

Knowledge and Self-Efficacy of Adolescents in the Prevention of Premarital Sexual Activity

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Abstract. *Unhealthy sexual behavior among adolescents, especially unmarried adolescents, tends to increase. Risky sexual behavior has an impact on the high number of unwanted pregnancies and early marriages as well as the increasing number of HIV/AIDS cases among adolescents. According to Green, a person's behavior is influenced by; predisposing, supporting, and driving factors. From the preliminary study conducted in December 2023, students of Bhinneka Karya 2 Boyolali High School have low knowledge about premarital sexual behavior. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between knowledge, and self-efficacy with premarital sexual behavior in adolescents. The population in this study were students of class X SMA Bhinneka Karya 2 Boyolali as many as 50 teenagers. The sampling technique in this study was accidental sampling, which obtained a sample of 40 respondents. The data used in this study are primary data with a research instrument in the form of a questionnaire about knowledge, self-efficacy, and premarital sexual behavior in adolescents. Univariate analysis was performed by conducting frequency distribution analysis, while the bivariate analysis used was chi-square.*

Keywords: *Adolescents, Knowledge, Premarital sex, Self-efficacy*

1. INTRODUCTION

The word 'adolescence' comes from the Latin word 'to grow'. Therefore, adolescence cannot yet be called adulthood, nor can it be called childhood. According to Yudrik, adolescence is a period of developmental transition between childhood and adulthood, which usually begins at 12 or 13 years and ends in late adolescence or early 20s. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the age limit of adolescence is 10-19 years. During this period of adolescence, curiosity about sexual matters becomes very high. The immature development of sexual organs and the desire to vent sexual desires become important issues in adolescent development. This leads to high rates of unwanted pregnancies and child marriage in adolescents. (Kadek et al., 2020; World Health Organization, 2014)

The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that 16 million teenage girls between the ages of 15 and 19 give birth to children each year, and 3 million of these girls have abortions. Pregnancy and childbirth-related incidents, including unsafe abortions, have increased as a result. According to the Ministry of Health and the Indonesian Child Protection

Commission (KPAI), 62.7% of teenagers in Indonesia have engaged in sexual activity before to marriage. (Adjie et al., 2022)

The Indonesian Adolescent Reproductive Health Survey indicated that 29.5% of adolescent boys and men, along with 6.2% of adolescent girls, reported having touched or stimulated their partners.

Additionally, 48.1% of adolescent boys and 29.3% of adolescent girls stated they had engaged in similar behaviors. Moreover, 79.6% of male adolescents reported having kissed someone on the lips, while 71.6% of both male and female adolescents admitted to having held hands. (Adjie et al., 2022)

According to the Indonesian Youth Reproductive Health Survey, 48.1% of teenage boys and 29.3% of adolescent girls reported touching or stimulating their partners, compared to 29.5% of teenage boys and 6.2% of teenage girls. 71.6% of adolescent girls and boys have held hands, while 79.6% of teenage boys have kissed on the lips. (Kemenkes RI, 2020; Rizkianti et al., 2020; Soetjiningsih, 2010)

Numerous research have indicated that adolescents are more likely to engage in premarital sexual conduct. In Indonesia, up to 44% of adolescents have dated. In this relationship, behaviors including groping, kissing lips, holding hands, and having sex are practiced. (Fitrian et al., 2019; Yanti & Aris, 2024)

According to Green, an individual's behavior is shaped by three main factors: predisposing factors, supporting factors, and driving factors. Research conducted across 12 cities in Indonesia indicates that adolescents have a notably limited understanding of premarital sex, with knowledge levels at just 6.11%. Consequently, a significant number of teenagers are engaging in premarital sexual behavior.. (Nisariati & Kusumaningrum, 2022; Notoatmodjo, 2014a; Nur Rohmah et al., 2022; Romulo et al., 2016)

Sexual development is a universal and intricate topic that begins well before teenagers contemplate engaging in premarital sexual behavior. The significant lack of accurate information in this area warrants attention. During adolescence, it is vital for teenagers to cultivate the social, emotional, and cognitive skills necessary for their growth and for reaching their full potential. The early stages of adolescence, specifically between the ages of 10 and 14, are particularly critical for personality development. This period is characterized by rapid growth that shapes various aspects of development and establishes a foundation for future behaviors, health, and sexual conduct. Numerous studies have been conducted to examine the various factors that influence teenage sexual behavior. (Kågesten et al., 2021; Sekopa et al., 2024)

Research in developed countries has found concepts between sexual self-efficacy, sexual autonomy, sexual communication, sexual attitudes, and knowledge. Whereas in developing countries the research is more on aspects of awareness, self-esteem, and body image in boys aged 10 to 14 years and women aged 10 to 14 years. (Kågesten et al., 2021)

