

FAMILY

INTRODUCTION

The Family Panel, first convened in January 2022, consists of six panel members:

1. **Fathurrahman Dawoed**, Panel leader, Vice-Chairman of AMP Singapore, and Executive Director, Andalus Corporation Pte Ltd
2. **Md Noordin Yusuff**, member of AMP Singapore Board of Directors, and Head of Security and IT Operations at Doctor Anywhere
3. **Hafiz Othman**, Executive Director, Emaan Catalyst Community Ltd
4. **Khairul Ruzaini**, Owner, SmartMamat.com and Lead, Marketing & Partnerships, ShopBack
5. **Nadia Hanim Abd Rahman**, Director, Al-Wafa' and Co-Founder, Our Little Ummah Learning Centre
6. **Siti Nurzakiah Zar'an**, Senior Medical Social Worker, KK Women's & Children's Hospital

The panel members conducted extensive discussions to identify issues within the context of Muslim families in Singapore. Following the discussions, the Panel highlighted the following as this study's main objective: **Strengthening the Family Institution through Islamic Values**. The secondary objectives are to study and reflect on:

- a) **the impact of digital devices on family values and relationships**
- b) **the importance of healthy communication on sexuality education between family members**

From the objectives mentioned above, we can see that the Panel adopted a problem-based

approach that revolves around the pressing issues of Technology and Sexuality Education, and how they impact families and children.

The family unit has been the constitutive point of reference to measure the success of every given society. This is primarily because this institution plays a vital role in enriching our lives, and it serves as our anchor in a fast-paced and ever-changing world. With its multifaceted functions, it serves as a critical pillar in the healthy maintenance of social life and the construction of moral values. At the individual level, families are an important source of emotional, social, and financial support. At a collective level, the family unit contributes to social order and cohesiveness as it helps develop socially responsible individuals, inevitably deepening the connection they have with the country. However, social critics have described our modern epoch as an age of disconnections, which is disruptive to collectivist norms that have traditionally shaped the family unit¹. It is characterised by the radical free will and individualism in which the familial space is no longer seen as a sanctuary but as becoming something of a prison.

Today, the growing ubiquity of technology means that the family unit has significantly been transformed by handheld devices and other everyday digital technologies. Technology has become an inescapable tool as more people are finding it difficult to live without it, seeing that we largely depend on it for communication, entertainment, and even earning a living. However, while technology has the powerful ability to

¹Mahroof, Kamran, et al. "Technology as a Disruptive Agent: Intergenerational Perspectives." *Information Systems Frontiers*, vol. 22, no. 3, 2018, pp. 749-770. doi:10.1007/s10796-018-9882-3.

connect people around the world with a single touch, it has paradoxically hindered family connections by reducing socialisation and driving a wedge between children and parents. This is because children view the decreasing interaction as a form of independence and freedom from parents' intrusion in their social lives. In other words, technology and digital devices ultimately complicate the ways families interact today as qualities of communication degrade, and people neglect personal involvement in the presence of others. This has deleterious effects on key family values such as love, care, mutual respect, and responsibility.

Moreover, technological developments have induced certain social disruptions that are reshaping the way we define the concept of family and the way we conceive traditional family life and norms. The digital age brings about new discussions such as technological disruptions and the ubiquity of sexuality that alter familial values and relationships. For instance, the idea of the heterosexual monogamous unit being the only way to produce and protect a child has been challenged. For example, we have seen an increase of portrayals in entertainment content and social media platforms that veer away from the heterosexual and monogamous way of bearing and raising children. The advent of technological progress means that women can bear and raise children on their own, while homosexual men are able to have biological children² through new means. At the same time, information technology opens many different platforms and opportunities for individuals to educate themselves on sexuality and adopt alternative lifestyles that stand in contrast with traditional family structures. To further compound matters, youths resort to these platforms to educate themselves on sexuality instead of communicating with parents. However, youths are not exclusively to be blamed as parents are also not communicating effectively on sexuality education due to fears of encouraging early sexual behaviour.

In light of these observed problems and the deliberations extrapolated from our engagements, the Family Panel therefore used technology and sexuality education as sub-themes in unpacking the convention's main theme – **Strengthening the Muslim Family Institution through Islamic Values**. We have narrowed the scope of the panel to the impact of digital devices on familial values and relationships, and the importance of healthy communication on sexuality education between family members.

The reasons for using technology as a sub-theme are as follows:

- Technology has disrupted traditional forms of communication between parents and their children
- There is a growing preference for online communication in all aspects of familial relationships
- The gradual loss of face-to-face interactions has led to the erosion of social values among children
- Excessive screen time and over-reliance on digital devices could lead to addiction-withdrawal effects

Similarly, the reasons for exploring issues on sexuality as a sub-theme are as follows:

- Parents avoid talking about the topic to their children while simultaneously wanting to be more involved in their children's sexuality education
- Lack of openness in talking about the issue within the community
- Fears of blasphemy when discussing sexuality
- Religious exposure since childhood impacts perception on sexuality
- Discussions of sexuality education are still limited in scope as they tend to focus only on preventive measures

Given the problems associated with technology and sexuality, we analyse the impact of shifting

²Vijayan, K.C. "Court rejects bid by gay man to make partner guardian of his two surrogate children." 2018. *The Straits Times*, <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/court-rejects-bid-by-gay-man-to-make-partner-guardian-of-his-two-surrogate-children>. Accessed 12 September 2022.

family values that fuel estrangement within the family unit. The Family Panel therefore aims to propose strategies in strengthening the Muslim family institution through a value-based framework that is conceptualised during the convention. This aligns with the recent statement made by Minister Masagos Zulkifli on Budget 2023: "To continue nurturing a community of success, we need to strengthen our Malay/Muslim families, who are the key building blocks of our community. A key area that requires attention is the changing needs of families³."

Paper Outline

This study uses both quantitative and qualitative approaches to examine the issues at hand. The sections are organised as follows:

This section elaborates on the general context of the study.

The sections on Problem Definition and Problem Statements will cover

- i) the qualitative and quantitative methods of identifying and understanding the issues of Technology and Sexuality Education
- ii) the subsequent findings from the methods
- iii) the extraction of Problem Statements from the findings

The Ideation section will expand on

- i) the methodology of ideation during breakout sessions
- ii) thematisation of the ideations
- iii) contextualisation and analysis of the ideations

The final section will conclude this paper with a summary and suggestions for future directions.

