



## Self-Efficacy About Sexual Behavior Among Islamic Boarding School Students

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### Abstract

Having premarital sexual intercourse has a broad risk impact on health. This is following the teachings of Islam that should be upheld by all Muslims, with no exception for students living in Islamic boarding schools. To Islamic values and culture, students should have strong self-efficacy to prevent them from engaging in sexual behavior. This study aims to determine the effect of self-efficacy on the sexual behavior of students living in Islamic boarding schools. This cross-sectional study was conducted between June and August 2023. The sample was 150 students who lived in an Islamic boarding school in Semarang, Indonesia, taken by random sampling technique. Data was collected through interviews and then analyzed by logistic regression. Students at Islamic boarding schools who had premarital sex were more likely to be found in adolescents aged <19 years (15.2%), male (9.5%), had low self-efficacy (18.2%), and ever accessed pornography (23.1%). Accessing pornography was influenced by sex ( $p = 0.021$ ,  $OR = 0.235$ ), while premarital sexual intercourse behavior was influenced by age ( $p = 0.013$ ,  $OR = 10.716$ ) and self-efficacy ( $p = 0.043$ ,  $OR = 4.602$ ). Younger students with low self-efficacy are more likely to practice premarital sexual intercourse. This study found that accessing pornography did not affect the practice of sex carried out by students in Islamic boarding schools. The health ministry needs to work with the religious affairs ministry to design programs aimed at increasing self-efficacy among students in Islamic boarding schools.

### INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is one of the stages in human life. This stage is critical because it is the transition stage from childhood to adulthood. At this time, the desire to find oneself and gain recognition from family and environment is high. Sometimes to get recognition from their environment, teenagers do things that are outside of ethics and rules. School is an extension of the family in laying the foundation of behavior for the child's next life, including health behavior. The population of schoolchildren in a community is quite large between 40% - 50%. Therefore health promotion in schools is very important. Pesantren which are non-formal educational institutions have not been intervened much in

terms of health. Health education in schools is a human investment for nation-building (Kusnadi et al., 2017; Zaini et al., 2022).

A school is a place for the delivery of knowledge material (teaching) and at the same time a place for the formation of attitudes, values, beliefs, and elements of desired behavior, where knowledge material about health can be given, both as a special subject and integrated with other existing teachings (Nyoko & Hara, 2020). For formal schools that generally have a specific teaching plan or curriculum, the placement of health education materials can be designed and sorted more carefully. The process of maturing adolescents of school age has been more prominent and exposure to

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external influences that can damage healthy living behavior becomes very vulnerable, such as smoking, drinking, narcotics and drug abuse, sexual deviation, and other acts of violence. Health education efforts in this group should be integrated into adolescent health programs if they already exist. Therefore, it should not be ignored the existence of educational institutions that may have informal status but have the very potential to engage in risky behavior.

Indonesian adolescents are currently experiencing increased vulnerability to various health risks, especially those related to reproductive health, including increased threats from PMS/HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancy, and abortion, which are receiving international attention. Other problems are related to drugs, liquor, cigarettes, student brawls, promiscuity, and violence against children/adolescents. Among students, diseases or health problems that are often faced are those related to skin diseases (scabies), malnutrition, and reproductive health including menstrual personal hygiene, homosexuality, the risk of contracting HIV / AIDS, sexual behavior, and smoking (Ahmed et al., 2014; Hayee et al., 2021; Mendolia et al., 2018). Therefore, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Health have even compiled training modules on adolescent reproductive health in Islamic nuances, by including the postulates of the holy book of the Qur'an in it.

Zina is practicing sex outside of marriage. Every student living in an Islamic boarding school is Muslim so they know that committing an act close to zina is a grave sin. Muslims are strictly forbidden to commit it (Ghozali & Nasrulloh, 2022). Nonetheless, adolescence is already in the stage of sexual maturity. In addition, media exposure in the current generation Z causes students to easily obtain information. If the information they get is valid, then they will behave healthily. On the contrary, there is also a lot of dangerous information that they can access freely. The bulwark that can prevent adolescents from behaving in premarital sex is self-efficacy. Therefore, this study aims to determine the relationship between self-efficacy of students and sexual behavior.

