A Theoretical Review: Globalization and Preventing Premarital Sex

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ABSTRACT

Background: Globalization is a double-edged sword since it improves human efficiency and effectiveness along with the development of technology. However, the negative impacts of globalization hit developing countries hard, such as the fading of traditional culture and people's tendency to be dependent on developed countries, or people imitate the negative behavior of those living in developed countries. Aims: This paper conceptualizes premarital sex behavior, which is a problem in the social environment that occurs in Indonesian society and generally in Islamic countries. The author will reveal sexual problems experienced by adolescents in terms of social phenomena in modern times. In addition, the impact of adolescent sexual behavior before marriage will also be discussed in this article, both in social, cultural, and religious settings. The author also offers alternative solutions to prevent premarital sex behavior in adolescents by looking at the role of the family, social environment, and educational institutions. Method: We use the Theory of Planned Behavior and Social Learning Theory approaches to explore the direction of adolescent behavior in making decisions. Results: As a result, our model can contribute to future research to research adolescent premarital sex behavior, especially in countries affected by globalization. In addition, we also offer a research model by formulating several propositions that will be a guide for further research. Conclusion: Globalization is very influential and we feel it in everyday life. Conditions such as promiscuity, negative internet, premarital sex, etc. can be found in social life. This condition cannot be avoided, which is something that should happen and needs to be addressed wisely by the whole community, especially parents who have teenage children. Several alternatives are offered to overcome this problem, among others, through educational institutions, the role of the family, and the social environment. These three factors are an alternative to preventing adolescent associations that lead to premarital sex.

Keywords: Adolescent sex behavior, Globalization, Indonesian adolescent, Premarital sex, Sexual education.

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of premarital sex behavior among adolescents in Indonesia has become a problem that needs special attention. This is because the Indonesian culture that considers premarital sex taboo and a serious problem in the social, cultural, and religious environment is gradually disappearing. Berliana et al. (2018) explained that premarital sex is a socially and culturally taboo thing in Indonesia. Also, a study by Ali (2018) explained that discussion about sex for adolescents in several Muslim countries had been considered taboo. The occurrence of the phenomenon of premarital sex in adolescents cannot be avoided because technological developments in the current era of globalization have changed the paradigm of society related to premarital sex. Cultural exchange in the era of globalization is very likely to occur to affect the way people perceive premarital sex. A research report by UNICEF explains that as many as 650 million adolescents have had sexual intercourse before turning 18 (UNICEF, 2018), and Indonesia is one of the countries with the largest number in the Asian region (Ali, 2018). The phenomenon shows that the stakeholders need to play their role in overcoming this problem.

The question that concerns us is how is sexual education in Indonesia and several other Islamic countries? Talking about sex in Indonesia and Muslim countries, in general, is a behavior that is considered taboo by the social community.
Social Learning Theory explains that the social environment is very influential on one's learning behavior through observation and the behavior of others (Decker, 1986; Li et al., 2017; Jadmiko, 2021). Premarital sex behavior is very likely influenced by the social environment the adolescent is in. Dating behavior, the association of men and women without any restrictions and a free lifestyle are some of the risk factors for premarital sex in adolescents. The view that premarital sex based on consensual reasons is common is the beginning of the occurrence of premarital sex. Several studies have shown that sexual violence and assaults on adolescents are done by those around the adolescents (Baron et al., 2020). The temptation to have premarital sex is one of the things that is difficult to resist, especially when it comes from someone close to them. Creating a social environment that upholds religious and moral values helps to minimize premarital sexual behavior in adolescents.

Previous studies have not identified much of the role of religion in overcoming adolescent sexual behavior, which is a vital thing in Muslim societies such as in Indonesia. More recent studies have looked at adolescent sexual behavior and ways of coping with it through the role of sexual education programs (Faludi and Rada, 2019; Faisal-Cury et al., 2020), the role of the family (Mbachu et al., 2020), and social community support (Baron et al., 2020). This paper tries to reveal the problems related to premarital sex experienced by adolescents, especially in Indonesia and generally in Muslim countries, in terms of demographics that significantly affect adolescent sexual behavior. In addition, the authors also recommend several propositions that can be used in further research to emphasize the role of educational institutions, family, religion and the social environment in overcoming the problems of premarital sex in adolescents. Several relevant previous studies are used as a reference in developing propositions in this paper. This paper tries to look at adolescent sexual behavior and ways of overcoming it other than through sexual education programs, the role of the family and the social community, as well as through the role of
religion, which is an essential factor in Muslim society.

