

The Relationship Between Parent-Adolescent Communication and Adolescents' Self-Protection Skills Against Sexual Violence in Medan City

Afrila Syahrani¹, Dewi Elizadiani Suza^{2*}

¹Faculty of Nursing, University of North Sumatera, Medan, Indonesia

²Faculty of Nursing, University of North Sumatera, Departement of Pediatric Nursing, Medan, Indonesia

Email corresponding: dewi1@usu.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Sexual violence is a forced sexual act without consent and has consequences for health problems, namely reproductive health, physical health, and mental health, which can be felt in the short and long term. It has become a global issue that requires immediate attention. This study aims to analyze the relationship between parent-adolescent communication and adolescents' ability to protect themselves against sexual violence in Medan City. The research employs a quantitative approach using a descriptive correlation method, involving 52 respondents-students in grades X and XI at MAS Al-Jamiyatul Washliyah school in Medan City-selected through purposive sampling. The Chi-Square test was utilized for data analysis. Research data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires using the google form application in May 2024, and computerized data processing using SPSS with univariate and bivariate data analysis. The findings revealed that 73.1% of respondents exhibited good parent-adolescent communication, 98.1% demonstrated effective self-protection skills, and 94.2% were considered at low risk of sexual violence. The results of the Chi-Square test indicated a significant relationship between parent-adolescent communication and the incidence of sexual violence, with a p-value of 0.003 ($\alpha = 0.05$). However, there was no significant relationship found between adolescents' self-protection skills and the risk of sexual violence, as indicated by a p-value of 0.803 ($\alpha = 0.05$). In conclusion, both parent-adolescent communication and self-protection skills are essential preventive measures against sexual violence. It is expected that schools can provide education related to the importance of parent-adolescent communication to prevent sexual violence.

Keywords: adolescent, communication, parents, sexual violence, students

INTRODUCTION

Sexual violence is a very serious human rights violation and a global problem. Sexual violence has an impact on a person's physical health, reproductive health, and mental health, which requires treatment (WHO, 2017). Physical contact is not the only cause of sexual violence. It can also occur when accompanied by other forms of violence, such as inappropriate sexual images. In this case, adolescence is very vulnerable, especially for women (Torazzi et al., 2021).

Globally, 15 million adolescent girls aged 15-19 are forced into sexual contact and data from 30 countries show that only 1% of them seek professional help, showing how dangerous sexual

violence is to adolescents (Thomas et al., 2022). Based on research Lestari and Herliana (2020), it was found that the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) received reports of 608 cases of sexual violence in 2017. In 2019, the number increased by 71 cases to 679 cases. In Medan City, cases of sexual harassment and violence often occur. Many media outlets have highlighted cases of sexual violence that have occurred, especially among adolescent students. This is in line with the research of Handayani et al. (2023), it was found that based on age, many who experienced sexual violence in Medan City were womwn aged 15-18 years.

Sexual violence in adolescents is caused by various factors, including family disharmony between parents and children, poor parenting, easy access to pornographic content, high poverty, and unemployment rates, and has been a victim of sexual violence in childhood (Tenkorang et al., 2021). Sexual violence can affect adolescent development, including physical, mental, and psychosocial development, and have the possibility of experiencing depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, eating disorders, and social isolation, which can persist into adulthood (Bachri & Putri, 2023). In addition, not only the victims are affected but also the people who live around them, and very high medical costs have a significant impact on the family (Verelst et al., 2020).

In most cases of sexual violence, the perpetrators are men and people close to the victim, such as uncles, grandfathers, fathers, teachers, boyfriends, and peers. Men are more likely to commit sexual violence against women if they have certain personality and character traits, such as being a member of a gang, using drugs or medication, having an antisocial personality, having experienced physical or sexual violence in the past, and having a low level of education (Cezimbra et al., 2020).

Parents are the foremost and main party in protecting adolesecent from sexual violence. Although most family members are known as the main perpetrators, protecting adolescents against sexual violence is a fundamental task of parents (Berkmen, 2022). This aligns with studies conducted by Citak Tunc et al. (2018), which states that parents are effective personal safety instructors.

According to Gustina (2017), the step that must be taken in determining how an adolescent can protect themselves from sexual violence is communication that occurs in the family, namely between parents and adolescents. As parents, they must have good and effective communication skills with adolescents so that the message can be conveyed well and adolescents can receive messages conveyed by parents. According to Sloover et al., (2024)

research, because it ensures healthy conduct and educated decision-making and serves to safeguard adolescent sexual health, parent-adolescent communication around sexual matters is considered a crucial stage in adolescent growth and well-being.

