



KNOWLEDGE, AWARENESS, AND ATTITUDE ABOUT REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS



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FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS UNIVERSITI PENDIDIKAN SULTAN IDRIS

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SULTAN IDERS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

PERAKUAN KEASLIAN PENULISAN

Perakuan ini telah dibuat pada 13 haribulan Februari 2024.

i. Perakuan Pelajar:

Saya, Chrystella Binti Miol bernombor matrik D20201093804 dari Jabatan Biologi, Fakulti Sains dan Matematik dengan ini mengaku bahawa tesis yang bertajuk Knowledge, Awareness, and Attitude about Reproductive Health among High School Students adalah hasil kerja saya sendiri. Saya tidak memplagiat dan apa-apa penggunaan mana-mana hasil kerja yang mengandungi hak cipta telah dilakukan secara urusan yang wajar dan bagi maksud yang dibenarkan dan apa-apa petikan, ekstrak, rujukan atau pengeluaran semula daripada atau mana-mana hasil kerja yang mengandungi hak cipta telah dinyatakan dengan sejelasnya dan secukupnya.

(Chrystella Binti Miol)

ii. Perakuan Penyelia:

Saya, Dr. Alene Binti Tawang dengan ini mengesahkan bahawa hasil kerja pelajar yang bertajuk Knowledge, Awareness, and Attitude about Reproductive Health among High School Students dihasilkan oleh pelajar nama di atas.

Tarikh

Dr. Alene Binti Tawang







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ABSTRACT

In the realm of adolescent development, high school students navigate self-discovery, forming knowledge, awareness, and attitude particularly in reproductive health. A comprehensive reproductive health education is required for informed choices and responsible behaviour. In Malaysia, statistics indicate a growing number of sexual reproductive issues among adolescents. Therefore, this study aims to explore high school students' knowledge, awareness, and attitude about reproductive health and factor correlates with students' understanding about reproductive health the most (parents or school). This study utilized a quantitative approach (survey study) to achieve its objective involving 116 respondents from SMK. Narinang, Kota Belud, Sabah. Descriptive data interpretation and Pearson correlation were employed in this study. The study found prominent level of knowledge (mean = 4.52) but moderate level of awareness (mean = 3.91) and attitude (mean = 3.86) in high school students. Despite a high correlation between school and parents, the school demonstrated a higher correlation coefficient (school r = 0.77; parents r = 0.67). Overall, the study shows a prominent level of understanding about reproductive health among high school students but low understanding on contraceptive method. Both school and parents have a high correlation on the students' knowledge, awareness, and attitude. However, the school possess a greater correlation on the students' understanding about reproductive health. In conclusion, this research provides a foundation for further investigations into factors shaping adolescents' perspectives on reproductive health in diverse settings.

Keywords: reproductive health; knowledge; awareness; attitude; influence









PENGETAHUAN, KESEDARAN, DAN SIKAP TENTANG KESIHATAN REPRODUKTIF DALAM KALANGAN PELAJAR SEKOLAH MENENGAH

ABSTRAK

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Kata kunci: kesihatan reproduktif; pengetahuan; kesedaran; sikap; pengaruh











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LISTS OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	- Acquired Immunodeficiency
	Syndrome
CSE	- Comprehensive Sexuality
	Education
HIV	- Human Immunodeficiency Virus
LPPKN	- Lembaga Penduduk dan
	Pembangunan Keluarga Malaysia
SRH	- Sexual Reproductive Health
SRHE	- Sexual Reproductive Health
	Education
05-450683 STD pustaka.upsi.edu.my	Ferpustakeen Tuenku ^B Sexually Transmitted Disease
STI	- Sexually Transmitted Infection
UNU IIGH	- United Nations University
	International Institute for Global
	Health









CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

pustaka.upsi.edu.my F Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun Kampus Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah PustakaTBainun ftbupsi 05-4506832 In the dynamic landscape of adolescent development, high school students stand at the crossroads of self-discovery, forming opinions, and gaining knowledge that shapes their worldview (Adler, 2020). Reproductive health, a topic that is crucial, but sometimes overlooked plays a significant role in the life of a high school student. The significance of comprehensive education about reproductive health is extremely important because it does not only give them necessary information but also, it can help them in making smart choices and behave responsibly (Hisham Altalib, Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman, & Omar Altalib, 2013).

