

## DETERMINANT OF CYBERSEX BEHAVIOR AMONG EARLY ADOLESCENCES IN MAKASSAR INDONESIA

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### ABSTRACT

*The Internet has changed the socio-cultural order of life; even more extreme can change the pattern of sexual behavior of its users as the internet sites containing pornographic materials or called cybersex. The study was aimed to determine factors related to cybersex behavior in early adolescences in School-X Makassar. The study was quantitative research using a descriptive approach involving all students of School-X Makassar as research population with the total number of samples as many as 306 students consisting of classes of VII, VIII, and IX. The proportional stratified sampling is applied as a sampling technique. The result showed that 42.5% of the students had positive behavior and 57.5% indicated negative behavior. Majority of the students had a good knowledge of cybersex (84%). In addition, 95.8% of the students had a positive attitude and 4.2% had a negative attitude. Other factors contributed significantly to cybersex among students were accessibility (89.9%), affordability (62.4%), and peer group influence (51%), although parental control remains high (90.5%). Parents and school should improve their supervision to early adolescents in the use of mobile/smartphones at home and school. Sexual education both at home and at school should be integrated into religious values. One effort should be applied by the school is to develop various extra curriculum to reinforce students' peer group activities.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Cybersex Behavior, Early Adolescences, Accessibility, Privacy, Affordability*

### INTRODUCTION

Use of the internet can play important role in changing personal and social behaviors. The internet's sites have made its users easy to search information, pictures, and video streaming and found partners (Jufri, 2005). The internet provides a wide range of information for its users including pornographic materials, sexual content, cybersex or virtualsex.

There are three types of sexual media using the internet, named internet sites, chatting room and video calls (Cooper, 2002). Overuse of cybersex on the internet can cause its users to get addiction (Saliceti, 2014). The study conducted by the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (Komisi Perlindungan Anak Indonesia/KPAI) reported that 92.7% of junior high school has done kissing and oral sex, 61% had sexual intercourse. Other findings by KPAI showed that 21.2% of female students of senior high school done abortion and majority have exposed cybersex. It implies that cybersex has become triggers of sexual behavior deviation which is impacted to adolescence reproductive health. Another research showed that 67% of cybersex users are recreational users, 29% are risk users, and 4% are sexual compulsive users (Sari & Purba, 2012).

The objectives of this study were to explore cybersex behaviors of early adolescences in Makassar city. Furthermore, this research looked into aspects of knowledge, attitude, accessibility, anonymity/privacy, affordability, peer group influence, and parental control.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Cybersex behavior, especially among adolescences, is an attractive topic to be discussed because of the challenging nature of the issue nowadays. Seven factors are emerged to have a clear understanding of cybersex behaviors in early adolescences. The increasing trends of cybersex among adolescence become serious health behavior attention.

The lack of information of sexual health and reproductive health had made young people or adolescences will try to find information by their self. The easiest information to be accessed is through the internet or online service. However, there is no guarantee that information provided on the internet is suitable with their age. This becomes the main reason why many of adolescences involve in online sexual activities and cybersex. Ideally, parents and schools are the best primary sexual health educators for adolescences but often due to cultural hurdles and reluctance to discuss sex-related issues make the information of sexual health do not reach to children and young people prompt and properly. (Langhaug LF, 2003), (Mturi AJ, 2005), (Wamoyi J, 2010). Therefore, parents as first sexual educators should have sexual-education parenting skills (Wamoyi J., 2011)for children to transfer the right information of reproductive health to prevent cybersex behavior.

It is recognized that there are many contributing factors when determining cybersex behavior. However, this study just limited to some predisposing, enabling and reinforcing aspects(Green LW, 2006). Predisposing aspects included knowledge and attitude, enabling factors involved accessibility, privacy and affordability, and the last, reinforcing factors explored peer group influence and parents' control.

## METHODOLOGY

This research used quantitative design with a cross-sectional approach(Sugiyono, 2011)(Cottrell RR, 2005). The data used for this study were collected from School-X, one of the schools in Makassar for three months. A survey was conducted using the questionnaire to gather information about determinant factors including knowledge and attitude, accessibility and affordability aspects, peer group influence and parental control. Cybersex behavior was defined in positive and negative behaviors. Positive behavior was students who had ever accessed virtual sex content on the internet, while negative behavior was students who had never accessed virtual sex content on the internet.

Data were collected using stratified proportional random sampling of students in grade VII, VIII, and IX who owned handphones or smartphones. A sample of the study was 306 samples, withdrawal from 1326 students. After data collection, data were categorized into cross tabulation, frequency, and distribution. Data were analyzed using to test the relation between cybersex behaviors and independent variables and then presented in a descriptive method.

## RESULTS

The background characteristics of the students who surveyed were shown in Table 1. The background characteristics included age, sex, and grade. The age range was between 13 and 16 years (mean = 13.73). There were 55.6% males and 44.4% females (170 and 136 students, respectively). Samples derived from grade VII to grade IX. The major students were from grade IX (108 students). Table 1 identified that nearly half of the students had positive cybersex behavior (42.5%) and the rest indicated negative behavior (57.5%).

Table 2 showed the scores in knowledge, attitude, accessibility and affordability aspects, peer group influence and parental control among adolescents by grades and sex. It showed that a majority of respondents had a good knowledge and positive attitude about cybersex (83.7% and 95.4%, respectively).

