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PEER INFLUENCE FACTORS ON FREE SEXUAL BEHAVIOR AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN STATE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL 2, ENREKANG DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Abstract:
Sexual promiscuity among adolescents shows a worrying upward trend. Adolescents are generally known for their intense curiosity and identity-searching process, which, if not accompanied by adequate guidance and understanding, has the potential to lead to deviant behavior. This study aims to analyze the influence of peers on sexual promiscuity among adolescents at SMA Negeri 2, Enrekang Regency. The type of research used is quantitative with a cross-sectional design. The study sample consisted of 249 students in grades 10 and 11, selected through proportional random sampling. Data were collected using a closed questionnaire and analyzed using the chi-square test. The results of the analysis showed that the majority of respondents had poor sexual behavior, namely 65.9%. Peer factors were proven to have a significant relationship with sexual promiscuity (p = 0.010). This finding indicates that peer influence is a dominant factor in adolescent sexual behavior. It is recommended that adolescents need to increase awareness and be selective in choosing friends.

Abstrak:
Perilaku seksual bebas di kalangan remaja menunjukkan tren peningkatan yang mengkhawatirkan. Remaja umumnya dikenal dengan dengan rasa ingin tahu yang besar serta proses pencarian jati diri, sehingga apabila tidak disertai arahan dan pemahaman yang memadai, berpotensi menimbulkan perilaku menyimpang. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis faktor pengaruh teman sebaya terhadap perilaku seks bebas pada remaja di SMA Negeri 2 Kabupaten Enrekang. Jenis penelitian yang digunakan adalah kuantitatif dengan desain cross-sectional. Sampel penelitian terdiri dari 249 siswa kelas X dan XI, yang dipilih melalui teknik proportional random sampling. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan kuesioner tertutup dan dianalisis dengan uji chi-square. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar responden memiliki perilaku seksual yang kurang baik, yaitu sebesar 65,9%. Faktor teman sebaya terbukti memiliki hubungan yang signifikan dengan perilaku seksual bebas (p = 0,010). Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa pengaruh teman sebaya merupakan faktor dominan terhadap perilaku seksual remaja. Disarankan kepada remaja perlu meningkatkan kesadaran serta selektif dalam memilih pergaulan.

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INTRODUCTION

The trend of casual sex among Indonesian teenagers is increasingly worrying. Puberty is a time of self-discovery, where individuals begin to explore values and ways of life independently. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported in 2020 that approximately 21 million pregnancies occur annually among adolescent girls aged 15–19 in developing countries, 49% of which are unplanned.

Premarital sexual activity carries the risk of serious consequences, such as unintended pregnancy and the transmission of STIs. A survey by the Ministry of Health showed that curiosity was the primary cause of premarital sexual behavior among adolescent boys. Meanwhile, for adolescent girls, the most common reasons were coercion by their partners or unplanned sexual activity [1].

The high number is related to the increasing tendency of deviant sexual behavior among teenagers [2]. Indonesia is included in the category of developing countries that also face the problem of deviant sexual behavior among teenagers. Every year, approximately 12 million teenage girls aged 15 to 19 years in developing countries experience pregnancy, and almost 49% are included in the category of unwanted pregnancies [3]. Data from the Population Service of South Sulawesi Province shows that the number of teenage girls who experience free sex is 33.7%, and boys 63.3% [4].

Data shows that the number of sexual violence cases in Enrekang Regency is experiencing a slight increase. Data from the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Agency shows 10 cases in 2022, with the same number recorded again in 2023. In 2024, this number increased to 14 cases, indicating an upward trend that requires closer attention. Data from the Enrekang Regency Health Agency shows an increase in STD cases due to promiscuity, particularly HIV infection. Over the past three years, the number of cases has continued to rise, with 12 cases in 2022, 13 cases in 2023, and a surge to 21 cases in 2024. Promiscuity is influenced by various factors, both internal and external. Internal factors include knowledge about reproductive health, attitudes toward sexuality, and self-control.

Meanwhile, external factors include family parenting styles and peer influence. A lack of comprehensive sex education, minimal open communication within the family, and strong peer pressure can increase the risk of adolescents engaging in premarital sexual behavior [5].

Based on information obtained by researchers in Enrekang Regency, there was a case related to free sex in one of the schools in Enrekang Regency. This school is considered one of the quite popular and well-liked high schools in Enrekang Regency, both in terms of achievement and number of students, so it is considered representative to describe the social conditions and behavior of adolescents in general. This study aims to determine the influence of peers on adolescent sexual behavior at SMA Negeri 2 Enrekang.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach with a survey method and a cross-sectional design. The sample in this study was 249 students. The inclusion criteria were students who were administratively registered as students in grades 10 and 11 at SMA Negeri 2, Enrekang Regency. Data were collected from the research sample respondents through a questionnaire instrument to measure research variables related to promiscuous sexual behavior in adolescents and peers.

