

Is there a Relationship between the Characteristics and Attitudes of Adolescents with Premarital Sex?

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Abstract

Background: Premarital sex is one of the high-risk behaviors of adolescents today. The characteristics of adolescents can also be a triggering factor for premarital sex. The purpose of this study was to analyze the relationship between characteristics and attitudes of adolescents towards premarital sex in East Java Province.

Methods: This is a quantitative research with a cross sectional research design. The data used were taken from Program Performance and Accountability Survey (2018) on adolescents aged 15-24 years in East Java Province. The sample of this study was 2796 adolescents after normal weight adolescents were carried out. The dependent variable in this study is the attitude of adolescents, while the independent variables are place of residence, age, gender, education, and economic status. Data collection using smartphones and instruments that refer to the IDHS and PMA. The data were analyzed descriptively and tested using chi-square with a significance level of 0.05.

Result and Conclusion: The results showed that the characteristics associated with the attitude of female adolescent was the place of residence with a significance value of 0.026. Age was related to the attitude of male adolescent with a significance value of 0.014. Education was related to the attitude of female adolescent (p -value = 0.000) and attitudes of male adolescent (p -value = 0.016). Economic status was related to the attitude of female adolescent (p -value = 0.000) and attitudes of male adolescents (p -value = 0.035). Characteristics had a relationship with adolescent attitudes in conducting pre-primary sex behavior. Therefore, it is necessary to have appropriate efforts to prevent adolescent risk behavior in accordance with the characteristics and needs of today's youth

Keywords: Adolescent, attitude, premarital seks, characteristic, good health, well-being

Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines adolescents based on 3 (three) criteria, namely:

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biological, psychological, and socio-economic. Adolescence in terms of biological conditions is a period when an individual develops from the first time he shows secondary sexual signs until he reaches sexual maturity. Adolescents are viewed psychologically as the period when individuals experience psychological development and identification patterns from childhood to adulthood. Adolescents are viewed from the aspect of socio-economic conditions during the

transition period to become more independent from socio-economic dependence.

Adolescence is a unique period and full of various transitional periods. This transitional condition often causes various problems in adolescents. Adolescence is a period of transition in which physical and psychological changes from childhood to adulthood⁽¹⁾. Psychological changes that occur in adolescents include intellectual, emotional life, and social life. Physical changes include sexual organs, namely the reproductive organs have reached maturity and are starting to function properly⁽²⁾. All aspects of development in adolescence globally take place between the ages of 12-21 years, with the age division of 12-15 years being early adolescence, 15-18 years being middle adolescence, 18-21 years being late adolescence⁽³⁾. In his teenage years his curiosity about all things is very big. Including sexuality. Desire to try new things and curiosity about sexuality as adults do⁽⁴⁾.

In the current era of 4.0, the ease of access to information and developing technology makes it easier for teenagers to find information. Various risky behaviors carried out by adolescents reduce the health status of adolescents. Whether we realize it or not, the increase in risky behavior among adolescents causes the emergence of various diseases. Since 2013 the prevalence of smoking among adolescents (10-18 years) has continued to increase, namely 7,2%⁽⁵⁾, 8,8%⁽⁶⁾ dan 9,1%⁽⁷⁾. In addition, the problem of early marriage is also one of the concerns of adolescent reproductive health problems. Unicef released data that Indonesia ranks seventh for early marriages that occur at the age of less than 17 years. Based on statistical data from BPS, it is stated that the percentage of East Java women aged 10 years and over who marry underage (less than 17 years), in 2014 it was 27.11%, in 2015 it was 8.99% and in 2016 it was 21.16%.