Adolescents who have high knowledge about premarital sexuality will have good attitudes and self-efficacy not to engage in risky premarital sexual behavior. (Nisariati & Kusumaningrum, 2022)

Risky premarital sexual behavior starts from holding hands and embracing to the beginning of risky premarital sexual behavior, if the perpetrator and his partner respond to each other's behavior. (Febriansyah, 2021)

Several studies have established a link between knowledge, self-efficacy, and sexual attitudes and behaviors. However, no study has specifically been conducted in Boyolali. (Atik & Susilowati, 2021; Kadek et al., 2020; Masae et al., 2019; Naja et al., 2017; Nisariati & Kusumaningrum, 2022)

Boyolali is a district that is experiencing significant industrial growth. However, many parents in Boyolali struggle to stay updated with the fast-paced flow of information, which affects their capacity to offer accurate guidance to their adolescents. This study seeks to examine the relationship between knowledge and self-efficacy and their impact on risky sexual behavior among adolescents at Bhineka Karya 2 High School in Boyolali.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study utilized a quantitative research design with an analytic survey approach. Descriptive analytics were employed alongside cross-sectional data collection to explore the relationships among various variables or to test these relationships in line with established theories. The research was conducted from January to July 2024 at Bhineka Karya 2 Boyolali High School.

Four questionnaires were used in this study. The first was a characteristics questionnaire that gathered information on adolescent identity, age, gender, parental education, and the age at which menarche or the first wet dream occurred. The second questionnaire assessed adolescents' sexual knowledge and contained 12 multiple-choice questions. The third section consisted of 20 items focused on adolescents' self-efficacy in avoiding premarital sexual behavior. Finally, the fourth section addressed adolescent sexual behavior, asking respondents about their experiences interacting with the opposite sex. All

questionnaires had previously been tested for validity and reliability. (Anggai, 2015; Brazete et al., 2023; Notoatmodjo, 2018)

The results were coded and tested using computer methods. Since the results did not qualify for *chi-square testing*, the researcher opted for *Fisher's exact test* as the bivariate analysis.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research was conducted on February 20, 2024 at Bhineka Karya 2 Boyolali High School for 40 students. The following are the characteristics of adolescents who are respondents in the study

Table. 1 Respondent Characteristics

characteristics	n	percentage
Age		
14 th	2	5%
15 th	25	62,5%
16 th	16	32,5%
17 th	1	2,5%
Gender		
Man	17	42,5%
Woman	23	57,5%

Source: primary data, 2024

Research indicates that the majority of respondents in the study were 15 years old and female. It appears that male adolescents tend to prefer vocational schools that focus on skill development over private high schools.

Among the 25 teenagers sampled in this study, all were 15 years old. This aligns with the guidelines set by the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Research, which prioritize children over 7 years of age when entering grade 1 of elementary school, or a minimum age of 6 years by July of the current year. Consequently, by the time they reach grade 10, the average age of these adolescents is 15 years. (Dasar, 2022). The research was conducted in February, during which many adolescents were still 15 years old. There were 13 adolescents who were 16 years old, while two were of other ages, and one was a teenager of a different age altogether. For the bivariate analysis, the *Fisher exact test* was used because the study results did not meet the requirements for applying the *chi-square test*.

Table. 2 Analysis of the Relationship between Knowledge and Risky Sexual Behavior in adolescents

	Low risk behavior	Heavy risk behavior	P-Value
Good Knowledge	37	1	0,004
Sufficient knowledge	0	2	

Source: primary data, 2024

The research took place in February, when many adolescents were still 15 years old. There were 13 participants who were 16 years old, while 2 adolescents were of different ages, and 1 was of yet another age.

For the bivariate analysis, *Fisher's Exact Test* was utilized, as the data did not satisfy the requirements for the *chi-square* test. (Atik & Susilowati, 2021). The same results were also obtained from Arista's research (2018) Adolescents who possess limited knowledge regarding unwanted pregnancy demonstrate a higher propensity for engaging in risky sexual behaviors than their peers with greater knowledge on the subject. (Arista, 2018)

Premarital sexual behavior issues among adolescents in Indonesia are significantly influenced by a lack of knowledge and understanding. This deficiency in awareness can lead to misconceptions and risky behaviors. Knowledge plays a vital role in shaping adolescent actions and decisions, highlighting the importance of comprehensive education on sexual health and relationships to promote informed choices among young people. (Andriani et al., 2022). Adolescents represent a demographic within society that readily assimilates new information. The provision of health education, coupled with enhanced environmental conditions, plays a crucial role in shaping adolescents' understanding of reproductive health and sexuality. This comprehensive knowledge is instrumental in promoting lower-risk sexual behaviors among this age group. (Kristianti & Widjayanti, 2021; Rindu et al., 2022; Widiyanto et al., 2013) Evidence indicates that an increase in knowledge is associated with a reduction in premarital sexual behavior among adolescents. This underscores the importance of education in promoting healthier decision-making. (Khasawneh et al., 2020)