The collected data were then processed using SPSS version 26. The analysis used the Chi-Square test, with the provision that the relationship is considered significant if the calculated χ^2 value $\geq \chi^2$ table or p value < 0.05. This test is used to determine the factors that influence promiscuous sexual behavior in adolescents.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Table 1. Distribution of Student Characteristics at State Senior High School 2, Enrekang Regency

Characteristics	n = 249	%
Age (years)		
15	28	11,2
16	145	58,2
17	71	28,5
18	5	2.0
Gender		
Male	105	42,2
Female	144	57,8

Table 1 shows that of the total 249 respondents, the majority were 16 years old, namely 145 people (58.2%), and the majority were female, namely 144 people (57.8%).

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Sexual Behavior of Adolescents at State Senior High School 2,Enrekang Regency

Behavior	n	%
Fair	85	34,1
Not Good	164	65,9
Total	**249**	**100.0**

Table 2 shows that of the 249 respondents, the majority had a less than good behavior category, namely 164 people (65.9%).

Table 3. Influence of Peers on Sexual Behavior of Adolescents at State Senior High School 2, Enrekang Regency

Peer Category	Behavior Category				Total		*ρ-Value*
	Not good		Enough				
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Not Good	129	70,5	54	85,0	183	100,0	0,010
Enough	35	53,0	31	47,0	66	100,0	
Total	164	69,9	85	34,1	249	100,0	

Table 3, of the 183 adolescents with less than ideal peers, 129 (70.5%) had less than ideal sexual behavior, and only 54 (29.5%) had moderately good behavior. Meanwhile, of the 66 adolescents with more than ideal peers, 35 (53.0%) had less than ideal behavior, while 31 (47.0%) had moderately good behavior. The statistical test results showed a p value of 0.010 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a significant relationship between peer influence and adolescent sexual behavior.

The influence of peers on adolescents' premarital sexual behavior can be explained through the concepts of conformity and subjective norms in the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 2011), where social pressure from peers influences an individual's decision to engage in or avoid a behavior [6].

A social environment that is permissive towards premarital sexual behavior will tend to form subjective norms that lead to the justification of this behavior. Teenagers who are in social groups that are accustomed to engaging in or talking about premarital sexual behavior will feel compelled to adapt in order to remain accepted in their group [7].

This finding is supported by research by Fitriana Ayu Puspitasari (2022), which showed that peer conformity significantly influences premarital sexual behavior. The higher the level of conformity, the greater the tendency for adolescents to engage in premarital sexual behavior.

Research by Sajidalloh et al. (2022) also shows that peers are one of the strongest factors influencing sexting behavior among adolescents, where social recognition and acceptance from peers are the primary motivations for engaging in online sexual behavior [8].

The results of this study indicate that peers influence the sexual behavior of adolescents at State Senior High School 2 in Enrekang Regency. Adolescents in the identity-searching phase tend to prioritize social acceptance from their peers, so the opinions and behaviors of friends play a significant role in shaping their decisions and actions. One of the main causes of this influence is adolescents' need for acceptance and recognition within their social group, which often leads them to follow the behavior of the majority in that group, including in sexual behavior [9].

Information received from peers is often inaccurate or not based on scientific knowledge, which can mislead adolescents. Peers can also act as a source of modeling, namely role models for behavior, so that

adolescents in each group engage in certain sexual behaviors, and some adolescents tend to imitate them as a form of solidarity or self-validation. This is reinforced by social pressure or peer pressure, both explicit and implicit, which encourages adolescents to follow group norms to avoid being ostracized [10].

This finding is also supported by research by Sinlaeloe and Wibowo (2022), which shows that peer conformity has a positive and significant influence on premarital sexual behavior in adolescents. The desire to be accepted within a group drives adolescents to adapt to the values and behaviors prevailing in their social environment. This study explains that adolescents with high levels of conformity tend to follow the norms and behaviors prevailing in their peer group, including regarding sexual behavior. This conformity arises from adolescents' need for acceptance within their social group, so they are driven to conform even if it means ignoring their personal values or prevailing social norms [11].

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research on the influence of peers on promiscuous sexual behavior among adolescents at State Senior High School 2, Enrekang Regency, there is a peer influence on adolescent sexual behavior at State Senior High School 2, Enrekang Regency.

So that teenagers can have the ability to filter their social environment and choose their peers wisely, as well as equip themselves with knowledge and life skills to support making the right decisions when facing social pressure and the dynamics of sexual development.

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