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MUSLIM ADOLESCENTS MORAL VALUE AND COPING STRATEGY AMONG MUSLIM FEMALE ADOLESCENT INVOLVED IN PREMARITAL SEX

SAEDAH A. GHANI^a, SALHAH ABDULLAH^b, SHARIFAH MARIAM SYED AKIL^c, NORATTHIAH NORDIN^d

UNIVERSITI SAINS ISLAM MALAYSIA

Abstract

Islam is an official religion in Malaysia, and premarital sex is absolutely forbidden in Islam. Despite being an Islamic country the number of adolescent involves in premarital sex is increasing each year. This study intends to find the relationship between Islamic moral value and coping strategies among female adolescents involved in premarital sex. The study explores the demographic and the psychological profile of the participants of the study. The subject of this study consists of 238 occupants from four government's shelter and rehabilitation home. Moral Values Inventory for Muslim Adolescents (MVIMA) and Coping Strategy Inventory (adapted and translated into Malay Version from *Spanish Version of Coping Strategies*) were used in this study. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics and for inferential data Pearson Correlation was used. Finding of the research shows that there is a significant relationship between coping strategies and moral values among adolescences involved in pre marital sex. The result of this study give the implication that the female adolescent and their parents should be given with sex education as an early measures to prevent premarital sex and the disease related to it. The implication of this study reflects the need of prevention and also rehabilitation program to high risk group teenagers. Teenagers need to develop positive values toward self-respect and self-esteem as well as coping strategy through assertive training. This study addresses the limitation of data collection from rehabilitation centres under the provision of Social Welfare Department. Thus future study should include shelter home for teenage pregnant girls run by the non government organization. Future study should also include qualitative approach to have in-depth understanding of premarital among teenage girls develop positive coping strategies in the process of recovering.

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Keyword: *premarital sex, adolescent, moral value, coping strategy.*

1. Introduction

Since the first decade of 21st century studies on adolescents immorality such as drug abuse, illegal race, premarital sex, pornography, and so on in Malaysia has been debated a lot (Husin Junoh, 2011). He then added, looking at the whole phenomenon of adolescences immorality in general, the national registration department of Statistics shows the number of illegitimate births registered in the year of 2006 to 2010 was over 234,647. Of the total, 80,979 or 34.5% of the babies' mother are Muslim. Abandoned babies were recorded 280 cases from 2005 to April 2010 in the whole country. The society also has been shocked with the issue of baby dumping and teenagers involve with premarital sex at the very young age and they are still in the school age (Utusan Malaysia, October 26th 2012 and Berita Harian May 19th 2010). Premarital sex is forbidden in Islam and despite Islam is an official religion in

Corresponding Author: Saedah A. Ghani

E-mail: saedah@usim.edu.my

Malaysia the number of young adolescents involved in premarital sex is increasing each year. The effect of the premarital sex has shown the alarming signal such as the adolescent may expose to risky sexual behavior with multiple partners, STDs or homosexuality. There are many factors contribute to the increasing number of premarital sex among young adolescents. Lacking of moral value and coping strategy are the two factors that contribute to the sexual involvement among adolescents. Most of the researches on moral value has gain attention of the researchers and have been expanded (Hart & Carlo, 2005) but mainly conducted in the Western context and only few researches were found studied in Muslim context. The research conducted in a Muslim context should be expanded which then can lead to an adequate understanding of Islam and its contributions. Many of the studies on moral values in the Western context but very few published studies about moral value in Islamic countries. So the objective of this study is to identify the demographic profiles, the psychological profile of the adolescents involved in premarital sex in rehabilitation centers in the aspects of moral value and coping strategy. The relationship between moral values and coping strategy among adolescents involve with premarital sex is investigated as well.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study used the survey method to collect the data. The sample of the study consists of 238 female Muslim inmates from four governmental welfare institutions. They were selected based on the background of the adolescents who involved with sex before marriage. Instruments used in this study are: 1. *Demographic profile* contains information such as age, race, welfare institute, condition before entry, year of entry, sexual experience, and onset age to sex, pregnancy of experience, occurrence of pregnancy, rape experience and same sex relationship. 2. *Moral Value Inventory for Muslim Adolescents (MVIMA)*: This inventory was originally introduced by Salhah Abdullah, Amla Salleh, Zuria Mahmud and Saedah Abd. Ghani (2010). This instrument consists of 48 items intended to measure individuals along three main dimensions of moral value ; spiritual values, social values, and personal values. There are nine subscales which is the values that have been measured in this inventory including patience, gratefulness, humility, respectfulness, positive regard, honesty, love, *tawakal*, sincerity The reliability for MVIMA in this study is alpha .93. 3. *Coping Strategy Inventory (CSI)* : The Coping Strategy Inventory comprises 40 items originally designed by Cano Garcia in 2007. It was adapted and translated from *Spanish Version of Coping Strategies* (Salhah, 2010). This inventory was translated into Malay language by using back translation method as suggested by Brislin and Lonner (1973). Participants were asked to answer 40 items to measure the way of coping based on three strategies; (social focus strategy, adaptive-maladaptive focus strategy, and emotion focus strategy). A five Likert-scale from 1 to 5 was used to indicate self-rating for each item. The eight primary factors (problem solving, cognitive restructuring, emotional expression, social support, problem avoidance, wishful thinking, self-criticism, and social withdrawal) identified as dimensions of coping. Coping Strategy Inventory shows high reliability as well. It has been tested by using coefficient alpha and showed the reliability as .92.

3. RESULTS

The Demographic Profiles of the Respondents

As illustrated in Table 1, most of the adolescents are at age of 16 to 18 years old (75.20%) involved with sex before marriage. The condition of the respondents before entry to the rehabilitation centers is categorized into three condition. Mostly respondents were studying (63.0%) while others were working (22.2%) and both studying plus working (16.8%). The respondents who participate in this study also have been staying in the rehabilitation centers for certain period of time. Mostly the respondents had been staying at the rehabilitation center in 2012 is about 75%. While some of them stay longer had been started in year 2011 (30.7%) and in year 2010 (21.0%) in rehabilitation centers. All 238 (100%) respondents admit they have experienced sex before marriage. Almost half of the respondents stated the onset age they involve with sex is at age 12 to 14 (47.2%). Some of the respondents experience pregnancy after having sex (21.0%). The respondent also answered about the rape experience. Almost half of the respondents who involved in sexual activity also had ever being raped (49.6%). The highest onset of age respondents being raped is at age 12 to 14 (24.4%). Lastly, the respondents also answer about same sex relationship.

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