Regarding accessibility of pornographic or cybersex content using smartphones, the majority of respondents were having high access with a percentage of 89.9%. It indicated that they could easily get cybersex materials through the website. This result was positively correlated with affordability to access cybersex. In term of affordability to access cybersex, 62.4% of respondents were affordable to reach cybersex content, although most of the respondents (77.8%) did not have enough privacy or less privacy.

The other important findings of the study were about to peer group influence and parental control. More than fifty percents students said that peer group said that peer group had high influence (51%) to cybersex behaviors. This result depicted that peer group plays important roles in enforcing cybersex behaviors of the students. Although in contrast, parents' control had performed good supervision (90.5%).

Comparing between males and females, males tended to have higher scores in all determinant factors. Table 2 also showed that there were statistically significant results among factors of attitude, accessibility, privacy, affordability, and peer group influence ( $p < 0.05$ ), while knowledge and parental control were statistically not significant factors toward cybersex behaviors ( $p > 0.05$ ).

## DISCUSSIONS

This study found that majority of respondents (83.7%) had good knowledge of cybersex. The results indicated that the students had a good score for knowledge of definition, signs, and types of cybersex. This was not surprising because most of the students had experiences on internet use. However, these experiences not only introduced students with many pictures and pornographic content which can be found on many websites, blogs, and social media but also resulted in internet dependency. Internet dependency can cause internet addiction disorder which drives people to overuse the internet (Saliceti, 2014). Moreover, it was predicted towards cybersex addiction as results of sexual arousal from virtual pornographic content (Laier, 2013).

In term of attitude, this study identified that 292 (95.4%) of students had a positive attitude toward cybersex behaviors. The similar results also reported by Byers & Shaughnessy (2014) in their study that individuals who engaged in more frequent with online sexual activity will more likely to have a positive attitude. Majority respondents of this study perceived

that pornographic sites should not be accessed by adolescences or students because they are not mature enough. However, availability of cybersex materials and pornographic content from websites, blogs, and social media had made open access for respondents to obtain cybersex and pornographic things. Almost all respondents (89.9%) could afford internet cybersex easily. The users of cybersex usually accessed pornographic content freely and privately although they are not mature enough. In fact, an internet café or smartphones, there are no rules in age limitation and access prohibition and other rules that forbid internet cybersex (Frankenthal, 2012).

Comparing between male and female users of cybersex, this study described that male was having a higher score than female (55.6% and 44.4%, respectively). This finding was in line with a study by Weinstein et.al (2015) indicated that men were having a higher frequency of cybersex use than women. (Weinstein, Zolek, Babkin, Cohen, & Lejoyeux, April 2015). Hurlock (2004) explained that one of the many reasons why males had a higher sexual tendency or sexual desires because of hormonal difference. A number of sexual hormones of male (testosterone) are 20 times higher than of females (Hurlock, 2004), (Kusmiran, 2010).

Data also demonstrated that peer groups had significant influence toward cybersex behaviors, although parents' control remained in good control and supervision. Consistent with the previous study by Negeri who found that youths' behavior is affected by parents and peers(Negeri, 2014). Rimington and Gast in their study suggested to increase health education about the danger of cybersex and abuse and to include health education into school curricula to increase awareness of potential addiction (Rimington & Gast, 2007).

The family is a main social structure for children. Within the family, the child learns various things in order to adapt to the culture in the neighborhood. (Lestari, 2012). Therefore, parents have important roles to control their children to negative behaviors, including cybersex behaviors. Parental control and monitoring of adolescences sexual behavior are importantly needed to prevent children from unwanted sexual behavior disorder.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Parents and school should improve their supervision to early adolescents in the use of mobile phones/smartphones at home and school. Sexual education both at home and at school should be integrated into religious values. One effort should be applied by the school is to develop various extra curriculum to reinforce students' peer group activities.

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**Table 1: Participants in Research by Age Sex and Grade**

Characteristics	n	Percent (%)
Age:		
13 years	147	48.0
14 years	97	31.7
15 years	60	19.6
16 years	2	0.7
Sex:		
Male	170	55.6
Female	136	44.4
Grade:		
VII	104	34.0
VIII	94	30.7
IX	108	35.3
Cybersex Behaviors:		
Positive	130	42.5
Negative	176	57.5

Table 2: Determinant Factors of Cybersex Behaviors by Grade &amp; Sex

Factors	Grade			Sex		Total (n=306)		p value
	VII	VIII	IX	Male	Female	n	%	
Knowledge:								.068
High	97	69	90	152	104	256	83.7	
Low	7	25	18	18	32	50	16.3	
Attitude:								.000
Positive	100	89	103	158	134	292	95.4	
Negative	4	5	103	12	2	14	4.6	
Accessibility:								.000
High	94	80	101	158	117	275	89.9	
Low	10	14	7	12	19	31	10.1	
Privacy/anonymity:								.000
High	26	20	22	50	18	68	22.2	
Low	78	74	86	120	118	238	77.8	
Affordability								.001
Affordable	73	46	72	121	70	191	62.4	
Not Af- fordable	31	48	36	49	66	115	37.6	
Peer Group Influence:								.000
High	57	41	58	117	39	156	51.0	
Low	47	53	50	53	97	150	49.0	

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