understanding independently through their natural curiosity. Furthermore, the learning environment becomes more enjoyable and less stressful, even when discussing sensitive topics. Thus, this exploratory approach contributes to creating an effective learning experience that is appropriate for the characteristics of early childhood.

Thus, these findings indicate that children's understanding of the concept of touch is influenced not only by the content but also by how it is presented through interactive and contextual media. The use of lift-the-flap books has been shown to integrate cognitive, affective, and experiential aspects of learning into a cohesive process, thus supporting the development of children's early awareness of self-protection.

Table 2: Content Analysis of the Lift-the-Flap Book in Building an Understanding of Good Touch and Bad Touch

Visualization / Scene	Description	Educational Meaning	Contribution to Understanding
	Illustration of a family with the roles of father, mother, and child in the context of the home	Introducing the child's immediate environment as the first learning space	Children understand that learning about the body begins in the family environment.
	Visual differences between men and women	Gender identification as a basis for understanding body boundaries	Children begin to recognize gender differences as part of the concept of privacy.
	Boys are directed to be independent or assisted by their fathers	Establishing boundaries based on gender equality	Children understand that not everyone can help with personal activities.
	Leon gets dressed after taking a shower	The importance of maintaining body modesty and privacy	Children understand that the body must be covered in social spaces.

	<p>Children dress neatly in front of others</p>	<p>Social norms in maintaining the body in front of others</p>	<p>Children understand the social context in maintaining body boundaries.</p>
	<p>Leon refused the hug</p>	<p>The importance of consent in physical interactions</p>	<p>Children learn that they have the right to refuse uncomfortable touch.</p>
	<p>Explanation of touch limits</p>	<p>Strengthening concepts through communication between characters</p>	<p>Children understand the rules of touch explicitly.</p>
	<p>Selda refused to sit on his lap</p>	<p>Rejection of inappropriate physical interactions</p>	<p>Children learn forms of self-protection in social situations.</p>
	<p>Prohibition of physical interaction with the opposite sex</p>	<p>Internalization of body boundary values</p>	<p>Children understand boundaries based on gender and social relations.</p>

Table 2 shows that the content in the lift-the-flap book is systematically structured to build children's understanding of the concepts of good and bad touch through representations of everyday situations. Each scene not only advances the storyline but also conveys an educational message that gradually introduces the concepts of body boundaries, gender differences, and the importance of maintaining personal privacy. Presenting the material in a concrete visual form helps children connect the information to real-life experiences, thereby facilitating understanding. Furthermore, the presence of lift-the-flap elements in several key sections strengthens the appeal and provides an exploratory experience that supports a deeper understanding of the concept.

Furthermore, the data show that children's understanding is built through several interrelated stages. *First*, introducing the family environment as an initial learning space provides a safe and familiar context for children. *Second*, identifying gender differences forms the basis for understanding the boundaries of physical

interaction. *Third*, presenting concrete situations such as dressing, bathing, and receiving touch helps children grasp concepts in a practical way. *Fourth*, emphasizing consent fosters an understanding that children have rights over their own bodies. *Fifth*, providing examples of behavior that rejects inappropriate touch strengthens children's ability to protect themselves. Thus, the book's content structure is not only informative but also transformative in shaping children's awareness of self-protection.

Overall, these findings confirm that the primary strength of lift-the-flap books lies in their ability to integrate narrative, visualization, and interaction into a single learning experience. This approach allows children not only to receive information but also to construct understanding through simple exploration and reflection. Therefore, contextually designed and interactive content is a key factor in supporting children's understanding of the concepts of safe and unsafe touch.

Interviews with the principal reinforced these findings. The informant emphasized that visual presentations reflect real-world conditions so prospective parents can obtain an objective picture from the outset. He stated that "*we want parents to see the school as it is,*" to avoid overly high expectations once students are accepted. The researcher's observations during the documentation process revealed that the school did not close off or avoid specific areas; rather, it presented the facilities as they were. This demonstrates institutional awareness of the importance of visual honesty in building relationships with the public.

