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Smart Self-Care: Improving Adolescent Reproductive Health Through an Interactive Approach at the Ihya'ul Irfan Cikeduk Islamic Boarding School, Cirebon Regency

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ABSTRACTS

Introduction : Adolescents are a vulnerable group to reproductive health issues such as early marriage, unwanted pregnancies, and sexual violence. As religious educational institutions, Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) play a strategic role in providing reproductive health education based on religious values. **Objective**: To increase the knowledge and awareness of reproductive health among adolescents in Islamic boarding schools through an interactive approach. **Method** : The activity was carried out on July 13, 2025 using counseling, discussion, role play, and educational games methods which were attended by 32 young women. **Result** : After the intervention, 85% of participants were able to re-explain basic reproductive health concepts; there was an increase in active participation, courage to ask questions, and readiness to talk about sensitive issues. **Conclusion**: An interactive approach is effective in improving adolescents' knowledge and assertive skills; it is recommended to be a routine activity in Islamic boarding schools..

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1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescents are a population group experiencing rapid physical, psychological, and social development. The adolescence period (10–19 years) is a transitional period during which individuals begin to experience hormonal changes, sexual development, and the formation of social identity and behavior. Reproductive health issues in adolescents are a global concern because they have implications for individual and family well-being, as well as influence the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to health and well-being. In Indonesia, several national surveys and reports indicate high rates of child marriage, unintended pregnancies among adolescents, and low levels of adolescent access to and understanding of reproductive health services. According to reports from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) and relevant ministries, the prevalence of early marriage and adolescent birth rates remain challenges that require multisectoral intervention.

Islamic boarding schools play a crucial role in character building and providing religious education. However, reproductive health materials are often poorly integrated into the curriculum, leaving adolescent students with limited access to accurate information. Education that is sensitive to cultural and religious values needs to be designed to be acceptable to the Islamic boarding school community without neglecting scientific aspects and adolescents' right to information. Interactive (participatory) learning methods such as group discussions, role-playing, and educational games have been reported to be effective in increasing knowledge retention and assertiveness skills in adolescents regarding reproductive health. Several previous studies have reported significant increases in knowledge following participatory educational interventions among adolescents in schools and religious communities.

Based on needs identification conducted by the Community Service (PKM) team of ITEKes Mahardika Cirebon, the Ihya'ul Irfan Cikeduc Islamic Boarding School demonstrated educational needs related to puberty, adolescent rights, sexual violence prevention, and early marriage prevention. Therefore, this PKM activity was

designed to provide comprehensive information and practical skills to the female students through an interactive approach.

General objective: To increase adolescent knowledge and awareness regarding reproductive health through an interactive approach in the Islamic boarding school environment.

Special purpose:

- a. Provides information about puberty and physical-psychological changes.
- b. Improving understanding of adolescent rights and access to information related to reproductive health.
- c. Preventing early marriage and efforts to prevent sexual violence through increasing assertiveness skills.

Benefit:

- a. For adolescents: increased knowledge, healthy decision-making skills, and courage to report harmful actions.
- b. For Islamic boarding schools: evaluation materials and integration of reproductive health materials in the development of students.
- c. For educational institutions: real service experiences for students and strengthening the role of higher education in efforts to improve public health.

2. METHODS

Design: Community service activity with an interactive educational approach (one-day workshop). Location: Ihya'ul Irfan Cikeduc Islamic Boarding School, Cirebon Regency. Time: July 13, 2025. Target: 32 female students. Implementation team: 4 lecturers of Midwifery ITEKes Mahardika. Approach: combination of counseling (short presentation), group discussion, role play for assertive skills simulation, and educational games to reflect on the material. Evaluation instruments: short pre-test and post-test (knowledge questionnaire), participant observation, documentation notes, and Curhat Box as a tool for collecting personal questions. Activity Implementation Details:

08.00 – 08.30 : Opening (prayer, welcome)

08.30 – 09.00 : Ice breaking and introduction

09.00 – 10.00 : Session 1 - Puberty and My Body (counseling)

10:00 – 11:00 : Session 2 - Reproductive Health & The Dangers of Early Marriage
(midwives/health workers)

11:00 – 12:00 : Session 3 - Smartly Protecting Yourself from Sexual Harassment and
Violence (role play and simulation)

12.00 – 12.30 : Interactive Games

12.30 – 13.00 : Closing and short evaluation



Figure 1: Counseling Process



Figure 2: Closing and brief evaluation

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

Participation: The activity was attended by 32 young women. Full attendance and active participation were evident throughout the session. Participants' enthusiasm was assessed as high based on facilitator observations and documentation notes.

Knowledge: Based on the evaluation instruments (pre-test and short post-test), 85% of participants showed an increase in their knowledge scores regarding basic reproductive health concepts. The average pre-test score was 55% (poor-moderate category), while the average post-test score increased to 82% (good category). This improvement was particularly evident in understanding the signs of puberty, the right to information, and preventive measures against sexual violence.

Assertive skills and behavior: Through role play, participants are able to practice the skills of saying 'no' assertively and recognizing risky situations.

Curhat Box received 12 anonymous questions indicating a need for further support from some participants. Feedback from a satisfaction questionnaire showed that 90% found the material easy to understand, and 88% hoped similar activities would be repeated.

Short-term impact: Increased courage to ask questions and a sense of security within the Islamic boarding school environment regarding sensitive issues. **Expected medium-term impact:** Reduced risk of early marriage and increased reporting of incidents of sexual harassment/violence to the authorities at the Islamic boarding school.

3.2 Discussion

The results of this activity indicate that an interactive approach is effective in improving adolescents' knowledge and assertiveness skills. This finding is consistent with previous studies that found that participatory methods such as role-playing and group discussions improve knowledge retention and practical skills in adolescents (Sari et al., 2022; Fitriani & Yuliana, 2023).

In addition to knowledge, psychosocial aspects also improved; participants reported increased self-confidence and communication skills. A key success factor was the use of culturally and religiously sensitive methods, ensuring the material was accepted without creating resistance. Collaboration with Islamic boarding school administrators and the use of appropriate language were crucial factors in implementation.

Constraints: Time constraints (one-day activity) limited the depth of discussion; some participants required follow-up sessions or individual mentoring. Furthermore,

the evaluation used was brief—a short pre-test/post-test—so a more comprehensive instrument is recommended for subsequent activities. Recommendations: Schedule a series of ongoing programs, provide training for adolescent health cadres in Islamic boarding schools, and develop educational modules tailored to the Islamic boarding school context.

Policy implications: Integrating reproductive health materials into Islamic boarding school curricula using a holistic approach (combining religious and health education) can strengthen adolescent protection. Universities can act as facilitators and long-term partners in developing the capacity of Islamic boarding school caregivers.

4. CONCLUSION

An interactive approach effectively improves adolescents' knowledge and assertive skills related to reproductive health at the Ihya'ul Irfan Cikeduc Islamic Boarding School. Further programs and integration of materials into Islamic boarding school development activities are needed to ensure the sustainability of the impact.

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