

Parenting practices and sexual behavior of early urban adolescent: a cross sectional study



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ABSTRACT

Background: There is a scientific prejudice related to the impact of parenting practices on early adolescents' sexual behavior in Indonesia. The missing aspects of parental get into mischief or risky sexual behavior among youth while sexual education itself is considered taboo in urban areas. This study intended to investigate the correlative pattern between parenting practices toward sexual behavior of early adolescents.

Methods: This quantitative, cross-sectional-analytical study enrolled 290 early adolescents aged 10-14 years in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, from May-June 2021. A validated and reliable questionnaire of 30 questions was used to get the Parenting Practice (Permissive, Authoritarian, Democratic) from the adolescent's perspective. The sexual behavior was collected using 37 questions to categorize the adolescents into Risky, Medium Risk and Non-Risky. The correlative analysis was used to determine the significance ($p < 0.05$), strength and direction of a linear relationship between two variables.

Result: It was reported that 184 (63.4%) adolescents had a democratic parenting practice and non-risky sexual behavior. Significant correlation was found ($p = < 0.001$; $r = 0.978$) and strength of correlation (r) was considered strong. A positive correlation was obtained to show that the Democratic Parenting Practice aligns with Non-Risky sexual behavior among early adolescents.

Conclusion: Significant findings of this study lead to a general description that democratic parenting practice applied in early adolescents could lead to non-risky sexual behavior. Further study that involves another stage of adolescence (middle adolescence and late adolescence/young adulthood) is required.

Keywords: Early Adolescents, Parenting Practices, Sexual behavior, Urban.

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INTRODUCTION

Globally, adolescent problems considered concerning health are unsafe sex, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs),¹ unwanted pregnancy, and abortion.² Moreover, these practices are also considered risk factors for drug abuse,³ partner violence, anxiety, depressions⁴ and other mental and physical problem that might encounter youth in the future. In line with those underlining problems, an observational study involved 4,684 grade 7 students in 18 schools children aged 10-14 in Lampung, Denpasar, and Semarang. Indonesia reported that only 44.4% of students understand that women can get pregnant when having sex for the first time, 22.9% know that both men and women can be infected with HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) during sexual intercourse for the first time, 31.2% who

know if there is PKPR or it can be called Youth Care Health Services, 19.5% of adolescents know that an injection can anticipate pregnancy, 13.5% know that women can expect pregnancy by taking contraceptive pills, and 17.8% of students know where to get condoms.⁵

Numerous studies indicated that parents play a significant role in sexually related behavior among early adolescents.⁶ According to a literature review, higher scores on parental support, control, and knowledge lead to a delay in first sexual intercourse, safer sexual behavior, and higher sexual competence.⁷ Another study also reported that maternal attitude, paternal control, and maternal warmth and control dimensions were significant predictors of real adolescent difficulties, externalizing, and internalizing behavioral problems.⁸ However, content analysis of a qualitative study that involved several

behavior theories such as Ecological Model of Health Behaviour, Problem Behaviour Theory and Integrated Behaviour Model found that reproductive behavior among adolescents was affected by family.⁹

From the adolescents' perspective, 4 out of 10 children in urban areas received information about health from their mothers but only discussed it when they first experienced menstruation. At the same time, ten early teens said that they got information about reproductive health from the internet, exchanged information with peers and school materials. Another study also found that females prefer being permissive, and males prefer high birth control, communion, and instrumentality for sexual attitude.¹⁰ Since the school has never done socialization about reproductive health (education) and students have never visited the Youth Care Health Service (PKPR) because they feel

it is necessary.¹¹ Even the study found no significant differences in preventing sexual risk behavior among adolescents in urban areas at pre-and post-sexual education (peer) ($p=0.086$),¹² the study that involves parenting practices is essentially important. However, adolescence (ages 10 to 19 years) is one of the most critical stages of human development because health and well-being at these ages influence health trajectories with lifelong consequences. While early adolescence (ages 10-14 years) is considered one of the healthiest periods of life, it is also a transitional period during which many health behaviors are acquired.¹³ This study intended to investigate the correlative pattern between parenting practices and sexual behavior of early adolescents.

METHODS

Study Design

This study was a quantitative, cross-sectional-analytical study that enrolled 290 early adolescents aged 10-14 in the Yogyakarta area, Indonesia, from May-June 2021.

Sample selection

The study population was all early adolescents (10-14 years old) who lived in the urban part of the Special Region of Yogyakarta. In determining the research sample, purposive sampling was used, and the population met the inclusion and exclusion criteria that had been set. The inclusion criteria in this study were early adolescents who lived in a special area of Yogyakarta and had wet dreams/ menstruation, lived with their parents and obtained permission from their parents. The exclusion criteria in this study were early adolescents whose parents did not permit them to participate in the study.

Assessment

A validated and reliable Parenting Practices Questionnaire of 30 questions was used

to get the Parenting Practice (Permissive, Authoritarian, Democratic) from the adolescent's perspective. The sexual behavior was collected using the Sexual Behavior Questionnaire of 37 questions (21 questions for men; 16 questions for women) to categorize the adolescents into Risky, Medium Risk and Non-Risky sexual behavior. Data collection was carried out at Junior high schools in Yogyakarta using questioner and prior informed consent via an online questioner.