These findings were further supported by interviews with parents, who stated that the virtual tour helped them gain a concrete understanding of the school's conditions. One informant stated that the visualization of the facilities "*matched what we later saw in person.*" Researchers interpreted this experience as evidence that visual transparency reduces information uncertainty and shapes perceptions of the school's honesty from the initial stages of interaction.

b) Increasing Children's Active Involvement in the Learning Process

These findings indicate an increase in children's active engagement in the learning process after using lift-the-flap books. This engagement is evident in the children's increased participation in various learning activities, such as opening sections of the book, observing illustrations, and responding to the teacher's questions. Children are no longer passive, but are directly involved in the process of finding information. Furthermore, the classroom atmosphere becomes more lively as children demonstrate enthusiasm, focus, and high curiosity throughout the activities. This process demonstrates that interactive media can create a more engaging and participatory learning experience. Thus, the use of lift-the-flap books enhances the quality of children's engagement, thereby more meaningfully impacting the learning

process. Empirical evidence from interviews and observations supporting these findings is presented in the following table.

Table 3: Increasing Children's Active Involvement in Learning through Lift-the-Flap Books

Interview / Observation Data	Description	Code
Class Teacher: <i>"The children are more enthusiastic when studying; they are fighting to open the book section."</i>	Increased enthusiasm and active participation of children	Active Engagement
Child: <i>"I want to open it again, what picture is inside?"</i>	Children's curiosity and exploratory engagement	Curiosity
Observations show that children focus on paying attention to the teacher's explanation while interacting with books.	Increased concentration during learning	Learning Focus
Supervising Teacher: <i>"Usually children get bored quickly, but with this book they stay longer in the activities."</i>	The duration of children's involvement in learning increases	Sustained Attention
Observations show children having simple discussions with friends about the contents of the book.	Social interaction as part of learning engagement	Collaborative Interaction

Table 2 shows that children's engagement in learning has increased significantly, not only in physical activity but also in cognitive and social domains. These data reveal several important aspects of children's engagement during the learning process as below;

First, increasing children's enthusiasm in participating in learning (active engagement). Children showed a high level of interest in the media used, demonstrated by their desire to participate directly. This enthusiasm is an early indicator that the learning media can capture their attention. This interest encourages children to engage voluntarily without coercion, thus creating a more enjoyable learning environment. Thus, the engagement that emerges is natural and sustainable.

Second, the development of children's curiosity. Interaction with lift-the-flap books sparks questions and a desire to further explore the content. The act of uncovering hidden sections within a book provides a surprising experience that stimulates curiosity. This process encourages children to continue exploring and understanding the information presented. This curiosity is a key driver of active learning in early childhood.

Third, increased focus and concentration during learning (learning focus). Observations show that children can maintain attention longer than those using conventional learning methods. Interactive media helps reduce distractions because children are directly involved in the learning activity. This involvement allows

children to focus more on receiving and processing information. This results in more effective learning due to improved concentration levels.

Fourth, increasing the duration of children's involvement in learning activities (sustained attention). Children did not easily lose interest during the learning process and even showed a desire to continue the activity. This indicates that the media used maintained children's attention for a longer period. The extended engagement provides more opportunities for children to understand the material in depth. Therefore, this aspect is an important indicator in assessing learning success.

Fifth, the development of social interaction in the learning process (collaborative interaction). Children interact not only with media but also with their peers through simple discussions. They share opinions and demonstrate what they find in books. This interaction enriches the learning experience by allowing children to learn not only individually but also socially. Thus, children's engagement encompasses broader dimensions: cognitive, affective, and social. These findings indicate that using lift-the-flap books can enhance children's active engagement in the learning process. This engagement is a crucial factor supporting successful learning, as children not only receive information but also actively participate in constructing their own understanding.



Figure 1: Children's Interactive Reading Activities in Learning.

The research findings, as shown in Figure 1, demonstrate that interactive reading activities can encourage children's active involvement in the learning process. These activities include direct interaction with books, simple peer discussions, and spontaneous responses to material read together. Children demonstrate a high level of focus, characterized by body positions leaning toward the book, serious and enthusiastic expressions, and involvement in sharing understanding with peers. This situation reflects that learning is no longer one-way but has evolved into a collaborative process involving cognitive, social, and emotional aspects. Therefore, this interactive reading activity demonstrates that appropriate media can increase

participation, extend attention span, and create a more lively and meaningful learning environment in early childhood.

2. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of the lift-the-flap book resulted in fundamental changes in children's understanding of the concepts of good and bad touch, as reflected in their ability to recognize body boundaries, differentiate types of touch, and respond to uncomfortable situations (Caruelle et al., 2024; Luo et al., 2022; Sauri et al., 2022). These changes are evident not only in cognitive aspects but also in children's initial awareness of self-protection in everyday life. The content structure, which is based on concrete situations, such as family interactions, personal activities, and social relationships, allows children to understand the concept gradually and contextually (Donald et al., 2024). Thus, learning media functions not only as a means of conveying information but also as a means of constructing meaning relevant to children's experiences.