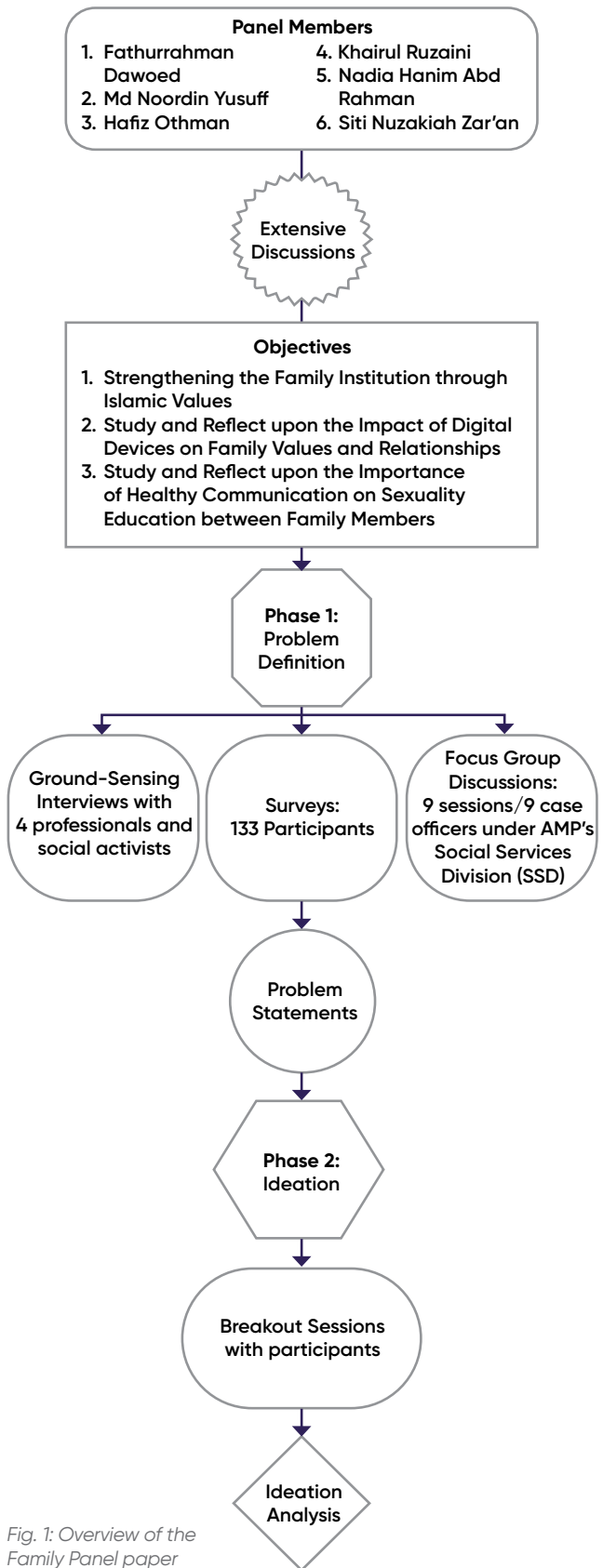


Fig. 1: Overview of the Family Panel paper

³Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY). "Strengthening our Community of Success." 2021. MCCY, <https://www.mccy.gov.sg/about-us/news-and-resources/speeches/2021/mar/strengthening-our-community-of-success>. Accessed 12 September 2022.

PROBLEM DEFINITION

Methodology

We utilised a multi-method approach to achieve a holistic and contextualised understanding of the issue at hand. By adopting this approach, we are exposed to responses from professionals to members of the public. The quantitative method provided us an overview of responses on the perceived state of the Malay/Muslim community today. Additionally, the qualitative approach allowed us to understand individual experiences, gain insights into key issues, assess the quality of current services provided, and obtain guidance in drafting recommendations for future policies.

The adopted methods are as follows:

1. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)
2. Ground-sensing interviews with professionals and social activists
3. Derivation of statistics and data by gathering public perception through a survey containing open and close-ended questions.

Focus Group Discussions with Practitioners

We conducted the FGDs separately based on two themes, mainly the impact of digital devices on familial values and relationships, and the importance of sexuality communication from a family perspective. We sought out nine case officers under AMP's Social Services Division (SSD) for each FGD.

The discussion on technology covers issues such as the impact of technology on parent-child relationships; the roles of stakeholders in mediating the prevalent use of digital devices among children; and the correlation between social/gender norms and technology.

On the other hand, the discussion on sexuality education covers sub-issues such as the extent of parental involvement in sexuality education; the roles of stakeholders in promoting healthy and respectful conversations around sexuality; and the correlation between social/gender norms and understanding of one's sexuality.

The interactions and discussions with AMP's SSD staff were helpful in facilitating a more nuanced perspective of the themes, as their responses were likely to be grounded in real encounters with clients of varying backgrounds and family dynamics, given their years of experience in their respective fields. While we believe that the insights gathered are necessary for highlighting key areas of concern, we acknowledge the limitations that surround the FGDs. Speaking to the officials limits our scope as they provide only case-specific responses. As such, it would be imprecise and unfair to solely work with findings from these FGDs.

Ground-Sensing Interviews

As mentioned earlier, the objectives of ground-sensing interviews are to gain insights into key issues, assess the impact of key issues on Muslim families, and obtain guidance in drafting recommendations for future changes.

A consultation on the role of parents and implications of digital exposure on familial values and relationships was organised with two officials from AMP SSD. The discussion focused on technological disruptions, technology as a bridging activity, and technological awareness.

As for sexuality, we held two ground-sensing interviews with members of Crit Talk and an officer from Pergas⁴. Both interviews dealt with sexuality being a taboo topic within Muslim families.

Discussions were held with the founders of Crit Talk as the organisation believes in making room for everyone in the community, allowing taboo topics such as egalitarian marriages, divorce, sexism, gender, and sexuality to be publicly discussed. Hence, the discussions centred on the nature of sexuality education and the availability of safe spaces for alternative views within the community.

Additionally, the Panel conducted a ground-sensing interview with an official from Pergas to explore the religious dimension to sexuality education, and its implication within the family unit. Getting insights from the religious fraternity was important for our analysis as religion is a powerful mobiliser that plays a critical role in shaping discourses in the public sphere⁵.

⁴Pergas ('Persatuan Ulama dan Guru-Guru Agama Islam Singapura' in Malay, or 'Singapore Islamic Scholars and Religious Teachers Association' in English) is a non-governmental organisation that serves a socio-religious role in developing the *asatizah* (Islamic religious teachers) and Muslim community in Singapore. It has played a historical role in spearheading public engagements related to the Muslim community. Crit Talk is a grassroots effort to initiate and engage in critical conversations in the public space about taboo issues revolving the Muslim community.

⁵Blackbox. "Muslim Community Sentiment Study 2020." 2020.

These interviews provided us with insights from key stakeholders on existing initiatives, allowing the panel to understand their experiences, concerns and challenges, alongside possible gaps unique to the Muslim community.

Outliers from Focus Group Discussions and/or Ground-Sensing Interviews

During our engagements, we identified certain outliers beyond the scope of discussion. It is relevant to note that these outliers were discussed by the participants during the convention.

Outliers of Technology

During the interview with AMP SSD, the discussion on the impact of technology on familial values and relationships boiled down to the nature of parental involvement, tapping into social support, and adopting traditional parenting styles.

Outliers of Sexuality

On top of that, from the ground-sensing interview with Crit Talk, we identified outliers that include addressing intergenerational trauma, sexuality being an issue of conservatism instead of one that is Malay, the role of Community and Muslim Organisations (CMOs) in facilitating instead of preaching, long-term parenting workshop and a proper diagnosis of the issue.

These outliers are addressed during the convention.

Key Findings

The following section elucidates key findings from the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and ground-sensing interviews. They have been categorised into two themes. For an analysis on the key findings, refer to Appendix A.

The impact of digital devices on familial values and relationships:

- The impact of technological disruption
- Technology as a bridging activity
- Facilitating technological awareness
- The role of parents in supervising technology usage

The role of families in sexuality education:

- Sexuality as a fear-inducing topic
- Sexuality education as firmly rooted in religious doctrine
- Sexuality as a discourse is complex and highly contested
- The role of parents in sexuality education

Perception Surveys

The perception surveys aimed to gather findings on the community's areas of concern and the potential room for improvement. Participants ranged from ages 20 and above across all income levels, educational backgrounds, and races. The 10-minute survey aimed to gather information on the public's general awareness and thoughts on the impact of technology on familial values and relationships. Views on the accessibility and quality of current efforts and programmes were similarly collated. Initially, we aimed to collect 400 survey responses through a poster that was disseminated to the public.

Format of Perception Surveys

Both surveys were formatted similarly, and asked for:

a. Basic information

- i) With the participants' basic information, we were able to compare the general trends for different age groups, the status of parenthood, races, income levels, and educational backgrounds. This is crucial in evaluating and understanding Muslim family dynamics.

b. Awareness of issues

c. Existing concerns

d. Thoughts on current advocacy work

- i) For example, questions targeted at Community and Muslim Organisations (CMOs) were present in both perception surveys. This is to identify the concerns and recommendations proposed by respondents that would better assist CMOs in addressing gaps within existing programmes.

e. Recommendations for programmes

- i) Participants were also asked to share on matters that should be incorporated to improve the quality of sexuality education/digital awareness programmes within the Muslim community.

Findings from Perception Survey

For the Perception Survey on both technology and sexuality education, we received a total of 133 respondents, of which 60% were parents.

The survey on technology showed that 62.2% of parents were sufficiently aware of the effects of digitalisation. Lack of time among parents to constantly supervise their children's usage of digital devices and difficulty in becoming positive role models as parents themselves rely on technology as a source of distraction were identified as important matters to be addressed.

Data gathered from the survey on sexuality showed that 89% of parents were not equipped with enough knowledge and skills to effectively communicate on the topic of sexuality with their children. Due to lack of awareness and knowledge on how to approach the topic, most parents in the survey relied on the internet to obtain information on sexuality-related matters. Religious sources and mainstream education were the next biggest sources of information. From this, we learned that parents prefer using the internet for information on sexuality education, as opposed to approaching professionals. As cited in the survey, 87% of the participants felt that discussions of sexuality were largely conservative and there was a lack of safe spaces for open discussion. This perhaps shows why participants are averse to seeking external help on such matters.