According to Lawrence Green, as noted in Notoatmodjo, three key factors influence behavior. The first is predisposing factors, encompassing thoughts and motivations that initiate specific behaviors. The second factor is supporting factors, which aid in the development of these behaviors. Finally, the third factor consists of driving factors, referring to influences from others. (Notoatmodjo, 2014b)

Adolescents often choose sexual abstinence after weighing the potential negative consequences of engaging in premarital sexual activity. Their decision is not solely based on a lack of desire but is largely influenced by a fear of the repercussions. Many adolescents continue to live in family environments that significantly shape their choices, setting clear boundaries for acceptable behavior. Furthermore, cultural differences in parenting styles and varying degrees of adolescent independence also play a crucial role in shaping their motivations regarding premarital sexual behavior. (Siswantara et al., 2024)

Table 3 Analyzing the Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and Adolescent Sexual Behavior

	Low risk behavior	Low risk behavior	P-Value
Good Self-Efficacy	33	1	0,054
Fair Self-Efficacy	4	2	

Sumber: data Primer, 2024

This analysis explores the correlation between self-efficacy and sexual behaviors among adolescents. Through a comprehensive examination of existing research and data, we aim to better understand how confidence in one's abilities influences decision-making and risk-taking in sexual contexts during adolescence. The findings will contribute to the development of effective educational programs and interventions that promote healthy sexual behaviors in young individuals.

The findings of this study revealed no significant relationship between self-efficacy and premarital sexual behavior in adolescents, with a p-value of 0.054. This conclusion was drawn from the *Fisher exact test*, which was employed for two primary reasons: (1) two cells had an expected count of less than 5, and (2) the sample size was small. Although alternative analyses indicated a potential link between self-efficacy and premarital sexual risk behavior among adolescents, this particular study did not corroborate that connection. These results differ from those of Yanti (2024), who found a relationship between self-efficacy and adolescent premarital sexual behavior. (Yanti & Aris, 2024).

The findings of this study revealed a p-value of 0.054, determined using the Fisher exact test. While results from other statistical methods also suggest a relationship between self-efficacy variables and premarital sexual behavior, the *Fisher exact test* was favored due to its higher sensitivity for small sample sizes. It is also the primary alternative when the assumptions for a chi-square test are unmet.

Fitrian's research (2019) identified several factors that influence premarital sexual behavior in adolescents. These include gender, dating history, exposure to pornography, history of masturbation, intention, and knowledge, alongside self-efficacy. The results highlight that dating history, a history of masturbation, and intention are particularly significant in shaping premarital sexual behavior among adolescents.

4. CONCLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclutions

The findings regarding the adolescents at SMA Bhineka Karya 2 Boyolali are as follows:

- a. The majority of adolescents at SMA Bhineka Karya 2 Boyolali demonstrate a solid level of knowledge.
- b. A significant portion of these adolescents shows high self-efficacy.
- c. Most adolescents at SMA Bhineka Karya 2 Boyolali engage in non-risky premarital sexual behavior.
- d. There is a correlation between knowledge and premarital sexual behavior among adolescents at SMA Bhineka Karya 2 Boyolali.
- e. There is no correlation between self-efficacy and premarital sexual behavior among adolescents at SMA Bhineka Karya 2 Boyolali.

Recommendations

- a. Schools play a vital role in addressing adolescent sexual behavior, which is significantly influenced by knowledge. Therefore, it is essential for educational institutions to provide accurate and comprehensive information about adolescent sexuality.
- b. Schools play a crucial role in addressing adolescent sexual behavior, which is significantly shaped by knowledge. Therefore, it is essential for educational institutions to provide accurate and comprehensive information about adolescent sexuality.
- c. Future researchers should consider expanding their study populations to ensure that their samples better reflect the diverse adolescent community.
- d. In studies focused on risky sexual behavior, researchers often depend primarily on questionnaires as their measurement tool. For future research, incorporating direct observation is advisable, especially for sensitive topics like sexual behavior that teenagers may hesitate to disclose.
- e. Future researchers should consider expanding their study populations to ensure that their samples more accurately reflect the broader adolescent community.
- f. In studies focused on risky sexual behavior, researchers often rely on questionnaires as the primary measurement tool. For future research, it is advisable to incorporate direct observation, particularly regarding sensitive topics like sexual behavior, which teenagers may be reluctant to disclose.

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