Parents are increasingly aware of the dangers of premarital sex that can be experienced by their children. This phenomenon is even seen as very frightening for the majority of the Muslim community because premarital sex (adultery) is a serious violation in Islam. The occurrence of premarital sex is driven by several factors that cannot be controlled by parents. The first factor is globalization that cannot be avoided because it allows for cultural exchange (Nederveen Pieterse, 2020), in which the culture and negative habits of other countries can be adopted by the Indonesian people. One of the negative impacts of globalization related to premarital sex is the Western customs of promiscuity between men and women. Vasilenko and Lefkowitz (2018) explained that having premarital sex is something students usually do at universities in America. The second factor is a teenager’s curiosity; trying new things is one of the natural traits of a teenager in the process of finding his identity (Bromberg and O’Donohue, 2013). Apart from having a positive impact on knowledge and new experiences, this trait also has a negative impact if the consequences are harmful to themselves and their environment. The negative consequences of this curious behavior include involvement in alcohol, drugs, premarital sex and other negative behaviors (Tao et al., 2019).

Both of these factors are subordinate factors that are natural and must be passed, and cannot be avoided by a person. However, a person’s learning environment can play a big role in determining that person’s behavior (van Leeuwen et al., 2018). Daffa et al. (2022) explained that a person’s learning behavior in their environment is fundamental in predicting that person’s behavior. Adolescents who live in a bad social environment can impact a high risk of premarital sex and even sexual harassment (Talboys et al., 2017). The learning process through social interaction and observation of the learning environment can make a teenager imitate what is seen in his environment. In addition, Ajzen (1991) and Jacob and Dwipayanti (2022) stated that a person’s subjective norms to conduct behavior are influenced by their social environment so that the bad social environment that supports adolescents to have premarital sex is one of the factors for the high rate of premarital sex in adolescents. Both of these theories emphasize that the social environment greatly determines a person’s behavior.

METHODS

Propositions

Globalization and premarital sex

Modern life cannot be separated from the role of technology which provides many conveniences in carrying out daily activities. This development is followed by the absence of restrictions in the exchange of culture, thoughts, products and services as well as the views of individuals or groups, which is called globalization. Globalization has changed many perspectives and habits of a person or group of people to think globally (Shuaib and Badmus, 2022). One of the negative impacts of globalization on social life is the practice of imitating bad habits by people in developed countries, one of which is teenagers’ promiscuity. The advancement of transportation modes and internet access makes it easier for people to access and apply the lifestyle of people in other countries. As a result, free sex and access to pornography are increasingly accessible and widespread by teenagers in Indonesia, both of which are bad habits from other countries. For the above reason, we propose the following:

Proposition 1: Globalization increases premarital sexual behavior in adolescents.

Role of educational institutions

Educational institutions are one of the factors that can minimize the occurrence of premarital sex in adolescents. Apart from being a place for academic knowledge development, schools are also a place for teenagers to find their identity through associating with peers (Zakiy, 2021b). From the support of educational institutions for sexual behavior by making rules and education about adolescent sexual behavior through counseling, it can minimize premarital sexual behavior in adolescents. Several previous studies have shown that sex education programs can minimize adolescent involvement in premarital sex (Mbachu et al., 2020).
This educational program can provide views for adolescents about their sexual life. However, in Indonesia and several other Muslim countries, sex education for adolescents has not been officially implemented due to various reasons such as religious restrictions (Tsuda et al., 2017) taboo things (Hastuti, 2016), and not receiving recognition and support (Utomo and McDonald, 2009). This is a dilemma for adolescents in getting safe sex education. Thus, studies from several countries can be used as a reference in formulating methods of sex education in Indonesia. For this reason, we formulate the following second proposition: Proposition 2: Educational institutions that are concerned about adolescent sex behavior weaken the relationship between globalization and an increase in adolescent premarital sexual behavior. After that, a high number of educational institutions are expected to reduce adolescent premarital sexual behavior.