Things that can be done to establish effective interpersonal communication between parents and adolescents using self-disclosure must also be followed by applying a listening attitude because listening can mean paying attention, understanding, evaluating stimulus that we receive. This means that in educating children related to communication, it is very important to listen to feelings, because what is felt by others is much more meaningful and affects what is done than what is thought (Septiani, 2021). Adolescent who are unable to defend themselves against sexual violence are more likely to become victims (Wulandari et al., 2020). On the other hand, adolescents with excellent self-defense skills are thought to be able to identify sexual violence and differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate physical touch, which increases their sense of self-worth and comfort.

Based on a literature review there are still many cases of sexual violence in adolescents, especially for women. This is because communication between parents and adolescents has not been carried out properly and effectively regarding sexual problems in adolescents. As well as the lack of self-protection skills of adolescents against sexual violence, adolescents become vulnerable to cases of sexual violence. This study is different from previous studies which only concentrated on the relationship between parent-adolescent communication and sexual violence. This study adds a new factor that aims to determine the relationship of adolescent self-protection skills to sexual violence. Based on this background, the authors are interested in conducting research with the title “The Relationship between parent-adolescent communication and adolescent self-protection skills against sexual violence in Medan City”.

METHODS

Research Design

The research design used in this study is quantitative, specifically the descriptive correlation method. This research was conducted from November 2023 to May 2024.

Respondent Characteristic

This study was conducted in one of the private schools in Medan City involving 52 respondents, namely X and XI grade female students. The characteristics of the respondents must meet the inclusion criteria of the study, namely adolescent female with an age range of

15-17 years, living with parents or guardians, present for the research and ready to participate as a respondent. The exclusion criteria in this study were male adolescents, not living with parents or guardians, not present for the research and not ready to participate as a respondent.

Sampling Technique and Instrument

The sampling technique used in sampling in this study was purposive sampling where the sample selection was based on the researcher's judgment or in accordance with the inclusion criteria set by the researcher so that a total sample of 52 respondents was obtained (Polit & Beck, 2018). A three-part questionnaire was used to measure parent-adolescent communication, adolescent self-protection skills, and sexual violence, and an additional questionnaire was used to obtain demographic data. The researcher developed his own questionnaire based on various types of theories related to the research variables.

The reliability test on this research instrument uses Cronbach's Alpha. The instrument is declared to have a satisfactory interpretation value of 0.70 but is considered more satisfactory if Cronbach's Alpha ≥ 0.80 (Polit & Beck, 2018). The reliability value in this study was obtained 0.95 by using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient.

Data Collection and Analysis

Researchers collected data at one of the private schools in Medan City. The data collection method was carried out by distributing questionnaires through Google Forms, and previous observations had been made. Research data collection was carried out after obtaining a permission letter from the Faculty of Nursing, University of North Sumatra; then, the researcher gave the permission letter to the school by providing an explanation of the research so that the researcher could conduct research at the school.

Data was collected in May 2024, at the time of collecting data, the researcher gave a brief introduction before explaining the objectives, benefits, and research protocols to respondents who met the inclusion requirements and were ready to participate. During the data collection process, the researcher was assisted by two students of the Faculty of Nursing, University of North Sumatra, who acted as research assistants. Before starting data collection, the researcher told the research assistants what to learn and do.

When filling out the questionnaire, a three-part questionnaire was used to measure parent-adolescent communication, adolescent self-protection skills, and sexual violence, and an additional questionnaire was used to obtain demographic data. The researcher developed his own questionnaire based on various types of theories related to the research variables. The

researcher asked the respondents for permission to agree by clicking the "Yes" column available on Google form as informed consent for the study. The researcher also explained the procedure for filling out the questionnaire before all filled out the statement until the researcher invited the respondents to fill out the questionnaire. The researcher allowed the respondents to ask questions related to the contents of the questionnaire that were not yet understood. After the respondents finished filling out the questionnaire, the researcher and assistant checked the completeness of the respondent data. Data collection lasted for 15 minutes.

In this study, the frequency distribution of respondent characteristics and the results of filling out the questionnaire were used to analyze the data. Data analysis includes univariate and bivariate. Bivariate analysis using Chi-Square. The results of the Chi-Square test showed that there was a relationship between parent-adolescent communication and sexual violence with a p-value of 0.003 ($\alpha = 0.05$), and there was no relationship between adolescent self-protection skills against sexual violence with a p-value of 0.803 ($\alpha = 0.05$).

Ethical Consideration

Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Supervisory Board of the University of North Sumatra No. 553/KEPK/USU/2024. In addition, research permits were obtained from the Dean of the Faculty of Nursing No. 964/UN5.2.1.13/SPB/2024, and research site permits were obtained from Principal No. 799/MAS.AW/UM/V/2024. Furthermore, each respondent was informed of the purpose of the study by the researcher, and only those who agreed to participate were included. The data collection technique was done through direct consent from the students and the school. Although parental consent was not obtained, the researcher guaranteed the conduct of the study following ethical standard, including maintaining confidentiality of identity and giving participants the full right to refuse or stop participation at any time.