Statistical Analysis

The correlative analysis was used to determine the significance ($p<0.05$), strength and direction of a linear relationship between two variables. The statistical application used was SPSS 16.0 that was provided by Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows that there were 153 (52.8%) 14 years old adolescents followed by a total of 182 (62.8%) Girls and Boys of 108 (37.2%) enrolled in this study. Based on Table 2, 184 (63.4%) adolescents had a democratic parenting practice and non-risky sexual behavior. Table 2 also reported a significant correlation between Parenting Practice and Sexual Behaviour of early adolescents ($p<0.001$; $r=0.978$). The strength of correlation (r) was considered strong. In contrast, a positive correlation was obtained to show that the Democratic Parenting Practice aligns with non-Risky

sexual behavior among early adolescents.

DISCUSSION

This study reported that 184 (63.4%) adolescents had a democratic parenting practice and non-risky sexual behavior. Parenting is a fundamental thing to shape the personality.³ Examples of good conduct from parents are needed for children's growth because children tend to imitate people's behavior in their environment.¹⁴ Openness between parents and children is important to minimize children from bad influences outside the family.^{14,15} Democratic parenting itself is a parenting pattern in which parents stimulate their children to be more independent but always provide limits or rules and control children's behavior. Democratic parenting was associated with improved child communication but problematic peer relationships and behavioral issues. Parental warmth was found to be related to other parenting characteristics and identity cohesion. Democratic parenting was associated with higher school engagement and identity coherence in both boys and girls.^{16,17}

A similar study in Yogyakarta aimed to investigate the correlation between parenting style and adolescents' attitude in premarital sex prevention in State Vocational School 2 of Sewon Bantul Yogyakarta also found that democratized parenting style was shown in 46 respondents (80.7%).¹⁸ In line with the findings of that study, a previous study

Table 1. Respondents' proportion is based on age and gender.

Characteristics	Frequencies (n=290)	Percentage (%)
Age		
12 years old	18	6.2
13 years old	119	41.0
14 years old	153	52.8
Gender		
Girls	182	62.8
Boys	108	37.2

Table 2. Parenting Practices and Sexual Behaviour of Urban Early Adolescent and Correlative Analysis result.

Parenting Practices	Sexual Behaviour			Total	r	*p
	Non Risky	Medium Risk	Risky			
Democratic	184	0	0	184	0.978	<0.001
Authoritarian	2	103	0	105		
Permissive	0	1	0	1		

*Correlative analysis were using Spearman test (significance $p<0.05$)

to determine the relationship between democratic parenting styles and premarital sexual behavior discovered that premarital sexual behavior has a relationship with democratic parenting ($p=0.029$). In this study, the correlation coefficient was -0.270 , indicating that the relationship between the two variables was negative and low.¹⁹

The study finding reported a significant correlation between Parenting Practice and Sexual Behaviour of early adolescents ($p<0.001$; $r=0.978$). The strength of correlation (r) was considered strong. In contrast, a positive correlation was obtained to show that the Democratic Parenting Practice aligns with non-Risky sexual behavior among early adolescents. Whether it is acceptance of sexuality education, studies have repeatedly shown that positive parental attitudes influence children's perspectives. Parents and families play an important role in shaping attitudes, norms, and values regarding gender roles, sexuality, and the social status of adolescents and young people.²⁰ Democratic parenting has a positive impact. Children become more creative, open and cheerful individuals, can distinguish between good and bad, optimal development, know how to respect and respect others, and solve problems with deliberation and a cool head, including in the area of sexual behavior.²¹ Children's interactions with parents can shape their character, personality and perceptions, especially reproductive health. This perception can lead to positive behavior.²² The positive correlation between Democratic Parenting Practice and non-Risky sexual behavior among early adolescents was also reported on study 71 female respondents in Medan using a proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The results of this study indicated that the influence of democratic parenting (78.87%) has a positive impact on adolescent attitudes (81.69%) (*chi-square analysis* $p=0.001$).²³

Related to the study location, the urban environment hypothetically plays a role in parenting styles as to how parents apply autonomic parenting in their daily lives. Parents show an openness to discuss with their children, mutually agree on house rules and teach the values of life to their

children while still teaching good manners and the importance of maintaining good relations with family and friends (peer).²⁴⁻²⁶ However, regression model advisedly could be conducted to the further research to determine the model of how strong the environment influence the correlation of Parenting Practice and Sexual Behaviour of early adolescents. Respectively, this cross sectional study didn't involve another factor that potentially confounded the correlation model. The authors strongly suggest further research to elaborate another model explaining how the correlation of Parenting Practice and Sexual Behaviour among adolescents leads to another outcome.

CONCLUSION

The significant finding of this study leads to a general description that democratic parenting practice applied in early adolescents could lead to non-risky sexual behavior. Further study involving another stage of adolescence (middle adolescence and late adolescence/young adulthood) is required.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All authors declared that there is no conflict of interest related to the publication of this article.

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ETHICS APPROVAL

Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the Health Research Ethics Committee of Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta No.115/EC-KEPK FKIK UMY/IV/2021, April 12, 2021.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

Each author has an equal contribution to the process of article writing.

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