> As teenagers go through physical and emotional changes, it is crucial to have good reproductive health education. If the information is not up-to-date or incomplete, it can lead to misunderstandings, bad decisions, and health problems (Hisham Altalib





et al., 2013). Therefore, this study wants to figure out what high school students currently know and think about reproductive health. Additionally, the researcher wants to explore which factor correlates withs students' understanding about reproductive health.

The results of this study can help teachers, parents, healthcare professionals and policymakers to understand what high school students need when it comes to reproductive health. By highlighting what is going on now, this study contributes to making educational strategies better, so students can make smart choices, learn to respect each other, and stay healthy.

05-450681.2 Background of Study

Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun Kampus Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah

According to Omar R., in Malaysia, reproductive health education is informally taught to children in terms of appropriate personality traits such as 'feminine' or 'masculine'. This informal education is taught around the age of four and from Malay mothers to their Malay children (Nawal Nabilah Kamaludin, Rosediani Muhamad, Zainab Mat Yudin, & Rosnani Zakaria, 2022). They are also taught that there are topics that cannot be talked about which includes sexual intercourse, private body parts, reproductive organ functions, among others.

Implementing formal education about reproductive health in Malaysia's school curriculum was not easy. This dates back in 1989, where it was first integrated into the national curriculum for secondary schools while, primary schools 5 years later. At first,





modules related to reproductive health education were called as Family Health Education or Pendidikan Kesihatan Keluarga (1989 - 2002) and then changed to Sexuality Education or in Malay, Pendidikan Seksualiti (2003 - 2005), which received many critics to conservative society in Malaysia (Nawal Nabilah Kamaludin et al., 2022). Hence, it was then changed to different other terms and was settled to the term Health Education or Pendidikan Kesihatan which was used until now. Now, the subject related to biological, sociocultural, psychological, and spiritual aspects of sexuality have been introduced to students as a part of the syllabus in Science, Biology, Islamic education, and Moral education (Salmi Razali et al., 2017).

By equipping individuals with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes, it strives to minimize the occurrence of such problems and their associated negative consequences. However, while reproductive health education was already implemented in schools but the syllabus is not quite complete (Salmi Razali, et al., 2017), thus requires further review about reproductive health education where it lacks comprehensive explanation on sexual intercourse; where, when and whom to have, preventative measures for pregnancy and implications of sexual intercourse (Mohd Azri Suan, Adibah Hanim Ismail, & Haliza Ghazali, 2015). It also does not teach about comprehensive age-appropriate reproductive health education in schools that addresses body rights, sexually transmitted infections, contraception information, meaning of consent, and so on due to societal view on this topic.

Other than that, Malaysia is a country where the society is governed by traditions that children will learn significant knowledge in their lives through their daily life experiences, environments, social, and cultural norms. This causes parents or







guardians to not discuss openly about sexuality or reproductive or sex-related body functions with their children (Nawal Nabilah Kamaludin et al., 2022). According to previous studies, most adolescents preferred talking about their concerns regarding sexuality and relationships among their peers or colleagues rather than with their parents and guardians (Nurazzura Mohamad Diah & Suhaiza Samsudin, 2019). This creates a gap between children and parent when opening or discussing about certain topics as they may think the topic is a bit taboo or sensitive. As a result, children will grow up to have limited perspective on the essence of sexuality and reproductive health education due to cultural customs and limited conceptual understanding of religious beliefs (Nurazzura Mohamad Diah & Suhaiza Samsudin, 2019).

05-450681.3 Problem Statement

Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun Kampus Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah

Incorporating reproductive health education within the mainstream educational system and through informal education helps promote responsible and safe sexual behaviour, empowers individuals to protect their sexual and reproductive rights, and contributes to the overall well-being and development of individuals and communities (Hisham Altalib et al., 2013). Unfortunately, the statistics indicate a growing number of sexual reproductive issues among adolescents (Mohd Azri Suan et al., 2015). According to the latest Malaysian Population and Family Survey (MPFS) in 2014, it was found that Malaysian adolescents have insufficient knowledge about their reproductive organs (LPPKN, 2021). Only 55% of them were aware of the transmission of HIV/AIDS through sexual actions, and 73% had knowledge of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) transmitted through sexual intercourse (LPPKN, 2021).