According to the results of the 2017 IDHS Survey, it can be seen that 59% of girls received lessons on

reproductive health, 55% of boys had knowledge about HIV and Aids, 48% of girls and 46% boys got knowledge about HIV. And they first got information about reproductive health at junior high school age⁽⁸⁾. The condition of information about sexuality without assistance from parents will have a bad impact. They can access pornography so that it has great potential for sexual behavior outside of marriage. This condition is quite worrying considering that such behavior can lead to Unwanted Pregnancy Cases which in turn triggers unsafe abortion practices, transmission of STDs and HIV/AIDS, and even death⁽⁹⁾. (IDHS) 2017 revealed that around 2 percent of female adolescents aged 15-24 years and 8 percent of male adolescents in the same age range, had had sexual relations before marriage. As many as 11 percent of them admitted to having an unwanted pregnancy⁽⁸⁾. Premarital sex behavior can be prevented by one of its efforts, namely the formation of positive attitudes of adolescents in assessing premarital sex behavior⁽¹⁰⁾.

According to Eaglyand Chaiken in Albaracin (2005), attitude is the degree of a person's psychological tendency to judge something whether they like it or not. Attitudes are influenced by one's beliefs and behavior in the past as well as affection arising from environmental reactions⁽¹¹⁾. Many studies stated that one of the factors that influence attitudes is the characteristics of the person. Based on the data and descriptions of reproductive health problems and adolescent risk behavior, the purpose of this study was to analyze the characteristics of adolescents on pre-primary sex behavior.

Methods

This research is a quantitative with a cross-sectional research design. The population of this study were adolescents aged 15-24 years in East Java Province. The sample of this study was 2796 adolescents after normal weight adolescents were carried out. The data used in the form of secondary data from Program Performance and Accountability Survey (2018) of East Java Province in 2018. The

dependent variable in this study is the attitude of adolescents, while the independent variables are place of residence, age, gender, education, and economic status. Data collection used a smartphone and the

use of instruments that refer to the IDHS and PMA. Descriptive data analysis and tested using chi-square with a significance value of 0.05.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 Relationship between Adolescents’ Sexual Attitudes and Residence, Gender, Age, Education, and Economic Status

No.	Characteristic	Girls Attitude against Premarital Sex		Total	Boys Attitude against Premarital Sex		Total
		Agree	Disagree		Agree	Disagree	
Based on Living Place Classification							
1	Urban	78.3%	55.1%	55.2%	73.1%	55.1%	55.2%
2	Village	21.7%	44.9%	44.8%	26.9%	44.9%	44.8%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Sig		0.026			0.066		
Based on Sex							
1	Male	73.9%	58.1%	58.3%	76.9%	58.1%	58.3%
2	Female	26.1%	41.9%	41.7%	23.1%	41.9%	41.7%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Sig		0.126			0.052		
Based on Age (in years)							
1	15	27.3%	16%	16.1%	0.0%	16.2%	16.1%
2	16	22.7%	14.3%	14.3%	20.8%	14.3%	14.3%
3	17	13.6%	13.0%	13.0%	12.5%	13.0%	13.0%
4	18	22.7%	13.6%	13.6%	25.0%	13.6%	13.7%
5	19	13.6%	10.2%	10.2%	16.7%	10.1%	10.2%
6	20	0.0%	8.2%	8.2%	0.0%	8.2%	8.2%
7	21	0.0%	8.1%	8.0%	0.0%	8.1%	8.0%
8	22	0.0%	6.6%	6.6%	0.0%	6.6%	6.6%
9	23	0.0%	6.6%	6.5%	12.5%	6.5%	6.5%
10	24	0.0%	3.4%	3.4%	12.5%	3.3%	3.4%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Sig		0.233			0.014		

Cont... Table 1 Relationship between Adolescents’ Sexual Attitudes and Residence, Gender, Age, Education, and Economic Status

No.	Characteristic	Girls Attitude against Premarital Sex		Total	Boys Attitude against Premarital Sex		Total
		Agree	Disagree		Agree	Disagree	
Based on Education Level							
1	Did not school	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
2	Elementary School	21.7%	2.3%	2.4%	21.7%	2.4%	2.4%
3	JHS	39.1%	23.3%	23.5%	39.1%	23.2%	23.4%
4	SHS	39.1%	60.1%	59.9%	39.1%	60.2%	59.9%
5	Diploma	0.0%	1.8%	1.7%	0.0%	1.8%	1.7%
6	Bachelor	0.0%	12.4%	12.3%	0.0%	12.3%	12.4%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Sig		0.000			0.016		
Based on Economic Status							
1	Lowest	26.1%	5.6%	5.7%	20.0%	5.6%	5.7%
2	Mid-Low	34.8%	15.5%	15.7%	12.0%	15.7%	15.7%
3	Mid	0.0%	21.1%	21.0%	20.0%	21.0%	20.9%
4	Mid-High	39.1%	30.8%	30.9%	32.0%	30.9%	30.9%
5	Highest	0.0%	27.0%	26.7%	16.0%	26.9%	16.0%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Sig		0.000			0.035		