Interpretatively, this increase in understanding indicates a shift from abstract to more concrete, applicable learning. Children no longer simply receive information verbally, but construct understanding through visual representations and exploratory experiences provided by books (Hammar et al., 2025; Marosi et al., 2024). Interaction with lift-the-flap elements allows children to discover information independently, thereby strengthening the process of internalizing concepts (Chinchay et al., 2024; Ernst et al., 2023). This suggests that children's understanding develops through active engagement in the learning process, where direct experience is a crucial factor in shaping awareness. Thus, the effectiveness of learning is determined not only by the content but also by the delivery method, which is appropriate to the developmental characteristics of early childhood.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings align with the constructivist approach, which emphasizes that knowledge is built through interactions between individuals and their environment. Children, as active learners, construct understanding through concrete experiences provided by learning media. Furthermore, the principle of developmentally appropriate practice (PDP) is also relevant, explaining that the material presented must be appropriate to the child's cognitive stage (Kinney et al., 2024). The use of visual illustrations, simple narratives, and interactive activities in the lift-the-flap book demonstrates the practical application of this principle. Thus, this media serves not only as a tool but also as a representation of a learning theory that places the child at the center of the learning process.

The novelty of this research lies in integrating early sexual education content with interactive, exploration-based media within a unified learning framework. Unlike previous research, which tends to use a verbal approach or one-way media, this study

demonstrates that lift-the-flap books can combine visual, narrative, and kinesthetic aspects. This integration results in a more comprehensive learning experience that aligns with the characteristics of early childhood. Furthermore, this research positions sexual education not as a separate topic, but as part of contextual learning integrated with children's daily lives. Thus, this research makes a new contribution to the development of learning strategies that are more adaptive and sensitive to children's needs.

The practical implications of these findings suggest that educators should consider using interactive and contextual media when delivering sensitive material. Teachers serve not only as conveyors of information but also as facilitators, guiding children in building understanding through learning experiences. Furthermore, educational institutions need to provide support by providing learning media appropriate to the characteristics of early childhood. This approach also requires a paradigm shift in viewing sex education, from what was previously considered taboo to becoming a crucial part of developing children's self-awareness. Thus, implementing appropriate media can enhance learning effectiveness while supporting children's holistic development.

From a global perspective, these findings are relevant to efforts to improve the quality of early childhood education, which emphasizes the importance of child protection and well-being. Education about body boundaries and self-protection is part of the international agenda for creating a safe environment for children (Temkina et al., 2025). The use of interactive media such as lift-the-flap books demonstrates that simple innovations can have a significant impact when designed to meet children's developmental needs. Furthermore, this approach can be adapted to various cultural contexts with relevant content adjustments. Thus, this research contributes to the global discourse on the importance of early sexuality education through a child-friendly, context-based approach.

However, this study has limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results. The limited scope of the study, limited to a specific number of participants and location, may allow for variation in results when applied in different contexts. Furthermore, the relatively short implementation duration does not fully reflect the sustainability of children's understanding over the long term. Other factors, such as family background, parenting styles, and prior experiences, may also influence children's understanding. Therefore, further research with a broader scope and a longitudinal approach is needed to test the consistency and long-term impact of using lift-the-flap media in early childhood sexual education.

Further findings indicate that implementing lift-the-flap books increased children's active engagement in the learning process, as reflected in their high levels of participation, focused attention, and interaction during the activity. Children were not

merely recipients of information but were directly involved through activities such as opening flaps, observing illustrations, and responding to the teacher's questions (Ladachart et al., 2022). This involvement was also evident in the children's increased enthusiasm and curiosity about the material presented. Thus, the learning process evolved from a passive pattern to a more participatory, interactive experience, creating a more lively, dynamic classroom atmosphere.