PROBLEM STATEMENTS

From the findings, we have first identified that digital exposure has led to communication problems within families. The absence of a value system in defining healthy boundaries poses increased difficulty in maintaining parental responsibility and accountability when regulating children's usage of digital devices. Second, we recognised that digital ubiquity has enabled the prevalence of alternative approaches to sexuality that may challenge Community and Muslim Organisations (CMOs) and family institutions due to lack of resources and support on the subject matter. Finally, we acknowledged the increased awareness of the importance of effective communication on sexuality, but there are different levels of openness and fear towards approaching it that require deeper investigation.

From the analysis of key findings, we extracted the following problem statements that are to be addressed during the convention's breakout sessions. The statements are as follows:

THEME 1:
Impact of digital devices on family values and relationships

PROBLEM STATEMENT:
1
Parents are conflicted in wanting to encourage technology use for their children but fear potential implications on parent-child relationship.

Guiding Question during Ideation

In what ways can Community and Muslim Organisations (CMOs) better equip parents in achieving the ability to strategically balance the use and access of technology?

PROBLEM STATEMENT:
2
Parents are concerned that children are heavily reliant on digital devices as an alternative form of education and entertainment.

Guiding Questions during Ideation

How can parents mediate between online and offline modes of education for children?

How can children prevent heavy reliance on digital devices? How can parents regulate children's exposure to technology use? How can parents be readily equipped and available for children as sources of knowledge?

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

3

Parents worry about the inappropriate and unsuitable content that linger on the internet, highlighting the lack of technological awareness and ethics among children.

Guiding Question during Ideation

How can we formulate ethical frameworks that would empower our children to use technology critically and creatively?

THEME 2:

Importance of healthy communication on sexuality education between family members

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

1

There is tension between the need to talk about sexuality openly and the fear of normalising actions that contradict Islamic guidelines on sexuality.

Guiding Questions during Ideation

Is it possible for parents to engage in conversations on sexuality education with children without the "too young" mindset? How can parents approach children on this topic?

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

2

Participants highlighted the increasing deterioration of mental and physical health due to the lack of safe spaces to express their sexuality and identity concerns.

Guiding Questions during Ideation

Is it possible to promote adequate safe spaces for individuals with sexuality and identity concerns?

Are our institutions equipped with sufficient resources to create safe spaces?

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

3

Parents are not well equipped with knowledge of sexuality due to lack of opportunities for parental involvement/ lack of breadth on sexuality topics.

Guiding Question during Ideation

How can parents help children avert various forms of influences that can be insensitive to long-established norms?

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

4

Asatizah and CMOs, in general, have the capacity and resources to conceptualise a holistic framework for sexuality education based on religious values.

Guiding Questions during Ideation

What can Community and Muslim Organisations (CMOs) offer in developing and enhancing the capabilities of religious teachers and counsellors?

While the repeal of Section 377A drives inclusivity, how can we guarantee the outcome of nurturing our children according to long-established family norms?

Problem Statements for Technology

- i) Parents are conflicted in wanting to encourage technology use for their children but fear potential implications on the parent-child relationship.
- ii) Parents are concerned that children are heavily reliant on digital devices as an alternative form of education and entertainment.

iii) Participants worry about inappropriate and unsuitable content that linger on the internet, highlighting the lack of technological awareness and ethics among children.

Problem Statements for Sexuality Education

i) There is tension between the need to talk about sexuality openly and the fear of normalising actions that contradict Islamic guidelines on sexuality.

ii) Participants highlighted the increasing deterioration of mental and physical health due to the lack of safe spaces in which to express their sexuality and identity concerns.

iii) Parents are not well equipped with knowledge of sexuality due to lack of opportunities for parental involvement/lack of breadth on sexuality topics.

iv) *Asatizah* and Community and Muslim Organisations (CMOs), in general, have the capacity and resources to conceptualise a holistic framework for sexuality education based on religious values.

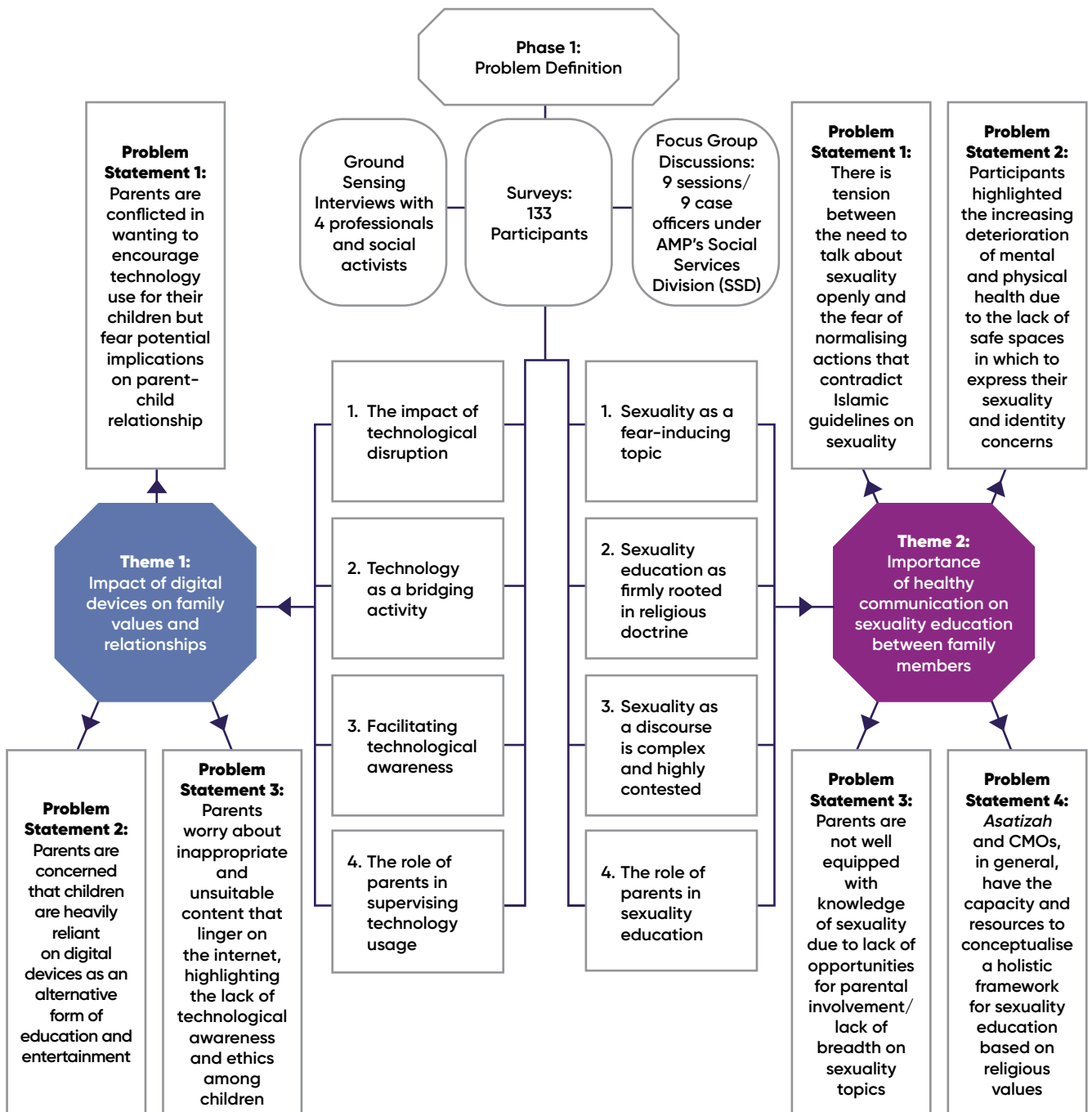


Fig. 2: Overview of ideation phase for the Family Panel paper

IDEATION

Breakout Session Methodology

A breakout session was conducted to identify potential solutions targeting the defined problem statements. Participants involved were seated in tables of seven, with a pre-assigned facilitator and a scribe. The tables were divided into two groups: Technology and Sexuality Education.