## METHOD

This is a cross-sectional study conducted in Semarang, the capital city of Central Java, from June to August 2023. The population in this study is students from an Islamic boarding school located in Semarang as many as 5,481 students. Based on the minimum sample size formula by Lemeshow and random sampling techniques, 150 students participated in this study. All the data was collected by a self-administered questionnaire. The study was authorized by the Ethics Committee (Approval ID: 403/EA/KEPK-FKM/2023) of the Faculty of Public Health, Universitas Diponegoro.

The independent variables in this study were student characteristics (age, sex, education, father's occupation, mother's occupation) and self-efficacy. The dependent variable is sexual behavior (accessing pornography and the practice of sexual intercourse). Access to pornography is measured by questions about whether or not they have ever accessed pornography (images, writings, or videos), while the practice of sexual intercourse is measured by questions about whether or not they have had premarital sexual intercourse. A score of 0 is given for the answer "yes/ever" and a score of 1 is given for the answer "no/never". Self-efficacy was measured by 10 valid and reliable questions, including questions about students' ability not to access pornography and maintain abstinence until marriage. The self-efficacy variable is normally distributed so that the cut-off point in its categorization uses the mean rate. Self-efficacy is categorized as "low" if the total score is  $< 9$  and categorized as "high" if the total score is  $\geq 9$ . Kolmogorov Smirnov's test shows that all questions are valid. Each question is also reliable (cronbach alpha  $> 0.60$ ). The data was analyzed by univariate to obtain the frequency distribution of each variable (age, sex, education, parent's occupation, accessing porn, and practicing sexual intercourse). Logistic regression is used to determine the relationship between age, sex, education, parent's occupation, accessing porn, and practicing sexual intercourse ( $p$ -value = 0.05).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Islamic Boarding School is an educational institution with the concept of boarding school education with the Ministry of National Education curriculum integrated with Islamic lessons. In this study, boarding school is a residence for students who are receiving formal education outside boarding school. Usually, students who live in boarding schools are from elementary school to college (Mustikawati et al., 2017). Of the 150 students who were respondents in this study, most were female (72%), aged  $\geq 19$  years old (69.3%), and were studying (78.7%). At this age, adolescents are experiencing psychosexual development with physiological reproductive organs. Sexual development is caused by an increase in testosterone in men and estrogen in women. An increase in this hormone causes increased sex drive in adolescents. In reality, adolescent sexual behavior is often manifested in unhealthy sexual behavior. Unhealthy sexual behaviors include having sexual intercourse, unwanted pregnancy, and contracting sexually transmitted infections. Unhealthy sex behavior can also be judged by not using condoms in sex and having more than 1 sex partner (Shaluhayah et al., 2020).

Most of their fathers jobs are employees while their mothers do not work (housewives). Being away from parents means that students living in Islamic boarding schools do not receive enough supervision from parents. The supervisor in the boarding school is the ustadz who is assisted by older students. Boarding schools with weak supervision will make it easier for students to try to perform behaviors prohibited by the school, such as interacting with the opposite sex which leads to zina (Ridha et al., 2023; Sudjak et al., 2017).

The study found that 8.7% of students had accessed pornography and 6.7% admitted to having had premarital sex intercourse. This is very worrying because students know very well that it is not allowed. Students at Islamic boarding schools have a social influence that is not only religious but also teaches about hygiene and health in Islam. They have religious values that have always been the rule of life. Value is a measure or principle that is believed and used as a standard of code of conduct that is considered good, appropriate, and correct.

Religious values are derived from religious norms which are the rules of religious teachings that bind its followers. Religious norms contain commandments and prohibitions for adherents to obtain happiness in the world and the hereafter. If his followers violate these rules, they are considered to have sinned and placed in the afterlife (Bobyreva et al., 2019).