Adolescents’ Attitudes towards Premarital Sex and Residence

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the place of residence is related to the attitude of girls in assessing premarital sex behavior in male and female with a significance value of 0.026. Girls who lived in urban areas tend to have an agreeable attitude if female and male adolescents engage in premarital sex. The results of this study were in line with Umaroh’s research (2015) which stated that place of residence has a significant relationship with adolescent premarital sexual behavior, namely adolescents who lived in urban areas tended to be more at risk for

premarital sexual behavior 1,340 times compared to adolescents who did not live in urban areas. One form of juvenile delinquency was premarital sex behavior ⁽¹²⁾. Adolescents’ premarital sex behavior can be influenced by lack of affection and attention from parents and inappropriate family conditions ⁽¹³⁾. Adolescents who lived in urban areas tended to have busy parents. Parents who paid less attention, were less involved in the maturation of their children and feel proud of their children tended to form children who deviate ⁽¹⁴⁾. Besides that, parents tended to give a negative response to adolescents who ask questions related to sexuality which can cause curious teens to

look for answers on their own in obscure sources. The shift in adolescent attitudes towards premarital sex was currently influenced by western culture that entered Indonesia ⁽¹⁵⁾. This was because adolescents who lived in urban areas were more open to the influence of information and culture from the west. Self-disclosure to western culture if not accompanied by strong self-restraint will result in juvenile delinquency ⁽¹⁶⁾.

Adolescents' Attitudes towards Premarital Sex and Gender

According to Table 1, it can be seen that there is no relationship between the attitudes of female and male adolescents in assessing premarital sex behavior. This was in accordance with research conducted by Kiptiyah (2017) which stated that the gender of adolescents did not have a relationship with adolescents' attitudes towards premarital sex ⁽¹⁷⁾. However, this finding was different from the research conducted by Yolanda, (2020) which stated that boys tended to have negative attitudes towards premarital sexual behavior, namely attitudes that support premarital sexual behavior ⁽¹⁸⁾. Thus, it can be said that gender is one of the characteristics of adolescents related to adolescent attitudes towards premarital sex. Males were usually more involved in deviant behavior that was influenced by psychosocial influences, such as limited rational thinking patterns, weak emotional management, and strong peer influence ⁽¹⁹⁾. Public perception of boys and girls was different if both of them have premarital sex. Girls were seen as bad if they have premarital sex, in contrast to boys who have premarital sex. If a man has premarital sex, it will increase his reputation ⁽²⁰⁾. Research conducted by Ahrold and Meston (2010) stated that there was a shift in sexual attitudes in the adolescent group and there were differences in the attitudes of female and male adolescents. Men have more liberal attitudes towards sex than women ⁽²¹⁾.

Adolescents' Attitudes towards Premarital Sex and Age

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that there was

a relationship between age and male adolescent attitudes in assessing premarital sex behavior in male and female with a significance value of 0.014. Boys tend to have an attitude of agreeing if girls and boys have premarital sex. The results of this study were supported by research by Fauziah (2017) which stated that there was a strong relationship between adolescent age and premarital sexual behavior ⁽²²⁾. According to the Indonesian Ministry of Health (2009), age categorization was divided into 9, namely toddlerhood (0-5 years), childhood (5-11 years), early adolescence (12-16 years), late adolescence (17-25 years), early adult (26-35 years), late adult (36-45 years), early elderly (46-55 years), late elderly (56-65 years), and seniors (65 years and over). Adolescents at the age of 18 fell into the category of late adolescence. In this phase, the accomplishment in regards of self-identity is prominent, the way of thinking is more logical, abstract, and idealistic and more time is spent outside the family ⁽²³⁾. At this time, adolescents experience the development of sexuality: physical and hormonal changes during puberty. The impact of those leads to great social and psychosocial consequences for adolescents. This causes adolescents to look physically mature and more likely to imitate the behavior of adults, including sexual behavior. In the late adolescence phase, their curiosity in attempting new things in life makes them commit deviance, including committing sexual intercourse ⁽²⁴⁾.