Each group ideated thematically for approximately two hours. The ideation process for each problem statement, within each theme, is as follows:

- Part A: Reflection of Problem Statement
- Part B: Ideate Using Guiding Questions
- Part C: Reflection of Undiscussed Issues

For Part A, participants were invited to reflect on the problem statement. This allowed them to contextualise problem statements according to their individual perspectives and experiences while also framing them in the context of the Muslim community. Discussants were also asked to provide input on the relatability of problem statements and were encouraged to share their own experiences – ensuring a more holistic understanding of these issues alongside a grounded ideation process.

For Part B, participants were prompted to ideate and discuss potential solutions. Facilitators led the discussions by using guiding questions based on key findings from the problem definition stage.

For Part C, participants deliberated on other related issues, such as the implementation of certain ideations and other issues that were not included in the discussions. This is to ensure comprehensiveness in the ideations.

Through the three processes, participants were able to discuss contextually and generate relevant and practical ideas that will bring progress for the community.

Impact of Digital Devices on Family Values and Relationships

PROBLEM STATEMENT 1:

Parents are conflicted in wanting to encourage technology use for their children but fear potential implications on the parent-child relationship.

1. Excessive technology usage aggravates existing relationship issues between parents and children

– Participants shared their concerns about the implications of technology on parent-child relationships. There is a belief that excessive technology usage, or digital addiction, impedes healthy relationships and communication. This could lead to three issues, mainly: 1) Lack of trust that could lead parents to enforce strict limitations on device usage; 2) Different understandings of what technology brings, i.e., views on the pros and cons of using social media; 3) Feelings of parental inadequacy due to children using technology to isolate themselves while also having access to unsuitable content for minors.

2. Parents are pessimistic about the implications of technology

– In today's situation, participants stated that parents are aware about the inevitability of technology's prominence, especially in the context of education, where children are required to use technological devices and can scour the internet for information. Children are also exposed to social media apps at home from a young age. Subsequently, parents are pessimistic about the spread of undesirable content that can be easily found online. Such content may contain portrayals that are against Islamic values and contradictory to traditional Asian culture.

3. Convenience supersedes thinking about implications

– For low to middle-income families, technology presents itself as convenience due to lack of resources. Technological devices are mediums that occupy children's time and attention, which is needed for parents who are either preoccupied with work or unable to hire outside help. While parents are aware that technology usage may be detrimental for their children, they are often unable to find better alternatives.



IDEATION ANALYSIS

Establish a proactive approach regarding technology usage

- a. Parents must be clear and rational in communicating the positives and negatives of technology, as well as when implementing boundaries and limitations regarding its usage.
- b. Communication is not only through words but through actions as well. Parents must therefore exemplify a balanced attitude towards technology because certain adults exhibit unhealthy technology usage that will negatively influence children. For this reason, it is important for parents to ensure that family members share a common understanding about the role of technology in their lives, which is to educate and entertain.
- c. A balanced and moderate approach is key, as to how Islam advocates the principle of moderation (*wasatiyyah*) in everything we do.

Utilise technology to establish healthy communication among family members

- a. Technology should be utilised to establish positive communication among family members. This would include its use as a common touchpoint for connecting and empowering families.
- b. There are many simple and non-expensive examples when it comes to using technology in ways that strengthen families. These may range from the formal enrollment into online groups or programmes, to the simple act of sharing among family members on educational contents taken from social media.
- c. Sharings and discussions in the familial context must be a two-way process between parents and children. This will lead to two things: 1) The fostering of a cooperative and collaborative culture among family members; 2) The availability of a medium that facilitates

discussion between children and their parents on matters which they may have come across from the internet.

- d. Incorporating the positive use of technology among children from young may have its benefits. It provides both parents and children with opportunities to foster trust and build confidence in communicating healthily with one another over a wide range of issues, including those that would have otherwise been deemed as sensitive.

Adults must be proactive in fostering an engaging parent-child relationship

- a. Fostering a healthy online communication between parents and children must always begin with a healthy offline communication as its foundation. This means that any prevailing parent-child conflict must first be resolved in person. Otherwise, the use of technology would only promote distrust and miscommunication, exacerbating the parent-child conflict.
- b. To avoid such unfortunate situations, parents must adopt positive parenting skills that help in resolving conflicts healthily and strengthen trust with their children.
- c. This will naturally pave the way for parents to foster an engaging parent-child relationship with their children. Parents must be bold and creative in their efforts to achieve this.

Resources must be allocated to support families in using technology healthily

- a. More resources should be allocated by Community and Muslim Organisations (CMOs) for families, especially those from low-income backgrounds and lacking the means to provide better alternatives other than technology usage for their children.
- b. These resources should be to: 1) Raise awareness about engaging their children

on ethical technology usage; 2) Assist parents in bridging the digital divide with their children; 3) Developing frameworks to educate their children about technology usage.

- c. However, practical and structural difficulties to reach these families must be considered as they may not have the resources (time and energy) to attend physical or virtual programmes regarding this issue.
- d. Social media is the apt medium to educate parents regarding this issue through bite-sized content. At the same time, tech firms must also bear responsibility in educating children about technology usage while also regulating appropriate content for their consumption.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 2:

Parents are concerned that children are heavily reliant on digital devices as an alternative form of education and entertainment.

1. Impact of digital fatigue on children

Participants observed that digital fatigue is a result of children's early and constant usage of technology – be it for casual or educational purposes. It may lead to negative physical and mental effects. Simultaneously, consumption of digital content may lead to excessive exposure to negative news. This will shape children's mental well-being and worldview, which may subsequently lead to them distancing from their parents.

2. Lack of resources to guide families

Participants also stated that families are unsure about the implications of excessive technology usage. This can be traced to unawareness of available resources that can educate them about this issue. However, standardised resources relevant to their context are difficult to find. Parents are also sceptical about how digital devices can cultivate and strengthen the culture

of reading but recognise that isolation is not a solution.

3. Divide in digital proficiency

Expectations exist for parents and children to have access and functional knowledge of technology for school purposes. However, some families do not possess resources or natural inclination to use technological devices. This leads to a divide in terms of digital proficiency, which has an impact on an individual's educational and professional context.

4. Lack of interpersonal communication between parents and children

The lack of substantial presence of parents in the early stages of childhood may lead to certain repercussions in the context of technology usage. As it leads to children maintaining a distance from parental authority, this may result in a lack of positive communication between both parties, as well as boundaries from excessive technology usage.



IDEATION ANALYSIS

Increase awareness about cyber wellness education for children

- a. Cyber wellness education should begin early, such as at the kindergarten or primary school level, due to early usage and exposure to digital technology.
- b. Children should be educated about: 1) Boundaries of technology; 2) Moderate digital usage; 3) Ways to overcome digital fatigue.
- c. As one of the issues is distance between parents and children due to technology usage, communication among family members should also be emphasised to go beyond online platforms. This will lead to children placing value in parental figures.

To inculcate children with strong principles, parents require relevant resources that must be placed strategically

- a. Resources must be strategically placed and available on different platforms, i.e., flyers, pamphlets, social media. These resources should be focused towards developing an ecosystem and community on which parents can rely.
- b. These resources can be developed in the following ways: 1) Create a database of resources about cyber wellness programmes; 2) Implement it at institutional and grassroots levels; 3) Develop a supporting ecosystem that promotes ethical and balanced digital usage.

There should be substantial output from CMOs about importance of self-reflection for growth mindset

- a. This would emphasise on: 1) Accepting changes regarding technology; 2) Framing problems correctly; 3) Realising the gap between parents and children regarding tech-savviness. This gap can subsequently be bridged through strong communication and relationship.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 3:

Parents worry about inappropriate and unsuitable contents that linger on the internet, highlighting the lack of technological awareness and ethics amongst children.

1. Widespread negative content in digital spaces

There is substantial awareness about the ubiquity of explicit content and its negative implications on children, such as hyper-sexualisation and sexual grooming. Negative content should also include the proliferation of

fake news and misinformation that has impacted how we see the world and others who are different from us.

2. Normalisation of negative content encountered online

The problem of portrayal of sexuality and violence is one that will remain accessible to children through technological devices. It has reached the point where children are desensitised to certain matters that are against religious values, such as sexual relations before marriage. These portrayals are against the ethical paradigm of our community. It is imperative for families to deal constructively with these matters. Overcoming this requires both children and parents to come together in formulating an ethical framework to understand why something is wrong/harmful or good/beneficial. It begins with trust, responsibility, and accountability.