Self-efficacy influences a person's behavior. The more confident a person is in abstinence, the more likely he is not to have premarital sex, and vice versa. From Table 1 it can be seen that as many as 78% of students have high self-efficacy, but 22% of others have low self-efficacy. Students with low self-efficacy tend to be unable to refrain from watching pornography and/or having premarital sex. Increasing knowledge about reproductive health and sexuality is essential to improving sexual self-care (Indraswari, Widjanarko, et al., 2023). This is because changing a person's behavior by improving their self-efficacy can be a protective factor against high-risk sexual behaviors, such as the prevention of AIDS and STIs in sexual intercourse (Assarzadeh et al., 2019).

A previous study reported topics like relationships and sex were taboo to discuss. Talking about sex is considered appropriate only by husband and wife. This is dangerous because it causes teenagers to obtain information about sex from misleading sources (Indraswari et al., 2021). From the results of crosstabulation, it is known that students who access pornography are more male (19%) and have low self-efficacy (18.2%). Females and males are equal when it comes to accessing pornography. Results of crosstabulation revealed that students aged  $< 19$  years are more likely to have premarital sex (15.2%) than students over 19 years old (2.9%). Male students are more likely to have premarital sex (9.5%) than female students. Most of them also had low self-efficacy (18.2%). As many as 23.1% of students who watched pornography also had premarital sexual intercourse. Students in this study belong to Generation Z. The characteristic of this generation is very good at finding information. The internet has existed since they were born in the world (Prakash Yadav & Rai, 2017). Previous research even found that students had been exposed to pornography

Table 1. The Characteristics of Respondents

Variables	n	%
Sex		
Female	108	72.0
Male	42	28.0
Age		
<19 years old	46	30.7
≥19 years old	104	69.3
Education		
Junior high school	5	3.3
Senior high school	27	18.0
College	118	78.7
Father's occupation		
Civil servant	17	11.3
Employee	65	43.3
Entrepreneurship	39	26.0
Unemployment	29	19.3
Mother's occupation		
Civil servant	12	8.0
Employee	36	24.0
Entrepreneurship	20	13.3
Unemployment	69	46.0
Passed away	13	8.7
Self-efficacy		
High	117	78.0
Low	33	22.0
Accessed porn		
Yes	13	8.7
Never	137	93.3
Had sex		
Yes	10	6.7
Never	140	93.3

Source: Primary Data, 2023

since the age of 5. This is very worrying because it can affect individual and social values. In the end, adolescent behavior becomes unhealthy because it considers premarital sex behavior to be accepted in the surrounding environment (Indraswari, Kusumawati, et al., 2023).

Table 2 shows the frequency distribution of students' answers measuring their self-efficacy. Only 88% of students were sure they could refuse their boyfriend's invitation to have sex, while 12% said they were not sure they could refuse. Most students believe they can keep their virginity and abstinence because premarital sex does not follow the teachings

of their religion. All respondents were Muslim and participated in every religious activity regularly held by the boarding school. In Islam, sexual intercourse can only be performed with a legal wife or husband in marriage. This is because Islam believes that a person will bear a great sin if he has premarital sex. This belief is very strong because it is firmly written in the Quran, the holy book of Muslims. Therefore, premarital sex is strongly opposed by Muslims and it is certainly known by all students studying at Islamic boarding schools. However, not all students feel confident that they can refuse their girlfriends to enter their rooms, even though it is a strict prohibition

Table 2. The Distribution of Frequency of Student's Self-efficacy

Component Self-efficacy	Yes		No	
	n	%	n	%
1. I was able to refuse if invited to have sex with my boy/girlfriend.	132	88.0	13	12.0
2. I can cling to the stance of not having sexual relations before marriage because it does not follow religious teachings.	142	94.7	18	5.3
3. I was able to keep my virginity until I got married.	142	94.7	8	5.3
4. I was able to hang on to my decision not to have sex before marriage for fear of getting pregnant.	140	93.3	10	6.7
5. I believe I can refrain from having sexual relations with my boy/girlfriend even if I have to break things off.	142	94.7	8	5.3
6. I believe I can refrain from having sex before marrying my boy/girlfriend, even though my friend thinks it's perfectly normal.	141	94.0	9	6.0
7. I was able to give my boy/girlfriend an excuse not to have sexual intercourse before marriage.	143	95.3	7	4.7
8. I'm sure I can refuse if my boy/girlfriend asks me to watch porn.	138	92.0	12	8.0
9. I was sure I could forbid my boy/girlfriend from coming into my room.	137	91.3	13	8.7
10. I was sure that I would not have sexual relations before marriage for fear of getting venereal diseases or sexually transmitted infections.	142	94.7	8	5.3

