

# The Relationship Between Family Environment and Adolescents' Knowledge of the Dangers of Free Sex and Sexually Transmitted Diseases

## *Hubungan Lingkungan Keluarga dengan Pengetahuan Remaja tentang Bahaya Seks Bebas dan Penyakit Menular Seksual*

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### Abstract

**Background:** Adolescents are vulnerable to risky sexual behaviors due to rapid developmental changes and limited knowledge of sexual health. The family environment plays a crucial role in shaping adolescents' understanding of the dangers of free sex and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

**Objective:** This study aimed to analyze the relationship between family environment and adolescents' knowledge regarding the dangers of free sex and STDs in Makassar City.

**Methods:** This study employed a cross-sectional design involving 60 adolescents in Makassar City. Data were collected using structured questionnaires. Statistical analysis was conducted using the Chi-square test with a significance level of 0.05.

**Results:** Most adolescents from adequate family environments had sufficient knowledge (55%). A significant relationship was found between family environment and knowledge level ( $p = 0.007$ ).

**Conclusion:** Family environment is significantly associated with adolescents' knowledge of the dangers of free sex and STDs. Strengthening family communication is essential for improving adolescent sexual health knowledge.

**Keywords:** family environment, adolescents, knowledge, free sex, sexually transmitted diseases

### Abstrak

**Latar Belakang:** Remaja merupakan kelompok yang rentan terhadap perilaku seksual berisiko akibat perubahan perkembangan yang cepat serta keterbatasan pengetahuan mengenai kesehatan seksual. Lingkungan keluarga memiliki peran penting dalam membentuk pemahaman remaja tentang bahaya seks bebas dan penyakit menular seksual (PMS).

**Tujuan:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis hubungan antara lingkungan keluarga dengan pengetahuan remaja mengenai bahaya seks bebas dan penyakit menular seksual di Kota Makassar.

**Metode:** Penelitian ini menggunakan desain potong lintang (cross-sectional) yang melibatkan 60 remaja di Kota Makassar. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan kuesioner terstruktur. Analisis statistik dilakukan menggunakan uji Chi-square dengan tingkat signifikansi 0,05.

**Hasil:** Sebagian besar remaja yang berasal dari lingkungan keluarga yang baik memiliki tingkat pengetahuan yang cukup (55%). Terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara lingkungan keluarga dan tingkat pengetahuan remaja ( $p = 0,007$ ).

**Kesimpulan:** Lingkungan keluarga berhubungan secara signifikan dengan pengetahuan remaja tentang bahaya seks bebas dan penyakit menular seksual. Penguatan komunikasi dan peran keluarga sangat penting dalam meningkatkan pengetahuan kesehatan seksual pada remaja.

**Kata Kunci:** Lingkungan keluarga, pengetahuan, penyakit menular seksual, seks bebas

## INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a critical phase of human development characterized by physical, emotional, and social changes. During this period, adolescents begin to explore romantic and sexual relationships, which may expose them to risky sexual behaviors if not supported by adequate knowledge and guidance [1]. Free sex among adolescents is associated with various negative consequences, including sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), unintended pregnancies, and psychosocial problems [2].

In Indonesia, including urban areas such as Makassar City, adolescents are increasingly exposed to information from digital media, which may not always provide accurate sexual health information [3]. Limited understanding of sexual health risks can lead adolescents to engage in unsafe sexual practices [4].

The family environment is a primary social context that influences adolescent behavior. Families that provide emotional support, supervision, and open communication can positively shape adolescents' attitudes and knowledge regarding sexual health [5]. Conversely, poor family environments may limit discussions about sexuality and reduce adolescents' awareness of the dangers of free sex and STDs [6]. Therefore, this study aims to examine the relationship between family environment and adolescents' knowledge of the dangers of free sex and sexually transmitted diseases in Makassar City.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Design

This study used a cross-sectional design and was conducted in Makassar City, Indonesia.

### Population and Sample

The study population consisted of adolescents, with a total sample of 60 respondents selected using total sampling.

### Variables

- Independent variable: Family environment (poor, adequate)
- Dependent variable: Knowledge of the dangers of free sex and STDs (insufficient, sufficient)

### Data Collection

Data were collected using structured and validated questionnaires.

### Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and the Chi-square test with a significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

## RESULTS

**Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents by Age**

Age (years)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
22–25	17	28.3
26–29	20	33.3
30–33	14	23.3
>34	9	15.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

Most respondents were aged 26–29 years (33.3%), indicating that the majority were in late adolescence to early adulthood.

**Table 2. Characteristics of Respondents by Gender**

Gender	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Male	29	49.0
Female	31	51.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

Female respondents slightly outnumbered males, although the gender distribution was relatively balanced.

**Table 3. Relationship Between Family Environment and Knowledge of the Dangers of Free Sex and STDs**

Family Environment	Insufficient Knowledge n (%)	Sufficient Knowledge n (%)	Total n (%)
Poor	10 (16.7)	12 (20.0)	22 (36.7)
Adequate	5 (8.3)	33 (55.0)	38 (63.3)
<b>Total</b>	<b>15 (25.0)</b>	<b>45 (75.0)</b>	<b>60 (100)</b>

**Chi-square test:**  $p = 0.007$

**Interpretation:** Adolescents from adequate family environments predominantly had sufficient knowledge (55%). The  $p$ -value of 0.007 indicates a statistically significant relationship between family environment and adolescents' knowledge of the dangers of free sex and STDs.

## DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that adolescents who grow up in supportive family environments tend to have better knowledge regarding the dangers of free sex and sexually transmitted diseases. This result aligns with previous studies suggesting that family communication and parental involvement play an essential role in adolescent sexual health education [7,8].

In Makassar City, urban lifestyle and exposure to digital media may influence adolescent behavior. Without adequate family guidance, adolescents may rely on peers or online sources, which can increase the risk of misinformation [9]. Families that encourage open discussions about sexuality help adolescents develop accurate knowledge and responsible attitudes [10].

The statistically significant relationship found in this study ( $p = 0.007$ ) confirms that the family environment is a critical determinant of adolescents' sexual health knowledge.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that there is a significant relationship between family environment and adolescents' knowledge of the dangers of free sex and sexually transmitted diseases in Makassar City. Adolescents from adequate family environments are more likely to have sufficient knowledge. Family-based sexual health education should be strengthened to prevent risky sexual behavior among adolescents.

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