IDEATION ANALYSIS

Implement a culture of ethical and positive technology usage

- a. A healthy and critical ecosystem is needed to empower children in implementing a self-regulatory mechanism to regulate their consumption of digital services and content. This can only be facilitated through creating a culture of ethical and positive technology usage in their main spaces; home and school.
- b. There should be cooperation and communication between parents and schools. It is important for schools to formulate ethical curricula to facilitate parents in crafting a framework to deal with the issue of ethical technology usage. Parents should also be aware of the content that schools convey to students about this matter.
- c. Parents must engage in dialogue and conversations – not a top-down approach – to inculcate creative and

critical values for the purpose of guiding their children in such contexts. They should be strategic and constructive in instilling an ethical framework for their children's technology usage.

Identify external providers for parents to learn and be guided in formulating frameworks for their children

- a. There must be better outreach to improve parents' access to community-based services. Such programmes may be available but are unknown to parents. These services should aim to teach parents about crafting critical and ethical frameworks. Access to these resources would empower parents to guide and explain to children regarding inappropriate content that they encounter online. It is crucial for parents to be aware, involved, consistent and nurturing in this context.
- b. When children are exposed to explicit content, adults/parents should be educative in their approach and response, not implementing an authoritative response such as banning usage. It is impossible to censor children in our current context of avid technology usage; thus, guidance is needed from the start. The approach of asking children critical questions is advisable; what do you do after seeing it? Why must you avoid it?

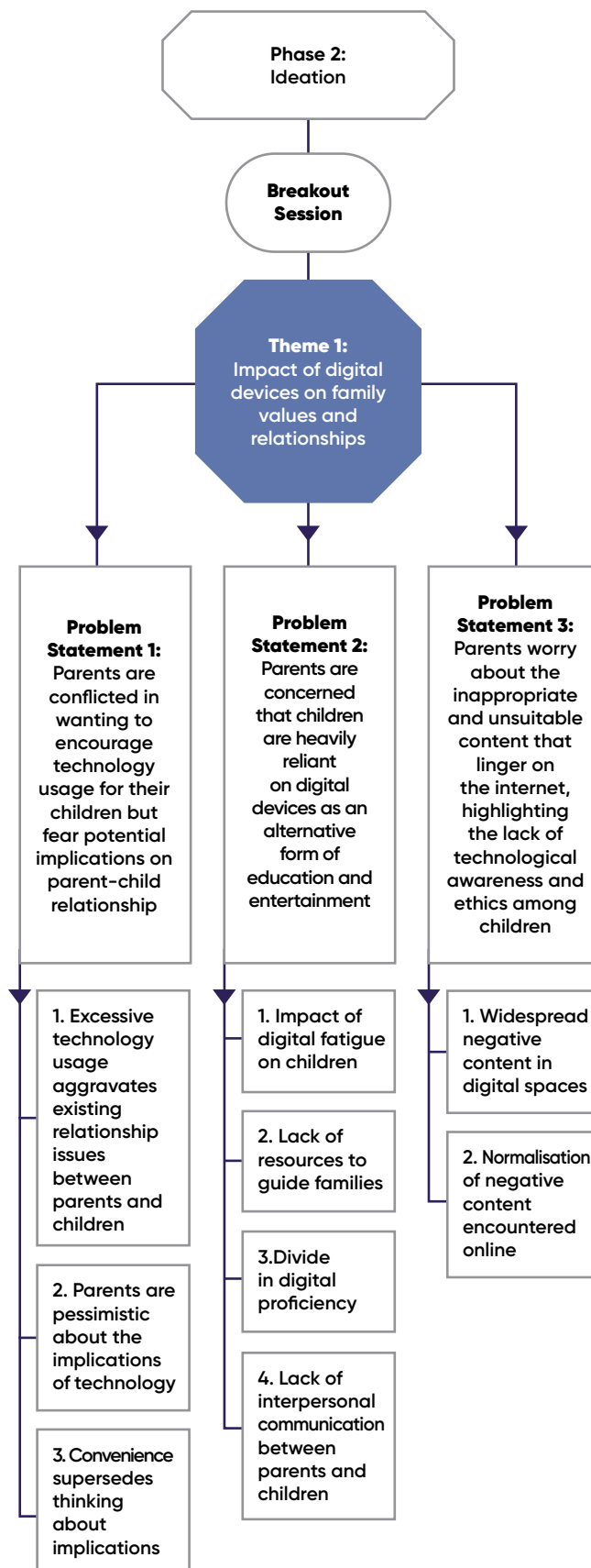


Fig. 3: Overview of ideation phase for Theme 1 of the Family Panel paper

Importance of Healthy Communication on Sexuality Education Between Family Members

PROBLEM STATEMENT 1:

There is tension between the need to talk about sexuality openly and the fear of normalising actions that contradict Islamic guidelines on sexuality.

1. Existence of tension towards engaging on sexuality issues

Participants agreed that tension exists mainly due to three reasons. First, as sexuality is regarded as a taboo topic, some parents refrain from talking about it and allow children to either discover by themselves or wait until they are older to talk about the birds and bees. Second, the lack of communication between parents and children prevents the normalisation of such conversations. It may be linked to the first factor and unhealthy family dynamics, preventing any possibility of a safe space. Third, the lack of resources and knowledge to address complex concepts such as gender dysphoria may be more familiar to the younger generation.

2. Age-appropriateness

There is uncertainty among parents about when they should engage their children on the topic of sexuality, with some believing that the best timing to discuss is when they have transitioned into adolescence. The way to discuss this topic is also deemed as challenging by the participants due to contrasting positions; in Islam, it is clear about what is right and wrong, while in modern context, a lot of things are relative. Participants also acknowledged that certain topics are grey in Islam, such as usage of pronouns. At the same time, parents are aware about the potential early exposure to sexual content and the harm it causes.

3. Widespread availability of sexual content on social media platforms

While parents are more comfortable in addressing these issues when their children are older and more mature, it is highly likely that they will be exposed to contents – through social media or games – containing sexual elements at a young age. While certain parents are passive regarding this, others wish to take a proactive stance in educating their children.



IDEATION ANALYSIS

Impart information to children gradually

- a. Parents should evaluate their child's preparedness for sexual education. In current contexts, with the pervasive presence of sexual content, it is useful and relevant for parents to start teaching their children about sexuality-related matters from young. This has practical implications as well.
- b. An example would be to educate them about shyness and body awareness, with the objective of teaching them to prevent anyone from touching them inappropriately. Subsequently, other relevant topics can be taught.
- c. Sexual education should be holistic and not just revolve around the act of sexual intercourse. Rather than children being taught about sexual topics at random through social media, it is important that they be taught systemically – by adults close to them – about puberty, bodily changes, etc.
- d. Parents should be aware that social media platforms contain reels and snippets about sexual education, and therefore they must take the initiative to engage their children on such matters.

Parents should share responsibility of engaging their children on sexuality matters

- a. There is importance in having both parents engaging and teaching their children about sexual education. The reason is that different genders have different perceptions about such matters, while the dynamics of father-son, father-daughter, mother-son, mother-daughter rapport are different.
- b. To have both parents approach the matter of sexual education with a child

would benefit the child as it exposes him/her to different gender perceptions.

- c. It is also beneficial to have continual conversations with children about matters related to sexuality, especially about different views children may encounter in current contexts. This is to build trust and comfort between parents and children, which can only be developed through constant engagement.
- d. Participants also acknowledged the conservative element of the Muslim community. This makes parents reluctant to engage their children on sexuality matters and being more comfortable in letting external professionals or schools to assume the responsibility.

Instilling Islamic values in children

- a. To instil Islamic values in children, parents should first strive to understand their contexts and experiences, which differ from theirs. It is through this way that they would be able to develop the most suitable content and form of communication to engage their children.
- b. Children should also be made aware regarding the diverse elements in society, such as different economical and familial situations. This would include how other children are brought up in single-parent households. However, parents must stress that certain absolutes in the family institution must be protected, such as mandating male-to-female marriages.
- c. The objective of engaging with children about this is to educate them about the diverse and plural elements of society while striving to co-exist peacefully despite differences.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 2:

Participants highlighted the increasing deterioration of mental and physical health due to the lack of safe space to express their sexuality and identity concerns.