The role of the religious family

Every parent does not expect their child to have premarital sex. Of course, parents always take preventive action so that their children avoid premarital sex behavior. Providing advice, paying attention to and caring about children's needs and being involved in children's relationships such as being close to children's friends and knowing where children spend time are preventive steps that parents can take in preventing adolescent premarital sex. A family is also a place for children to tell the life they are experiencing outside the home so that it is possible for parents to know the problems experienced by these teenagers. Through a family approach, children are more open in telling various problems they are experiencing. Several previous studies have explained that family plays a crucial role in providing sexual education to adolescents (Faludi and Rada, 2019). However, in this paper, the author tries to provide a different perspective by looking at religiosity in the family to minimize premarital sexual behavior in adolescents. Hence, below is the third proposition:

Proposition 3: A religious family situation weakens the relationship between globalization and an increase in adolescent premarital sexual behavior. If well-given and well-received, it helps to lower adolescent premarital sexual behavior.

The role of the social environment

The social environment is very influential on the character formation of adolescents because, in adolescence, many new things are learned in shaping their attitudes, character and personality. Social Learning Theory explains that individuals will carry out the learning process from observations and experiences of the surrounding environment (Li et al., 2017). Due to the collectivist culture, the level of social interaction among adolescents in Indonesia is very high (Ssewanyana et al., 2018). Thus, the role of the social environment is very significant in shaping adolescent sexual behavior. Adolescents will see the behavior of other individuals in the surrounding environment, such as the style of interaction between adolescents, social rules and social sanctions given if the adolescent violates the laws and habits that apply in society. Eastern culture upholds the values of decency, ethnicity and religious values which prohibit premarital sex can minimize adolescent premarital sexual behavior amid global challenges. The influence of the social environment like this will direct the behavior of adolescents to behave well in accordance with the will of their social environment. Thus, the fourth proposition is as follows:

Proposition 4: A social environment that is concerned with adolescent sex behavior weakens the relationship between globalization and an increase in adolescent premarital sexual behavior.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Theoretical Contribution

In this paper, we focus on the role of the social environment in Indonesian society that adopts a culture of collectivism in their lives to overcome the negative influence of globalization on adolescent premarital sexual behavior. In addition to having a positive (Zukhrufani and Zakiy, 2019; Amin, Hadisiwi and Suminar, 2022), recent research also shows the negative impact of the development of information technology on adolescent health and growth, such as virtual games and social media that can disturb the psychological state of adolescents (Zhai et al., 2020), depression (Revathi, Nair and...
Achuthan, 2020), headaches (Augner and Hacker, 2012) to increased behavior of premarital sex and sexual violence (Fairbairn, 2020). The unstoppable pace of globalization has a profound effect on social life. A study by Gentilviso and Aikat (2019) explained that there are changes in the behavior of teenagers from the Baby Boomer generation and the X generation (those who were born in 1946-1980) with the Millennial generation and the Z generation (the generation of 1981-present), in that millennial and Z generation prefer practical things, entertainment and interaction, as well as viral media. Teenagers now also tend to look for shortcuts to achieve success by becoming the center of attention (Gentilviso and Aikat, 2019). As a result, adolescents tend to be more materialistic (Geng et al., 2020). Hence the old taboo behaviors are common occurrences nowadays.

Our main contribution in making this paper is to find solutions to social problems in Indonesia, especially in the problem of adolescent premarital sexual behavior. Our first contribution is to elaborate on the role of educational institutions in educating students to behave ethically by creating a curriculum that is concerned with adolescent premarital sexual behavior. A teacher not only provides knowledge for his students but must pay attention to the moral and moral aspects of his students. A teacher's personal attention to his students by providing counseling needs to be done so that students feel they are getting attention so that they can talk about personal problems they are experiencing. Teachers who pay special attention to the ethical and moral development of students will reduce student problems in school (Liang, Dai and Matthews, 2020; Zakiy, 2021). Teens are more open to telling their personal problems to people they trust (Amorim Neto et al., 2020; Jauzi and Zakiy, 2021). Thus the role of teachers in minimizing the occurrence of premarital sex behavior is crucial.

