

## Sexual Behavior in Adolescent Courtship, Exposure to Pornography, and Parental Sexual Communication

Sri Lestari

Faculty of Psychology, University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta

The aim of this study was to find out the correlation between parent-child communication about sexuality and exposure to pornography with adolescent's sexual behavior in courtship. Participants were 551 adolescents (225 boys and 326 girls) who lived at Sukoharjo. Results show a correlation between parent-child communication about sexuality and Internet exposure to pornography and sexual behavior in dating. Implications of this study are discussed.

*Keywords:* courtship behavior, parental sexual communication, exposure to pornography

Penelitian ini bertujuan mengetahui korelasi komunikasi orangtua-anak tentang seksualitas dan paparan pornografi dan perilaku seksual remaja dalam berpacaran. Partisipan penelitian ini adalah 551 remaja (225 laki-laki; 326 perempuan) yang tinggal di Sukoharjo. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada korelasi perilaku seksual dalam berpacaran dan komunikasi orang tua-anak tentang seksualitas dan paparan pornografi. Dibahas pula implikasi temuan ini.

*Kata kunci:* perilaku pacaran, komunikasi orangtua-anak tentang seksualitas, paparan pornografi

Dating is a normal behavior in teenagers. Youth dating behavior can be found in public places like city garden, mall, bus station, and so on. Data from Indonesian Birth Control Society (Perkumpulan Keluarga Berencana Indonesia/PKBI, 2001) on 2479 youngsters in five cities; Kupang, Palembang, Singkawang, Cirebon, and Tasikmalaya showed variations in teenagers' activities in dating like touching, kissing, petting, and copulating. Sexual intercourse in youngsters who dated was believed to be an expression of love. Meanwhile, another PKBI survey (Sugiarto, 2006) found that premarital sexual relation had begun as young as less than 18 years old. Teenage sexual behavior in dating was influenced by environmental conditions such as mass media, informational media, or education given by their parents. Mass media like television play a lot of adolescent life rich in romance. Internet is accessible to youngsters and it could become a good source for material of sexual development. Interview with youngsters showed that internet and pornographic VCD was becoming a source of reference for youngsters who want to know about sex (Anganthi & Lestari, 2007).

---

Financial support from the skim Young Researcher's Grant, Dir. of Research and Public Service, Dir.Gen. of Higher Ed., Dep.of National Edu. is gratefully acknowledged.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Sri Lestari, S.Psi, M.Si., Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Muhammadiyah, Surakarta, Jalan Ahmad Yani Tromol Pos 1, Pabelan, Surakarta 57102. E-mail: srilestari@scientist.com.

Ideally, parents should take an active role in educating their children about sex, but in fact not all of them take their responsibility optimally. They tended to be waiting their children asking questions and not being proactive. In fact, Whitaker, Miller, May, and Levin (1999) stated that if parents could communicate with their children about sexual topics in a good atmosphere, this would influence their attitude toward sexual behavior. Based upon previous explanation, the reseach question was: would youngsters' dating behavior be influenced by parents-children communication about sexuality and pornographic exposure?

### Youngsters' Dating Behavior

Dating is a site for youngsters to express interests, feeling, and thoughts with sexual counterpart. Love and affection was expressed through words and actions in communication between partners. Communication between lovers was different from communication between non-lovers in the tendency to exaggerate the good side of their lovers and minimize the bad side. (Masters, Johnson, & Kolodny, 1991).

Sexuality of courtship is in analogy with dating. There were some reasons why people date (Bruess & Greenberg, 1981). First, dating was done for pleasure, usually done in spare time or when people need recreation. Second, dating was done for friendship in which someone felt happy being