RESULTS

The results of the frequency distribution analysis can be seen in Table 1. It was found that based on age, the majority of respondents were 16 years old, namely 30 people (57.7%). Based on parental occupation, the majority of respondents' parents worked as farmers, namely 42 people (80.8%). Based on parental status, all respondents lived with their biological parents, namely 52 people (100%). Based on education, the majority of respondents' parents had a high school education, namely 26 people (50.0%). Based on income, the majority of respondents' parents had an income of >2,500,000, namely 19 people (36.5%), and the majority of respondents had a range of 1-3 siblings, namely 30 people (57.7%).

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondent's Characteristic

Characteristics	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age		
15 years	6	11.5
16 years	30	57.7
17 years	16	30.8
Class		
X	24	46.2
XI	28	53.8
Parent's Occupation		
PNS	10	19.2
Farmers	42	80.8
Parent Status		
Birth Parents	52	100.0
Parents' Last Education		
SMP	4	7.7
SMA	26	50.0
D3	2	3.8
S1	16	30.8
S2	4	7.7
Parents' Income		
<500.000	17	32.7
500.000-2.500.000	16	30.8
>2.500.000	19	36.5
Number of Siblings		
1-3	30	57.7
4-6	21	40.4
7-9	1	1.9

Can be seen in Table 2. Respondents who have communication between parents and adolescents in the good category are 38 people (73.1%) and 14 people (26.9%) in the bad category.

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Parent-Adolescent Communication

Parent-Adolescent Communication	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Good	38	73.1
Bad	14	26.9
Total	52	100.0

Can be seen in Table 3. Respondents who have self-protection skills in the good category are 51 people (98.1%) and 1 person (1.9%) has bad categories.

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Adolescent Self-Protection Skills

Adolescent Self-Protection Skills	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Good	51	98.1
Bad	1	1.9
Total	52	100.0

Can be seen in Table 4. Respondents who have a low-risk category for sexual violence are 49 people (94.2%), and the high-risk category is 3 people (5.8%).

Table 4. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Sexual Violence

Sexual Violence	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
High Risk	3	5.8
Low Risk	49	94.2
Total	52	100.0

Can be seen in Table 5. The findings of this study are based on the results of the Chi-Square test, obtained a p-value of 0.003 ($\alpha = 0.05$); it is concluded that there is a relationship between parent-adolescent communication and sexual violence in Medan City. Poor parent-adolescent communication will be at risk of sexual violence. The better the parent-adolescent communication, the lower the risk of sexual violence.

Table 5. The Relationship Between Parent-Adolescent Communication and Sexual Violence

Parent-Adolescent Communication	Sexual Violence						Total		p-value
	Low Risk		Medium Risk		High Risk				
	f	(%)	f	(%)	f	(%)	f	(%)	
Good	38	73.0	0	0	0	0	38	77.6	0.003
Less Good	11	21.2	0	0	3	5.8	14	22.4	
Total	49	94.2	0	0	3	5.8	52	100.0	

Can be seen in Table 6. The study's findings have been based on the chi-square test, which obtained a p-value of 0.803 ($\alpha = 0.05$); it is concluded that there is no relationship between adolescent self-protection skills and sexual violence in Medan City. There is no sufficient evidence to conclude that the better adolescent self-protection skills, the lower the risk of sexual violence. A p-value greater than 0.05 indicates that this result could have occurred by chance.

Table 6. The Relationship Between Adolescent Self-Protection Skills and Sexual Violence

Adolescent Self-Protection Skills	Sexual Violence						Total		p-value
	Low Risk		Medium Risk		High Risk				
	f	(%)	f	(%)	f	(%)	f	(%)	
Good	48	92.3	0	0	3	5.8	38	98.1	0.803
Enough	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Bad	1	1.9	0	0	0	0	0	1.9	
Total	49	94.2	0	0	3	5.8	52	100.0	

DISCUSSION

Parent-Adolescent Communication

Parent-adolescent communication is the ultimate solution to resolving sexual violence cases. One way to begin is by fostering open communication among teachers, parents, the community, and children. In this case, the tripartite education center is one of the important factors in handling cases of sexual violence in adolescents (Septiani, 2021). In this study, more than half of the respondents, half of the respondents as many as 26 people (50%) indicated that parent-adolescents had communicated regarding body privacy and warned their adolescents not to accept gifts from strangers or go to places with unknown people without parental permission.