Additionally, there has been an alarming increase in the number of unwanted pregnancies among students in Malaysia. It is estimated that around 18,000 underage girls become pregnant each year (Abdul Rahman Zulkarnain, Muhamad Nur Fariduddin, & Ching Sin Siau, 2021) (Mohd Azri Suan et al., 2015). A survey conducted by the Ministry of Health (MOH) in 2015 revealed that many female youths lacked proper knowledge about reproductive health. What is even more concerning is that they reported learning about the term "sexual" from online sources rather than from the school curriculum (Abdul Rahman Zulkarnain et al., 2021). These findings highlight the urgent need for improved sexual and reproductive health education among students in Malaysia. Therefore, in this study the researcher will explore the knowledge, awareness, and attitude about reproductive health among high school students and to determine which factor has more correlation on students' knowledge, awareness, and attitude about reproductive health (school or parents/guardians).

1.4 Objectives

As teenagers grow up, they go through a lot of changes both in their bodies and how they view the world (Jansson, 2005). Therefore, understanding what high school students know and think about reproductive health is important during this time. The researcher wants to explore their knowledge, awareness, and attitude about reproductive health because it helps the researcher to understand their current understanding on this topic. Since these years are crucial for their development, it is vital to figure out what factors play a significant role in shaping their views on





reproductive health (Abdul Rahman Zulkarnain et al., 2021). So, the goal of this study is to shed light on the current situation and find out what things are influencing high school students' understanding of reproductive health.

Therefore, the objectives of this study are:

- 1. To explore the knowledge, awareness, and attitude about reproductive health among high school students.
- 2. To determine which factor has more correlation on students' knowledge, awareness, and attitude about reproductive health (school or parents/guardians).

The first objective of this study is to explore what high school students know, understand, and think about reproductive health from different perspective. The researcher divides it into three subgroups to really understand which areas have a significant difference. Knowledge is more to factual understanding which encompasses biological aspects or reproductive health (Fowler, Koo, Richmond, Cree, & Asman, 2022). Awareness is a broader concept that encompasses factual knowledge and understanding the importance, implications, and context of reproductive health issues (Melaku, Berhane, Kinsman, & Reda, 2014). Attitudes involve their self-belief, practices, and perspective regarding reproductive health (Jansson, 2005). Therefore, this study aims to look at what they already know, how aware they are, and what attitude that they must give a complete picture of what high school students understand about reproductive health.

The second objective is to find out who has the most impact on what high school students know and think about reproductive health. Understanding what factors





influence high school students' knowledge, awareness, and attitude about reproductive health helps to connect the identified problem (Hisham Altalib et al., 2013). This investigation allows for a deeper understanding of the impact that both education and family have on students. By figuring out these correlations, we can better understand why reproductive health issues such as unwanted pregnancies, might be on the rise and how and who we can address them (Abdul Rahman Zulkarnain et al., 2021). Understanding this will help make reproductive health education better in the future.

1.5 Research Questions

Therefore, the research questions are as follows:

- 1. To what extent do high school students possess knowledge, awareness, and 05-4506832 attitude regarding reproductive health?
 - 2. Between schools and parents/guardians, which factor has more correlation on students' knowledge, awareness, and attitude about reproductive health?

1.6 Conceptual Framework of Study

The researcher conducted this study to investigate high school students' understanding and perspectives on reproductive health. The study aimed to determine whether parental influence or school education has a stronger correlation with students' knowledge, awareness, and attitudes toward reproductive health. The findings of this study provide



valuable insights for future researchers aiming to comprehend the current state of reproductive health knowledge and the reasons behind its persistent challenges. Additionally, it offers guidance for addressing misconceptions in educational approaches related to reproductive health.

Diagram 1.1: Conceptual Framework of Study

Input:

the knowledge, Explore 1. awareness, and attitudes about RH among high school students.