1. Defining Safe Spaces

Participants agreed on the importance of having safe spaces for conversations on sexuality. However, there is a need to define this safe space as it can mean differently for different groups. Participants questioned the format of these safe spaces: physical, sacred metaphysical? Or should these be spaces to digest your ideas without being given unsolicited advice? There were also suggestions to define the boundaries of the safe space so that it is not unfettered and remain culturally/religiously sensitive. The question then would be, can a safe space remain safe if the boundaries are hegemonic and not sensitive to the lived experiences of marginalised groups?

2. Lack of data

Some participants questioned the statement as there is a lack of data to support the argument on mental and physical deterioration. Participants state that – in the context of the Singapore Muslim community – there is no data correlation yet between deterioration of mental and physical health and lack of safe spaces.

3. Preparedness of *asatizah* and religious institutions

Since religious teachers play an essential role in educating the Muslim community, participants expressed concerns about the competency of *asatizah* and religious institutions to engage in these matters. Comparisons were made between local and foreign contexts; for the latter, people are more compassionate and non-judgemental. The social and cultural norms of approaching such issues were also raised, such as how *asatizah* would be judged if they raised and engaged in these matters in the public sphere.



IDEATION ANALYSIS

Develop safe spaces at home

- a. It is fundamental for families to develop the culture of having safe spaces for everyone, especially children and youths. Parents must be proactive in communicating with their children that they have safe spaces in the form of their parents.
- b. The consequence of parents not developing this culture is having children and youths finding external safe spaces that hold onto values and principles that are not aligned with Islamic values.
- c. The borders and boundaries on how and when to engage in sexuality education with children must be redefined. Bread and butter issues lead parents to prioritise financial security and occupation matters.
- d. However, the openness to listen and converse with children is important as well. Stepping out of the parenting role – assuming a non-authoritative and engaging persona – can help parents to engage their children better.

Be purposeful in the space that we are providing

- a. Participants stated that safe spaces should be places where people feel safe physically to be in and also mentally comfortable to express themselves without being judged.
- b. They also stated that for an individual of LGBTQ orientation, mosques are such safe spaces for them.

To educate and equip parents about the ways of educating and conversing with children about religion

- a. To develop safe spaces, there must be more practicality and positivity when teaching religion to children and teens. The approach should not be to instil fear and guilt but rather to be mindful and humane.
- b. To achieve this, there should also be credible and streamlined resources developed by a task force which consists of *asatizah*, educators, and other professionals. These resources would address the issue of how parents should positively engage their children about sensitive sexual matters.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 3:

Parents are not well equipped with knowledge on sexuality due to lack of opportunities for parental involvement/lack of breadth on sexuality topics.

1. Fear of normalising

Participants highlighted that parents avoid discussing topics on sexuality with their children due to fear of normalising sexual norms that may contradict our Islamic values. They also raised concerns over the lack of expertise and knowledge to discuss the topic in ways that induce awareness rather than perpetuating discrimination against particular groups (i.e., LGBTQ Muslim community). However, parents today desire to be more involved in engaging with their children about such matters, such as consent and age appropriateness to engage in sexual activities. Ultimately, participants reinforced the need to change the perception of the topic as taboo, and instead find constructive ways of talking about the issue to the younger generation.

2. Different approach due to generational exposure

Participants stated that there should be recognition about the contrasting approaches of different generations regarding the teaching of sexuality topics. The older generation is more conservative than the younger generation in their approach and perspective. While different approaches and perspectives have benefits, there needs to be common ground in the way the older generation engages the younger ones regarding these matters.

3. Develop contextual parental relationships with children

Participants noted the different attitude of children in today's context as compared to the past. They observed that certain parenting methods – such as authoritativeness that is effective to a certain extent – may not be suitable to maintain secure relationships with children. Children would be unable to be vulnerable with their parents, leading to a lack of trust and communication.



IDEATION ANALYSIS

Engaging children with different sexual orientations

- a. Parents' main priority should be to provide a safe and humane space for children who identify with a different sexual orientation. This is to build trust and ensure that these children remain close to their family and religion. For the latter to do so, they must consistently feel safe in communicating about such matters.
- b. While it is important, parents should not only engage their children from a *fiqh* (jurisprudential) and *hukum* (permissibility) perspective. Children today need to be engaged from a contextual perspective and in a holistic manner. This could include addressing concerns stemming from modern concepts and frameworks.

- c. There should also be a distinction between faith and behaviour. While parents may disagree with their children's different sexual orientation, parents should not equate this to their children leaving and denouncing their faith. Instead, parents should strive to ensure their children remain connected with religious values and teachings. We must also acknowledge the existing opposite stance towards this behaviour; others perceive this as a separation from religious values and teachings.
- d. To support parents in this context, participants suggested that support groups should be formed with the assistance of Community and Muslim Organisations (CMOs).

Engaging in conversations at every opportunity

- a. If needed, parents should strive to form a space for them to engage their children on prevalent contemporary activism. This would help children develop their identity.
- b. Parents should take into account Singapore's cosmopolitan context. While it is needed to communicate with children from a religious perspective, the current context requires parents to also engage with modern social factors. In the context of sexuality and sexual orientations, children may not apply their religious values and instead adopt modern frameworks to decide the morality of such matters. Parents need to be cognisant about such influences in order to engage their children meaningfully and reiterate that Islamic values should be prioritised.
- c. Participants stated that practicality should also be taken into account. Parents may be more preoccupied with material provision for their children and not have the capacity and resources to engage on such matters.

Being brave and creative in finding
mediums and spaces to engage in
conversations with children

- a. Participants suggested that parents should be creative in using communication platforms such as movies and social media content to engage children in conversations.
- b. Participants also stated that a simple guide should be developed as a resource on how parents can engage children on human anatomy and sexuality matters. The guide should be categorised according to age group.

Parents should be proactive in engaging
with their children about what they have
learned in external programmes

- a. Parents must create spaces to engage with their children about what they have learned in external programmes. This is to instil value-based principles that are in accordance with religious teachings.
- b. While learning must continue in homes, not all families have the resources to engage with their children in this context. An example would be single-parent households.
- c. CMOs should organise workshops and produce educational materials on sexuality catered to both parents and children. Participants also suggested a database of resources and helplines to assist families in this context.

PROBLEM STATEMENT 4:

Asatizah and CMOs generally have the capacity and resources to conceptualise a holistic framework for sexuality education based on religious values.

1. Lack of uniformity about how to engage in issues related to sexuality

Participants observed that there are competing ideas and different opinions regarding sexuality issues and how to engage in these matters, which displays a lack of uniformity within the Muslim community. This makes it difficult for *asatizah* and CMOs to consolidate engagement efforts in these issues, especially when CMOs tend to operate in silos.

2. Need for cooperation between *asatizah* and professionals in dealing with sexuality issues

There is a need to pool skills, resources, and knowledge when engaging in these issues. *Asatizah* need support from institutions and grassroots organisations to blend religious knowledge with data analysis and contextual information. While resources may be available, there is no proper streamlining of these resources.



IDEATION ANALYSIS

Establish a task force to streamline efforts

- a. A sexual education task force comprising individuals from different backgrounds should be formed to tackle the issue of sexuality. This is so that the responsibility is not pinned down to any particular group: parents, *asatizah*, or educators.
- b. Participants stated that there should be a streamlining of different expertise across CMOs and agencies to create a task force and develop a holistic framework. This framework can be used as general reference for both individuals and organisations.

- c. This task force should work cross-functionally with stakeholders such as CMOs, social service agencies, and subject matter experts. Communication strategies must convey religious and non-religious components. Participants emphasised the need to harmoniously marry content experts and mode of delivery.

Develop educational and informative programmes for the community

- a. Participants suggested that there should be Continuing Education and Training (CET) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), programmes, forums, mentoring sessions, and helplines to engage the Muslim community on sexuality-related matters.
- b. Such content and programmes should move beyond legal (*fiqh*) deliberations and use a multidisciplinary approach. For this reason, the trainers and educators should be from different disciplines.
- c. Participants underlined the importance of building upon existing programmes to educate professionals on how to

assist and engage the community in these matters. Participants cited the *Bersamamu* programme run by the Registry of Muslim Marriages and M³ as an example of how *asatizah* are empowered to be trained and equipped to help families. They also suggested for marriage preparation courses to include sexual education for children.