Interpretively, this increased engagement demonstrates that interactive media can transform how children participate in learning. The exploratory activities facilitated by lift-the-flap books provide a space for children to learn through direct experience, rather than simply listening to explanations (Ernst et al., 2023; Yi et al., 2024). This results in increased focus and attention span, as they are physically and cognitively engaged in the learning process. Furthermore, interactions occur not only between children and the media but also between peers and teachers, enriching the learning experience. Thus, active engagement is an indicator that learning is meaningful and aligned with the characteristics of early childhood.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings align with social constructivism theory, which emphasizes that learning occurs through active interaction between individuals and their environment (Khosravi et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2024). Children construct knowledge through hands-on experiences involving exploration and collaboration (Lee & Kwon, 2024). Furthermore, active learning theory explains that physical and mental engagement in the learning process can enhance comprehension and retention of information (Ríssola et al., 2022). The use of lift-the-flap books, which combine the activities of opening, observing, and discussing, is a concrete example of this principle (Basri et al., 2024). Thus, interactive media not only increases engagement but also supports a more effective and child-centered learning process.

The novelty of this research lies in the use of lift-the-flap books as a medium that not only conveys material but also engages children in comprehensive participation in the context of early sexuality education. Unlike previous approaches, which tend to be one-way, this research demonstrates that integrating exploratory elements into the media can create a more dynamic learning experience. Children's involvement occurs not only at the individual level but also in social interactions that enrich the learning process. Thus, this research offers a new perspective: learning media can be designed not only to convey information but also to holistically activate the learning process.

The practical implications of these findings suggest that teachers should adopt learning strategies that encourage active child engagement through interactive, exploratory media. Learning should no longer be teacher-centered, but rather focus on children's activities as the primary subjects in the learning process. Furthermore, educational institutions need to provide facilities and media that support a participatory

learning environment. This approach also requires a shift in perspective, recognizing that child engagement is a crucial indicator of learning success. Therefore, media such as lift-the-flap books can be an effective alternative for improving the quality of early childhood learning.

From a global perspective, these findings are relevant to developments in 21st-century education, which emphasize student engagement as a key to successful learning. Approaches that encourage active participation, collaboration, and exploration have become part of modern educational practices in various countries (Adeoye et al., 2025; Moslimany et al., 2024; Örüçü & Kutlugün, 2022). The use of simple yet interactive media, such as lift-the-flap books, demonstrates that increasing engagement does not depend solely on high technology but on appropriate learning design. Thus, this research contributes to the development of learning strategies that can be widely applied in various early childhood education contexts.

However, this study has limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results. The observed children's engagement was confined to a specific learning context and for a limited duration, so it does not fully reflect the long-term sustainability of engagement. Furthermore, external factors such as individual child characteristics, teacher teaching style, and the learning environment can also influence engagement levels. Therefore, further research with a broader scope and longer timeframe is needed to examine the consistency and long-term impact of interactive media use on children's learning engagement.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that the implementation of lift-the-flap books in early childhood learning not only improves understanding of the concepts of good and bad touch but also encourages children's active involvement in the learning process. These two findings are interrelated, with exploratory engagement through interaction with media directly contributing to the formation of more concrete and contextual understanding. Thus, learning is no longer a one-way process but rather a participatory process, where children construct knowledge through direct experience. This synthesis demonstrates that the effectiveness of early sexuality education learning is determined not only by the content but also by the media design and learning experiences presented.

Conceptually, this research contributes to strengthening the experiential learning approach in the context of early childhood sexuality education. The novelty offered lies in the integration of sensitive educational content with simple interactive media that can simultaneously activate children's cognitive, affective, and social dimensions. These findings broaden the understanding that learning media function not only as tools but also

as pedagogical instruments that shape how children understand and respond to information. Thus, this research not only confirms existing practices but also offers a conceptual framework that demonstrates that active involvement is a crucial prerequisite for developing children's understanding of self-protection issues.

The practical implications of this research suggest that teachers and educational institutions need to develop learning strategies that position children as active subjects through the use of interactive and contextual media. However, these implications cannot be separated from the key finding that engagement and understanding are mutually reinforcing. Therefore, the use of media such as lift-the-flap books should be viewed as part of an integrated learning design, not simply as a method variation. This approach requires teachers' readiness to facilitate interactions, as well as institutional support in providing a safe and responsive learning environment to children's needs.

However, this study is limited by the number of participants and the relatively short duration of implementation, which means it does not fully reflect the long-term sustainability of its impact. Furthermore, variations in social context and child characteristics may influence the results. Based on these limitations, future research is recommended to develop longitudinal studies to examine the consistency of children's understanding and engagement over time, as well as to expand the research context to include diverse cultural settings and educational institutions. Thus, future research development will not only strengthen the validity of the findings but also broaden the conceptual contribution to developing more adaptive and contextual early childhood sexuality education.

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