In addition to the role of a teacher in paying attention to students, curriculum formation is also thought to influence adolescent premarital sexual behavior. Several previous studies have shown that a curriculum devoted to tackling sexual behavior can prevent sexual problems in adolescents (Kuykendall et al., 2020). The existence of a special curriculum to deal with sexual behavior proves the seriousness of the institution in tackling sexual problems in adolescents. The adolescent sexual learning curriculum program provides sexual knowledge to adolescents from an early age in order to understand the boundaries of social relationships and understand the consequences of unhealthy sexual behavior (Krebbekx, 2019). Miedema et al. (2020) argued that the sex education curriculum is an important means of informing adolescents about their sexual rights and health, as well as generating public health and contributing to sustainable development. However, the implementation of this program needs to be properly monitored and regulated so that it is in line with the expected objectives. The formation of the CSE curriculum program is an alternative program that can be applied because it comprehensively studies knowledge, attitudes, skills, and values so that students can talk about sex openly, know scientific facts and have social skills to act in order to fight peer pressure (Krebbekx, 2019). This program is important to avoid sexual violence and assaults and educate adolescents about the risks of having premarital sex (Fedina et al., 2018).

The second contribution is to look at the role of the religious family environment concerned with adolescent sexual behavior. For people who live in Islamic countries, the interaction between teenagers is of great concern. Parental protection against adolescent premarital sex behavior is very intensive because premarital sex behavior is a severe violation in Islam. The Qur'an has emphasized the prohibition of premarital sex, which is called “zina” as stated in Surah Al-Isra verse 32, "And do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse. Indeed, it is ever an immorality and is evil as a way." However, the protection seems excessive because talking about sex is taboo in Muslim countries (Akhu-Zaheya and Masadeh, 2015). As a result, the knowledge of adolescents about sex is never obtained in the family, while these adolescents must face a global environment that requires them to know the negative impact of risky sexual behavior. Families who equip their children with religious knowledge must also be open-minded by having knowledge of the limitations that can and cannot be done.
Family concern for adolescent sexual behavior, apart from a religious perspective, can also be done by providing knowledge of sex to adolescents from an early age. The combination of religious teachings with the provision of knowledge about sexual behavior can provide more comprehensive knowledge to adolescents. Family is the first bastion to protect adolescents from premarital sex behavior (Somefun, 2019) due to the negative impact of globalization since teenagers spend a lot of time with family during their early growth (Gomez-Baya et al., 2018). Today, a child needs to be instilled with religious values, which are the foundation of a child’s attitude (George Dalmida et al., 2018) and try to imitate the behavior of the surrounding environment (Lu et al., 2019). After a child experiences puberty and begins to understand his social environment, sexual education can be given so that he has the knowledge and can act in case of peer pressure or sexual threats (Krebbekx, 2019). To get the most out of this method, family commitment and sacrifice are needed so that the child can understand the goals expected by the family.

The final contribution is the role of the social environment in shaping adolescent sexual behavior refers to the Social Learning Theory that the social environment can influence a person’s behavior (Decker, 1986; Li et al., 2017). Adolescents who interact with the environment that support them to stay away from premarital sex behavior will tend to avoid it. Ssewanyana et al. (2018) found that environmental factors have the most significant influence in determining the risk of sexual behavior in adolescents. The social environment of adolescents in the technological era is not only related to one’s social interactions in the real world, but interaction through cyberspace is also essential in determining the behavior of adolescents in their daily lives (Abdullahi and Abdulquadi, 2018; K Hedo and Katmini, 2022) Some students often stalk and share sexual content through technology assistance (DeKeseredy et al., 2019). Related to the very high level of internet users among teenagers, preventive action to oversee the use of the internet is necessary. Ajayi and Ezegbe (2020) explained that teenage girls and young women (15-24 years old) are greatly at risk of experiencing unwanted pregnancies.

