Religious Practices and Determinants of Dating Relationship in Uhamka Faculty of Health Sciences Students, Jakarta

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Abstract: Adolescence is a transition period before an individual achieving his marital status. For university students, it is a time when they are no longer under direct parental supervision. Religion can be seen as a social determinant of health, but it has less scientific evidence. This study aims to identify the association between sociodemographic variables, religiosity, academic performance, and attitudes with dating relationship. This study used cross-sectional study. The population included the first-year students of the academic year 2017/2018 of Public Health Study Program Faculty of Health Sciences, Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. (UHAMKA). The sample was taken by total sampling technique. The samples included 166 first-year students of the Public Health Study Program Faculty of Health Sciences students in the age range of 17 to 26 years (M age 19; SD = 1.3). A Heath Behavior Questionnaire was administered. The result indicated that students who have high religious scores tend to avoid dating. The most dominant factor for dating relationship is sex (OR =2,9; 95% CI 1,1 – 7,6).

1 INTRODUCTION

Freshmen students are those who are in the first year at the university. At that period of transition according to psychological development, they assume some adult roles and responsibility as different from when they were in high school. As university students, they are in a new environment, including academic system and social life (Peltzer, Malaka, & Phaswana, 2002).

Many recent studies show a profound ignorance of religion, apart from the fact that knowledge about religious practices is essential for human flourishing in this multi-religious world. Religious literacy is a current skills in social determinant of public health (Ellen L Idler, 2014). Further analysis of the data of Indonesian Demographic Health Survey (IDHS) 2012 showed that 19% of unmarried adolescent male aged 15-24 years were in a relationship when the survey was conducted and they experienced premarital sex. The reasons were mostly curiosity (55%) and another was by incident (25%). 92% of

them did it with their girlfriend. In terms of location, they did it at boarding house (23%) or couple's house (21%) (Handayani & Huriah, 2016).

The number of teenagers who have premarital sex in Indonesia is increasing, and the upward trend can be seen in the last five years of 2007-2012 on the IDHS, where premarital sexual behavior at the youth level was 8.3 per cent of the total teenagers surveyed (BKKBN, 2012). A survey in Semarang which involved 1,355 respondents, who were high school and vocational students, revealed 392 students or 28.92 per cent agreed to have sex before marriage. A study conducted in Denpasar, Bali, showed that as many as 4.26% claimed had premarital sex with their partner in the past year (1.44% girls and 3, 19% boys) (Yuni; Adi; Siswanto, 2013).

Premarital sexual behavior is still a moral, psychological, and physical debate. In fact, a high number of sexually active teenagers were found in United States. The national data in America shows that 46% of early high school adolescents are sexually active; the numbers are increasing in the

final high school period, which is 62%. The increase in the number of teenagers who have premarital sex was discovered since the 80s. National data on male adolescents showed that one-third of young men have sex at the age of 15 years (BKKBN, 2012).

Although a lot number of studies have been published about multiple health risk behaviors among community college students, community colleges are underutilized in health behavior research (Pokhrel, 2004). Some theories of adolescent development are the basis which strengthens the hypothesis of the alleged factors of premarital sexual behavior. The emergence of serious issues concerning the factors of risk behavior in adolescents reinforced the theory. Furthermore, the perspective of adolescent development became the basis of the importance of the theory of factors, individuals, and the environment in premarital sexual behavior (Busseri, M. A., Willoughby, T., Chalmers, H., & Bogaert, 2008).

UHAMKA, one of universities under the Islamic Mass Organization in Indonesia, implements and teaches Islamic value in the academic system. UHAMKA carries out the vision of Muhammadiyah, namely "Towards True Islam." One way to achieve that is by applying the teaching of Islam and *Kemuhammadiyahan* (AIK) courses as part of the all-academic subjects, including *muamalah* (Arifin, 2015). In Islam, sex before marriage (*zina)* was forbidden. Based on the principle of *muamalah* in Islam, the dating-relationship is included in one of the behaviors that are at risk of *zina* (Fajri, Muhammad Dwi; Rasjyid, 2017). This background is the basis for researchers to see the extent to which religious practice lessons relate to the dating relationship of student in UHAMKA**.**

Hypothesis: Independent factors (sex, academic performance, attitude, and religious practice) are significantly related with dating relationship.

2 SUBJECTS AND METHODS

The focus of this study is on the religious practices and determinant factors of dating relationship of public health study program UHAMKA University. The data were obtained from a survey using Health-Behavior Questionnaire. The population of this study included students of the public health study program at the Faculty of Health Sciences University of Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr HAMKA. The sample was taken using total sampling technique. All members of the population, as many as 166 students, who meet the inclusion and exclusion criteria, were included in the study. The inclusion criteria recorded were the freshmen students of Public Health Study Program UHAMKA. Those who were unwilling to become respondents were excluded from the population — a letter of approval obtained from the student after being explained the purpose and method of research.