In line with Azinar's research (2013) that there is a significant correlation between attitudes and premarital sexual behavior towards risk of Unintended Pregnancy (UP) ⁽²⁵⁾. This means that adolescents' permissive attitudes towards sexuality is four times greater risk or tendency to engage in sexual behavior at risk of adverse event compared to respondents who are less permissive. The National Family Planning Coordinating Board stated that 40% of those with permissive attitude did not mind dating by hugging each other, 20% did not mind dating by kissing each other, 35% of boys did not need to keep their virginity, 10% of girls did not need to keep their

virginity. Furthermore, 95% of them said chatting is the old style of dating. Meantime, 60% of adolescents with non-permissive attitude objected to the courtship style holding on to each other⁽²⁶⁾.

Adolescents' Attitudes towards Premarital Sex and Education

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that there is a correlation between adolescents' education and their attitudes in perceiving premarital sex behavior. This applied in male and female as well. In his research, O'Donnel (2020) discovered that most of the unreported cases of premarital pregnancy and premarital sex occurred among people with low education.⁽²⁷⁾ Generally, education affects a person's knowledge. The higher a person's education, the easier it is to perceive information from various sources. The higher a person's education, the better his knowledge. This knowledge has an impact on determining one's attitudes and behavior. A person with higher education is more likely to represent a positive attitude and behavior⁽²⁸⁾.

Adolescents' Attitudes towards Premarital Sex and Economic Status

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that there is a correlation between economic status and male and female adolescents' attitudes in perceiving premarital sex behavior. Those who are in the upper middle economic status tend to have an agreeable attitude in perceiving their fellow committing premarital sex. Adolescents with upper middle economic status have a sufficient life and can access various facilities or suspicious places. Adolescents with upper middle and upper economic status have higher exposure of premarital sex and have a modern lifestyle. Ease of access to information from various media and lack of parental control can be the cause of teenagers with upper and upper middle economic status committing premarital sex. In contrast to adolescents with low economic status, they are more likely to find it difficult to access information from various media and establish friendly relations with the opposite sex⁽²⁹⁾. Research

from Cofie (2010) stated that adolescents with upper middle economic status have more opportunities to commit premarital sex compared to those with lower middle economic status⁽³⁰⁾.

This results analysis differ from research by Anjarwati (2009), which states that adolescents with low economic status tend to commit premarital sex compared to adolescents with high economic status⁽³¹⁾. Low economic status relates to premarital sex behavior in adolescents, particularly among female adolescents. Their low economic status and inability to meet their basic needs are often tempted them to seek financial rewards from young or old men, substituted with sexual rewards.^{(32) (33)} Therefore, it is imperative to provide educational efforts that are in accordance with the needs of adolescents through the suitable media. This is since many media that has produced remains involve teenagers partially, thus there is a gap between the existing media and the youth needs⁽³⁴⁾. Cooperation from across sectors is one of the keys to succeed in organizing youth health programs⁽³⁵⁾.

Conclusion

Characteristics correlates with adolescents' attitudes in perceiving premarital sex behavior. Male and female adolescents have different attitudes of premarital sex behavior. They have their respective point of view in perceiving primary sex behavior. Female adolescents are more likely to disapprove the behavior of sex offenders compared to men. There are aspects of adolescent characteristics related to disapproval of premarital sex behavior in female adolescents: place of residence, gender, age, education, and economic status. Furthermore, there are aspects of male adolescents related to disapproval of premarital sex behavior: age, education and economic status. Therefore, it is necessary to prevent premarital sex in accordance with the needs and characteristics of current youth.

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