2. Explain which factor has more correlation in the knowledge, awareness, and attitude about reproductive health (parents or school)



Output:

1. Understanding the current knowledge, awareness, and attitude about RH.

2. Understand why RH issues are on rise.

3. Offers valuable insights to future researchers to address misconceptions in education.







1.7 Importance of Study

In the context of Malaysia, it is crucial for high school students to have comprehensive knowledge, positive attitudes, and awareness regarding their sexual and reproductive health. This is particularly important because many students are unmarried, and their engagement in premarital sexual activities can potentially result in unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) due to a lack of understanding about safe sex and contraception (Abdul Rahman Zulkarnain et al., 2021).

Understanding the knowledge, awareness, and attitude of high school students regarding reproductive health education can provide valuable insights for researchers. It allows for a comprehensive understanding of the students' perspectives and sheds light on their practices and beliefs surrounding this important subject matter. Such insights can further guide future researchers in addressing and rectifying potential misconceptions related to reproductive health education among students.

By conducting research that explores students' knowledge, awareness, and attitude on reproductive health education, researchers can gain valuable information about the effectiveness of current educational approaches, identify gaps in knowledge, and uncover common misconceptions (Abdul Rahman Zulkarnain et al., 2021). This data can then be utilized to develop evidence-based strategies and interventions aimed at improving reproductive health education programs tailored to the specific needs of high school students.





The findings obtained from research on students' attitude about reproductive health education can also contribute to the formulation of policies and curriculum development (Adler, 2020). Understanding the perspectives and concerns of students allows for the inclusion of relevant and culturally sensitive content, which in turn promotes the delivery of comprehensive and relevant reproductive health education.

Moreover, addressing misconceptions and providing accurate information to students is essential in ensuring they have the necessary knowledge and skills to make informed decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive health (Hisham Altalib et al., 2013). By bridging the gap between misconceptions and accurate information, future researchers can play a vital role in empowering students to adopt responsible behaviours, prevent unintended pregnancies, and protect themselves from STDs.

In summary, investigating the knowledge, awareness, and attitude of high school students regarding reproductive health education is a crucial step towards advancing the field of sexual and reproductive health. The insights gained from such research can inform future studies, aid in the improvement of educational programs, and contribute to the overall well-being and empowerment of students.

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1.8 Limitations of Study

One potential limitation of this study is it only includes a specific demographic group. In this case, the study focused on high school students in Sabah, encompassing students from form four in Kota Belud. It is important to acknowledge that the findings of the





study may vary if the research were to be conducted in different schools or different region primarily due to differences in lifestyle, socioeconomic factors, and other sociodemographic backgrounds among students.

The choice of only one school might not be representative of the entire high school student population in Sabah. Each school or region may have unique characteristics and circumstances that could influence students' knowledge, awareness, and attitude regarding reproductive health education. Factors such as cultural norms, religious beliefs, and socioeconomic disparities can significantly impact the understanding and perceptions of students in different contexts.

To mitigate this limitation, future researchers could consider conducting studies So of the section of various socioeconomic backgrounds and cultural contexts. This would help capture a more comprehensive picture of students' knowledge, awareness, and attitude regarding reproductive health education in Malaysia, thereby enhancing the overall validity and generalizability of the research findings.

1.9 Operational Definition

a) Reproductive Health

Reproductive health encompasses the holistic well-being of individuals, encompassing their physical, mental, and social dimensions, rather than simply the absence of illness or disability, concerning all aspects pertaining to the reproductive system, its functions,





and processes. The attainment of sexual health or reproductive health for both men and women relies upon several key factors including access to accurate and comprehensive information on sex and sexuality, awareness of the risks and consequences of unprotected sexual activity, availability of sexual health care services, and living in a supportive environment that promotes reproductive health (WHO, 2019).

b) High school students

A high school student is a person that enrols in a or attends high school. In Malaysia, high school students are 13 - 17 years old.

1.10 Summary

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pustaka.upsi.edu.my This chapter discusses about the aspect of knowledge, awareness, or attitude of high school students about reproductive health despite the implementation of reproductive health education here in Malaysia and being informally taught about this topic by their parents or guardians. This study is formed because of the statistics that indicates a growing number of sexual reproductive issues among students and lack of proper knowledge about reproductive health among high school students. There are two objectives in this research that are proposed and adapted to the method of data collection by questionnaire.