The data analysis was carried out using Stata software for univariate, bivariate, and multivariate. Univariate analysis was performed to display the frequency of each variable and bivariate analysis using chi-square to compare the observed frequency and the frequency of expectations. Besides, bivariate analysis was also carried out with the prevalence of ratio risk analysis to compare the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The logistic regression conducted to find the most dominant independent variable.

Measures

Data pertaining to prevalence and frequency of dating relationship were obtained from A Heath Behavior Questionnaire, including four items on basic sociodemographic data: sex, academic performances, religious practices, and attitudes. Dating relationship was measured with a question: (1) have you ever been and have a boy/girlfriend? (1: yes, 2:no).

Religious practice was measured through three questions: (1) How important is religion to you? (1: very important, 2: important, 3: not important), 2) In the last six month, how often do you attend religious courses (1: once a week, 2: 2-3 in a month, 3: once in a month; 4: never) 3) In the last six month, how often do you come the mosque? (1: once a week, 2: 2-3 in a month, 3: once in a month; 4: never). Academic performance was measured by one self-rating item on "What is the last cumulative academic achievement score" (1=>3, 2<3).

3 RESULTS

Of the total, 84 (50.6%) said that they had a dating relationship. Only 54 (32.53%) of the students admitted that they achieve high score for their religious practice. Most of the students had a high academic performance and twenty-seven (16.27%) are male. From all of the respondents, only 66 (39,76%) have negative attitude. Table 1 explains the students' characteristic.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristic and Dating Relationship (n=166)

Variable	n	%
Sex		
Male	27	16,27
Female	139	83,73
Academic Performance		
Middle – low < 3	47	28,31
High >= 3	119	71,69
Religious practice		
Low (score <14)	112	67,47
High (score >=14)	54	32,53
Attitudes		
Negative	66	39,76
Positive	100	60,24
Dating relationship		
Yes	84	50,6
No	82	49,4

The results of multi-variate analysis showed that the most dominant factor for dating relationship is sex (OR =2,9; 95% CI 1,1 – 7,6). Table 2 explained logistic regression.

Table 2. Logistic Regression

Variables	OR	Std Err	95% CI Min	Max
Sex	2.95	1.42	1.15	7.57
Academic performance	1.41	0.52	0.68	2.90
Religious practice	1.10	0.38	0.56	2.15
Attitudes	1.10	0.41	0.54	2.27

4 DISCUSSION

The current study showed that religious practice prevents students from dating relationship. Religion often takes a fundamental role in people's health, and for those, this starts even before an individual can consider their belief system. However, even if one is ambivalent about religion, the chances are high that religion influences one's life, even as a way of life (Barmania, Sima; Reiss, 2018). Religious values have clearly forbidden dating behaviour. The standard of behaviour among boys and girl is described in detail in the *muamalah* and *ibadah* lessons. In Islam it is called *adab* (manner) (Fajri, Muhammad Dwi; Rasjyid, 2017).

Indonesia is one of the nations in South East Asia with mostly Muslim population, where people practice their faith along with the local values (Barmania, Sima; Reiss, 2018). Cultures about dating relationships are also influenced by Islamic values. Unfortunately, in Indonesia, information related to reproductive health is still much contested by religion and education, so it has not been included in the education curriculum. IDHS surveys showed that dating relationship is a risk factor for the rate of unwanted pregnancies in adolescents. Male students have a higher proportion to have dating relationships compared to women.

Furthermore, similar result was found in the IDHS. Knowledge of healthy relationship in dating is essential to prevent adolescents from any risks that might occur (Handayani & Huriah, 2016). The information can be included into AIK lessons for students, but the content should be adjusted to the adolescent development (Arifin, 2015).

With the limitations of the study, only one study program in one among seven campuses was included in the sample. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized across UHAMKA. Substantial variation in a dating relationship in this university could help planners more clearly distinguish the service needs to the various subgroups within the population. Furthermore, in this study, the variables of dating behaviour are not explored further so they cannot describe the risk behaviour of the students.

5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, religious practices prevent students from dating behavior, of which the most dominant factor is sex. Further studies on the dating behavior of the students should be conducted with bigger sample sizes. It is recommended for the institution to update the content of Islamic lectures and adjust the materials with the adolescent's development. Male students should be engaged more in the discussion than female to prevent them from any other risky sexual behaviors. The teaching of AIK needs to be updated and in line with the advance of technology as well as the needs of adolescents.

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