**Future research agenda**

Some further study to empirically test the propositions we offer in the provided conceptual model.

**Conceptualization of the religious environment**

Previous studies had no consensus on the measurement of the religious environment in both the family and society. We suggest that as a first step, further research conducts qualitative studies to explore the meaning, definition, dimensions and indicators of the religious environment. One way to do this is to conduct in-depth interviews with religious leaders, anthropologists, sociologists and community leaders (as people who consider society’s problems). The second way is to conduct participant observation by conducting ethnographic research in order to reveal the criteria for the religious environment in the family and society. A qualitative approach as a first step allows researchers to explore the concept of a religious environment in depth from experts to find definitions that can be used in future studies. In addition to clarifying the conceptualization of measuring the religious environment, a qualitative approach with ethnographic methods allows researchers to determine what kind of culture can implement a religious environment to overcome adolescent premarital sexual behavior. After formulating a definition of the religious environment, the researcher can then ascertain the dimensions of the religious environment.

**Testing propositions in empirical research**

There are several main concerns for testing propositions empirically from the papers we offer. First, researchers need to ensure that people in the countries studied are countries that have been affected by globalization, not countries that have had the impact of globalization. This is because the proposition that is built is specifically for countries whose traditional cultures are eroded by the influence of the cultures of other countries as a result of globalization. In addition, the religious environment referred to in this paper is that the majority adopt Islamic teachings because they strongly oppose premarital sex behavior. For this reason, in testing our proposition, researchers need
to pay attention to the context of the country, culture and religion adopted by the society in which the research takes place. The design of selecting research objects in countries affected by globalization is not in countries that have an impact on globalization because the direction of globalization has changed the habits of people in various countries to follow the habits of developed countries (Anderson, 2017). The object was selected so that data retrieval is in accordance with the conditions of the people affected by the negative effects of globalization.

Second, the topic of adolescent premarital sex behavior is a sensitive matter for most people, especially in countries that consider it taboo and unethical to talk about this. As in Indonesia and other Muslim countries, talking about premarital sex behavior is very rarely done, especially by teenagers, so this problem is very sensitive and falls into a person's privacy zone. Researchers needed to convince the respondent in the study to be able to tell the actual situation they are experiencing by keeping the identity of the respondent a secret, taking a psychological approach so that adolescents want to tell the events they have experienced (Amorim Neto et al., 2020). Researchers can also expand the research location so as not to justify certain areas by collaborating with the government that has data on this matter. For this reason, the research respondents' trust in the researcher is the key to the success of the validity of the data in further research.

Third, to see the support of educational institutions for adolescent sexual behavior, a special in-depth study is needed in order to create a sexual education curriculum. So far, the sex education curriculum in Indonesia has experienced many conflicts and debates (Tsuda et al., 2017), so that there has been no final decision on this issue. So far, the concern of educational institutions on adolescent sexual behavior in Indonesia has only been limited to making school regulations that must be obeyed by all students, not being comprehensively included in a school program. Researchers need to make instruments to measure the role of educational institutions in paying attention to adolescent sexual behavior in the school environment. In addition, researchers can also trace the extent to which the regulations issued by schools can bind their students because there are differences in regulations in each school, such as public schools, private schools and religion-based schools.

CONCLUSION

Globalization is very influential and we feel it in everyday life. Conditions such as promiscuity, negative internet, premarital sex, etc., can be found in social life. This condition cannot be avoided, which is something that should happen and needs to be addressed wisely by the whole community, especially parents who have teenage children. Several alternatives are offered to overcome this problem, among others, through educational institutions, the role of the family and the social environment. These three factors are an alternative to preventing adolescent associations that lead to premarital sex. The author formulates several prepositions that are expected to be empirically tested in further research in order to provide solutions to the problem of premarital sex in Indonesia and other Muslim countries.

REFERENCES


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