Customise resources based on aptitude and needs

- a. Participants stated that resources should be developed strategically for parents according to age groups. For example, preschoolers (concrete operation thinkers) are better suited for direct and simple conversations. Youths (formal operation thinkers) are better suited for debates and discussions.
- b. It is also crucial to understand the LGBTQ community's struggles to get an insider/outsider perspective. This is to avoid essentialising the issue and projecting certain presumptions that may aggravate the situation further.

CONCLUSION

This study was initiated with the main objective of **Strengthening the Family Institution through Islamic Values**, and the secondary objective to study and reflect upon: **1) The impact of digital devices on family values and relationships; 2) The importance of healthy communication on sexuality education between family members.** Based on the objectives, the panel members adopted a problem-based approach, which revolves around the pressing issues of Technology and Sexuality Education and their relation to families and children.

Utilising both qualitative and quantitative approaches, as mentioned in the first section of this study, three problem statements were defined for the theme of Technology, while four problem statements were defined for the theme of Sexuality Education.

Theme 1: Technology

1. Parents are conflicted in wanting to encourage technology use for their children but fear potential implications on the parent-child relationship.
2. Parents are concerned that children are heavily reliant on digital devices as an alternative form of education and entertainment.
3. Parents worry about inappropriate and unsuitable content on the internet, highlighting the lack of technological awareness and ethics amongst children.

These problem statements were ideated during AMP's 4th National Convention and subsequently led to contextualisation and potential solutions the community could adopt. We observe that there are two common factors found in the ideations for the aforementioned problem statements: 1) Parents must inculcate engaging parent-child relationships; 2) Identifying providers that can guide and support parents in developing relevant frameworks. (Refer to Appendix B, Figure 5.)

Based on this, we can conclude that participants involved in the convention identified these two ideations as necessary steps in equipping and educating both parents and children with the skills and knowledge for ethical and healthy

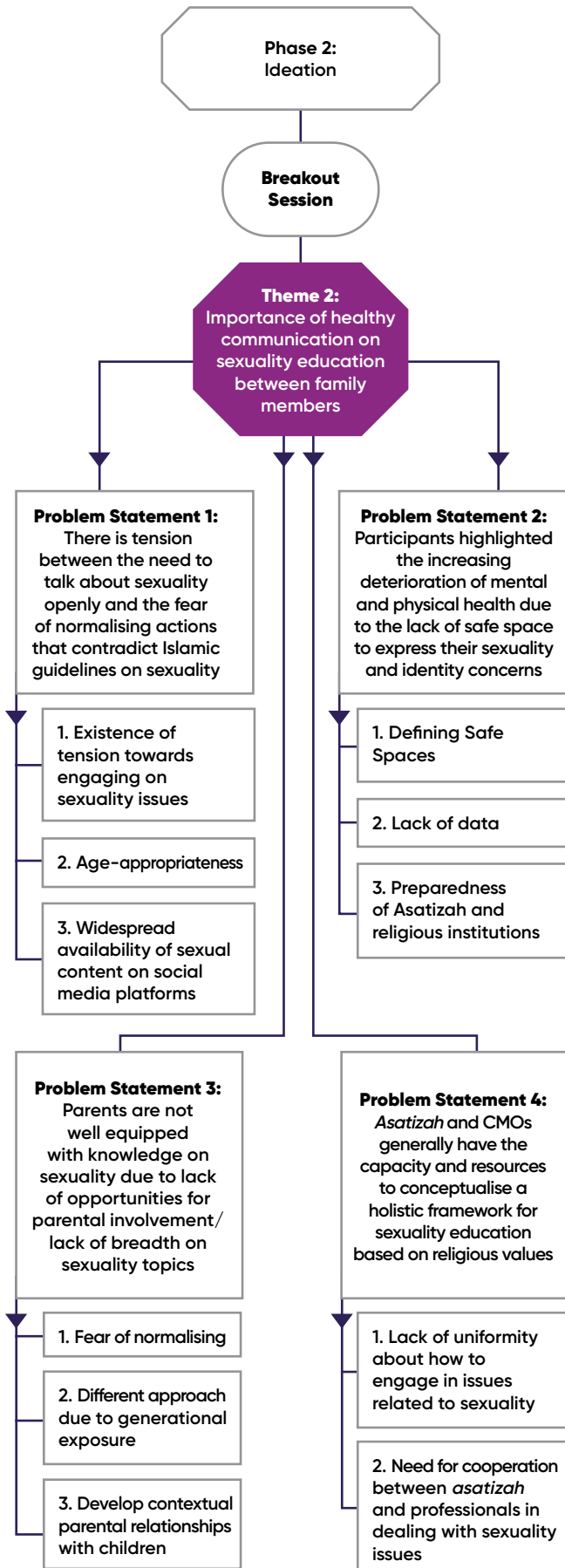


Fig. 4: Overview of ideation phase for Theme 2 of the Family Panel paper

technology usage. However, they also raised the issue about lack of resources, or rather the lack of awareness of existing resources. For this reason, relevant organisations must develop and streamline resources that would assist and empower them.

While every parent will have their own ideas and thoughts on how to develop "engaging parent-child relationships", participants identified elements that can be defined as universally positive – to develop trust between both parties, to engage in open conversations, and to be non-authoritative in approach.

Theme 2: Sexuality Education

1. There is tension between the need to talk about sexuality openly and the fear of normalising actions that contradict Islamic guidelines on sexuality.
2. Participants highlighted the increasing deterioration of mental and physical health due to the lack of safe space to express their sexuality and identity concerns.
3. Parents are not well-equipped with knowledge on sexuality due to lack of opportunities for parental involvement/lack of breadth on sexuality topics. The design of social media may cause individuals to remain in their own circles, engaging mostly like-minded individuals. This may hinder constructive discussions on complex issues that intersect diverse interest groups.
4. *Asatizah* and Community and Muslim Organisations (CMOs) generally have the capacity and resources to conceptualise a holistic framework for sexuality education based on religious values.

These problem statements were ideated on during the convention and subsequently led to contextualisation and potential solutions the community could adopt. We can acknowledge that the topic of sexuality education and related issues are contentious in the community. This is reflected in the ideations for this theme, which contain different ideas and understandings regarding this matter. We need to point out that certain ideations are directed towards individuals who are in different situations regarding sexual orientation and sexual development. They include addressing children, teenagers and youths, as well as engaging those

who are certain of their sexual orientation, or those who should be engaged proactively on this matter. We acknowledge the restrictions of this study and advocate for more to be done.

We also observe that there are a few common factors in the ideations: 1) To educate and equip parents about the ways of educating and conversing with children about religion; 2) Engaging in conversations at every opportunity; 3) Be proactive in engaging with children; 4) Develop educational and informative programmes for the community. (Refer to Appendix B, Figure 6.)

From these ideations, we can conclude that participants identified the significance of parental role in developing safe and humane spaces to engage and communicate with their children, as well as the importance in developing educative resources through collaboration and cooperation that emphasise empathy and humanity. While this topic remains a contentious and sensitive issue within our community, the ideations reflect the need for the community to pool our skills and resources to engage with this matter constructively.

In alignment with the main objective of this study – **Strengthening the Family Institution through Islamic Values** – we can conclude that participants of this study reflected the *proactive and pragmatic* attitude of the Muslim community regarding these issues. They underlined the importance of proactive and consistent engagement within the family institution about these matters. They advocated for parents to develop open relationships with their children that will develop into trust and healthy communication. With this in mind, they were also realistic in the capabilities of parents to engage with their children on these matters. Hence, both themes emphasised the need for the pooling and streamlining of resources from professionals and organisations.

At the same time, while participants acknowledge that the issues revolving technology usage and sexuality education are important, they also realise that parents may be occupied with providing basic needs for their families. They are aware of the varied family situations in our community. We can observe from the ideations that participants

were pragmatic in this aspect, acknowledging the capacity of parents as working adults while bearing the responsibility to engage their children on complex issues. For this reason, it is positive to note that they developed the ideations in both familial and structural contexts.