Source: Primary Data, 2023

in Islamic boarding schools. Islamic boarding schools are very strict in regulating interactions between men and women because it is feared that it leads to adultery or sexual behavior with people who are not their muhrim. Muhrim is a person who cannot be married, in Islamic rules (Ghozali & Nasrulloh, 2022). Students who have high religiosity scores will be more likely to avoid watching pornography and premarital sex intercourse (Shapiro et al., 2017).

From Table 3 it is known that gender ( $p = 0.021$ ) affects students in accessing pornography. Male students are 0.235 times more likely to access pornography than female students. Age ( $p = 0.013$ ) and self-efficacy ( $p = 0.043$ ) affected intercourse sexual practices (Table 4). Students younger than 19 were 10,716 times more likely to have sex than students over 19. Students with low self-efficacy were 4,602 times more likely to have sex than students with high self-efficacy. Accessing pornography is prohibited for all

students living in Islamic boarding schools. Not all students can afford to refuse their boyfriend's invitation to watch porn together. Sexual content may be more prominent, or perhaps more appealing, to viewers who have a permissive attitude, so the consumption of sexual content reinforces permissiveness for those who already have that attitude (Dillman Carpentier & Stevens, 2018). It will manifest distress at the potential of having premarital sexual intercourse (Hennegan et al., 2019).

## CONCLUSION

Some students who live in Islamic boarding schools have low self-efficacy. They are unable to resist their boyfriend's invitation to access pornography and engage in premarital sexual intercourse. The study found that students at Islamic boarding schools who had premarital sex were more likely to be found in



Table 3. Result of Multivariate Analysis on Students' Characteristic Toward Accessing Pornography

Variable	$\beta$	SE	Wald	Sig	Exp ( $\beta$ )	95% CI	
						Lower	Upper
Sex	-1.493	0.647	5.328	1	0.021	0.235	0.063 0.798
Age	0.229	0.837	0.075	1	0.785	1.257	0.244 4.478
Father's occupation	0.118	0.253	0.216	1	0.642	1.125	0.685 1.847
Mother's occupation	0.049	0.159	0.093	1	0.760	1.050	0.769 1.434
Self-efficacy	1.042	0.633	2.711	1	0.100	2.834	0.820 9.793

**Note:**  $\beta$  = Beta Coefficient; SE= Standard Error; df= Degree of Freedom; Sig.=Significance; Exp ( )= Beta Exponential; CI= Confidence Interval

Source: Primary Data, 2023

Table 4. Result of Multivariate Analysis on Student's Characteristic Toward Practicing Sexual Intercourse

Variable	$\beta$	SE	Wald	df	Sig	Exp ( $\beta$ )	95% CI	
							Lower	Upper
Sex	-0.662	0.805	0.675	1	0.411	0.516	0.107	2.500
Age	2.372	0.957	6.142	1	0.013	10.716	1.642	69.927
Father's occupation	0.368	0.368	1.000	1	0.317	1.445	0.702	2.971
Mother's occupation	0.005	0.195	0.001	1	0.978	1.006	0.686	1.475
Self-efficacy	1.526	0.755	4.090	1	0.043	4.602	1.048	20.201
Accessing porn	1.535	0.912	2.833	1	0.092	4.640	0.777	27.719

**Note:**  $\beta$ = Beta Coefficient; SE= Standard Error; df= Degree of Freedom; Sig.=Significance; Exp ( $\beta$ )= Beta Exponential; CI= Confidence Interval

Source: Primary Data, 2023

adolescents aged <19 years, male, had low self-efficacy, and had accessed pornography. Access to pornography is influenced by sex. Males are more likely to access pornography than females. The practice of premarital sexual intercourse is influenced by age and self-efficacy. Younger students with low self-efficacy are more likely to practice premarital sexual intercourse. This study also found that accessing pornography is not the determinant of premarital sexual intercourse among students in Islamic boarding schools.

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