The ideations from both these themes are developed in the context of individual families as well as structured organisations. In the context of familial relationships, they elucidated on the importance of positive values and behaviours such as healthy communication and engagement, seeking common ground for mutual understanding, and instilling a culture of learning new skills and attaining new knowledge. In the context of structural improvements, they expounded on the importance of collaboration and cooperation, the need to develop and streamline resources, as well as the importance of creating safe spaces in our community.

It is hoped that this study can provide a better understanding regarding the issues of technology usage and sexuality education in the context of Muslim families. It is our hope that this study will contribute in strengthening the family institution of the Muslim community in Singapore.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Analysis of Key Findings

Issues on the Impact of Digital Devices on Familial Values and Relationships

The Impact of Technological Disruption

Generally, participants agree that the prevalent use of technology has disrupted traditional forms of communication. Interactions between parents and their children have shifted towards digital messaging platforms like WhatsApp. This new form of communication is largely devoid of elements of face-to-face interaction, such as visual and social cues. Such changes have been understood to have ramifications on parent-child relationships. However, it is important to note that the experience of technology varies for different age groups, which in turn conjures particular expectations.

On the one hand, parents find themselves wanting to encourage their children to use technology while simultaneously fearing that it may jeopardise their relationship. Conversely, youths who are early adopters of technology would prefer to peruse the internet and social media platforms for information rather than seeking information from their parents. Such clashes in perceptions of the helpfulness of technology could be the root of conflict for many parent-child relationships today.

Technology as a Bridging Activity

Parents arguably invest in digital devices for their children for education and entertainment purposes. While technology has helped children occupy their time, excessive screen time has led to negative consequences. For younger children, over-reliance on technology could lead to withdrawal effects in the form of throwing tantrums upon not being allowed to use digital devices. Participants proposed that parents mediate technology usage by switching between different modes of sensory tech stimulation (i.e. visual to auditory) or opting for "offline" activities, such as books, to redirect them to a sense of normalcy. Weighing on the developmental dimension of technology use, participants express that parents can supervise their children by participating in the same activity, enabling them to monitor and spend time with

their children. Alternatively, parents can regulate exposure to technology use by limiting its usage to certain days.

Facilitating Technological Awareness

Participants noted that technology should not be pathologised. Instead, technology should be discussed openly between parent and child. This includes restrictions imposed on content or platforms deemed inappropriate and unsuitable for their viewing. By explaining the reasons behind such restrictions, there would be increased technological awareness and discussions on ethics surrounding tech use. One participant expressed how schools can play a role in rolling out awareness programmes with pedagogies intended to educate the student population.

However, the frequent use of technology remains a concern. Participants duly emphasised the need for a value-based approach that seeks to guide and empower children pertaining to their use of technology. By aligning the appropriateness of technology with familial values, parents hope that both younger children and youths can discern information and navigate technology independently.

The Role of Parents in Supervising Technology Usage

To reiterate, parents carry the greatest responsibility in supervising technology usage among their children. As a start, when it comes to communicating the rules on technology use, the distribution of roles between parents must be clear and equal. If parents were to face problems in taking care of their children, they should tap into social support such as immediate family members instead of relying on tech gadgets. Alternatively, parents can consider adapting traditional parenting styles to support modern parenting methods.

Issues with the Role of Families in Sexuality Education

Sexuality as a Fear-Inducing Topic

Generally, participants highlighted that parents avoid talking about sexuality to their children due to fears of normalising notions of gender fluidity

and sexual orientation. This is because children are impressionable individuals and could unconsciously imbibe such information. This may lead to them acting on likeness towards the same gender. While such correlations have yet to be proven by current literature, parents in the surveys raised concerns over the lack of expertise and knowledge to discuss the topic in ways that induce awareness rather than perpetuating discrimination against particular groups (i.e. LGBTQ Muslim community). At the same time, parents wanted to be more involved in talking about sex objectively to their children. This pertains to notions of consent and age appropriateness to engage in sexual activities. Ultimately, participants reinforced the need to steer away from viewing the topic as taboo and instead find healthy ways of talking about the issue to the younger generation.

Participants also highlighted that the formation of safe spaces is necessary to encourage deeper conversations on sexuality and a better understanding of mental health and social issues that affect marginalised groups or individuals. Moreover, humans are spatial beings that require such avenues to articulate their identities. For many Muslims, this space represents our homes, mosques and institutions. As a community, we are interdependent because what we need is meaningful psychosocial recognition. Unfortunately, some respondents argue that many LGBTQ individuals do not enjoy this privilege. It is mainly why they form organisations that serve as support groups that allow them to safely articulate their identities in order to remain mentally sane and physically healthy.

Sexuality Education as Firmly Rooted in Religious Doctrine

Undeniably, religious connotations underlying the topic of sex and sexuality are correlated with notions of guilt and inferiority. Fundamentally, faith-based approaches are largely rooted in practising abstinence with an emphasis on gender binary. With religious views dominating sexuality education, particularly in *madrassahs*, the lack of diversity in gender representation may trickle into intolerance towards those who deviate from the norm. Interestingly, one participant shared how faith-based pedagogies should be centred around notions of *rahmah* and *fitrah* constituting the

essence of psychoeducation. It is also emphasised how we should increase fundamental knowledge of our faith to improve understanding of the unique experiences of such persons. In the case of the LGBTQ Muslim community, it is encouraged that families work on reframing their views towards helping them balance between the two identities rather than forgoing one for the other. By providing them space to navigate around notions of sexuality and religious identity, we ensure that families avoid dismissing their condition altogether and instead reinforce the family unit as the primary support system.

Sexuality as a Discourse is Complex and Highly Contested

Interestingly, tensions surrounding the topic of sexuality reside within Community and Muslim Organisations (CMOs). One participant stated how competing interests and opinions of different organisations towards notions of sexuality (i.e. homosexuality) are highly contested, giving the impression of lack of uniformity. This makes it difficult for CMOs to consolidate advocacy efforts for certain issues, especially when they tend to operate in silos. Given that issues of gender and sexuality can be highly convoluted, participants expressed the need to streamline efforts such that the Malay/Muslim community is reaffirmed by the current leadership. Alluding to the role of ground-up initiatives, it is stated that varying levels of operation range from reactionary to highly committed behaviours that are dependent on the timing of events. In this regard, information pertaining to the frequency of activities for such advocate groups has yet to be explored.

The Role of Parents in Sexuality Education

Lack of opportunities for parental involvement stems from broader structural issues such as poverty or the lack of quality time due to work commitments. Thus, parenting workshops on sexuality should go beyond the abstinence narrative and take into account other components such as the emphasis on psychotherapy and the focus on structural issues, i.e. socio-economic conditions and generational trauma. This is to ensure that efforts are not palliative; rather they can provide transformative changes in the long run.

Appendix B:

	Proactive approach	Utilise technology positively	Engaging parent-child relationship
Parents are conflicted in wanting to encourage technology use for their children but fear potential implications on parent-child relationship	✓	✓	✓
Parents are concerned that children are heavily reliant on digital devices as an alternative form of education and entertainment			✓
Parents worry about the inappropriate and unsuitable contents that linger on the internet			

Fig. 5: Solutions addressing problem statements of Theme 1: Technology

	Impart information gradually	Share responsibility between parents	Instil Islamic values	Develop safe spaces at home	Be purposeful in developing safe spaces	Educate and equip parents
The tension between the need to talk about sexuality openly and the fear of normalising actions that contradict Islamic guidelines on sexuality	✓	✓	✓			
Participants highlighted the increasing deterioration of mental and physical health due to the lack of safe space to express their sexuality and identity concerns				✓	✓	✓
Parents are not well equipped with knowledge on sexuality due to lack of opportunities for parental involvement/lack of breadth on sexuality topics				✓		✓
Asatizah and CMOs generally have the capacity and resources to conceptualise a holistic framework for sexuality education based on religious values						✓

Fig. 6: Solutions addressing problem statements of Theme 2: Sexuality Education

Increase awareness about cyber wellness	Develop relevant resources for parents	Develop mindset for self-growth	Develop culture of ethical technology use	Identify external providers
✓	✓	✓		✓
			✓	✓

Openness towards children with different orientation	Consistently engage in conversations	Creativity in utilising mediums to engage children	Proactive in engaging children	Establish task force to streamline efforts	Develop holistic programmes for the community	Customised resources
	✓	✓	✓			
✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
				✓	✓	✓