According to research conducted by Mataraarachchi et al. (2024) that parents who have a good understanding of sexual violence issues tend to be better able to recognize risk factors, provide appropriate information, and establish effective communication with adolescents, which overall strengthens the protection system in the family environment. This is in line with the findings in this study, which showed that the level of parent-adolescent communication was in the good category, where most parents were able to communicate to their adolescents about warnings that could risk sexual violence. This finding implies that effective communication between parents and adolescents plays a crucial role in sexual violence prevention efforts, so preventive interventions need to actively involve families as key partners. Therefore, the tripartite approach involving schools, families and communities should be strengthened through training and education programs for parents to improve their understanding of sexual violence issues and their ability to convey appropriate information to their adolescents.

Adolescent Self-Protection Skills

In this study, it was found that indicators of self-protection skills have different levels of ability. However, the majority of respondents, 45 people (85.6%), showed the ability to avoid invitations to watch sexual content and can choose a safe place if they are in an environment that has the potential to commit acts of sexual violence. In addition, 42 people (80.8%) can report to the perpetrator to get appropriate punishment. The study's findings indicate that developing appropriate self-protection skills can keep adolescents away from perpetrators of sexual violence. Based on research by Wulandari et al. (2020), it states that adolescents who are proficient in self-defense will be able to identify situations that can lead to sexual violence and can distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate physical contact. They also have greater self-control and self-confidence and feel protected and comfortable. Meanwhile,

adolescents who have poor self-protection skills are caused by various factors including a lack of comprehensive sexual education, lack of support and understanding from the family environment, lack of access to information and resources that can help adolescents develop self-protection skills (Maurida & Silvanasari, 2023).

Sexual Violence

Violence very often occurs in everyday life both in the family, community and peer environment. Violence is basically a reality that exists today, which states that violence against women is still quite a lot and often occurs whenever and wherever (Handayani et al., 2023). This study shows that the risk of sexual violence is in the low category, this is due to the ability of parents-adolescents to communicate the issue of sexual violence properly and the ability of adolescents to reject invitations from strangers so that adolescents can avoid sexual violence behavior. This is also supported by research conducted AlRammah et al. (2019), that parent-adolescent communication related to sexual violence if it goes well will reduce the risk of sexual violence, because parents are the main protectors for their adolescents, especially from sexual violence (Maurida & Silvanasari, 2023), which states that the development of good self-protection skills can be a factor in reducing the risk of sexual violence for adolescent.

Success in preventing sexual violence against adolescents depends on two things: the level of communication between parents-adolescents and the self-protection skills of adolescents. For this reason, intervention programs in child protection must involve and pay attention to the role of the family through the implementation of open and educative communication. In addition, curriculum makers in schools and other related institutions should develop a comprehensive sexual education curriculum that strengthens adolescents' self-protection skills. Policies and programs in this regard need to be based on tripartites approach that involve schools, families and communities to be able to provide protection and create an environment that supports adolescents in facing the risk of sexual violence.

LIMITATION

The fact that this study still has limitations, especially in the instruments made by the researcher himself based on the theory, so the data obtained may still have shortcomings. The results of the Chi-Square test were found between variables x and y, which may have a significant relationship, but the relationship is very weak, so it is not statistically significant. This can also be caused by the limitations of less diverse respondents.

CONCLUSION

Communication between parents and adolescents has a significant relationship with the risk of sexual violence, where the better communication, the lower the risk faced by adolescents. In contrast, adolescent self-protection skills did not show a significant relationship with sexual violence, although improving these skills still contributed to reducing the risk. Therefore, efforts to prevent sexual violence in Medan City must prioritize improving parent-adolescent communication that is in line with strengthening adolescent self-protection skills. In general, the majority of respondents in this study showed good communication, adequate self-protection skills, and a low risk of sexual violence. For this reason, schools need to involve parents in education about sexual violence, for example through seminars, family counseling, or relevant educational modules, to strengthen the role of families in preventing sexual violence in adolescents.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to thank all respondents who were willing to participate and all parties involved in helping the research process to completion.

REFERENCES

- AlRammah, A. A., Alqahtani, S. M., Al-Saleh, S. S., Wajid, S., Babiker, A. G., Al-Mana, A. A. K., & Al-shammari, H. H. (2019). Parent-child communication and preventive practices for child sexual abuse among the general population: A community-based study. *Journal of Taibah University Medical Sciences*, 14(4), 363–369. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtumed.2019.06.005>
- Bachri, Y., & Putri, M. (2023). Pengaruh paket edukasi terhadap pengetahuan remaja tentang pencegahan kekerasan seksual. *Jurnal Keperawatan Jiwa (JKJ): Persatuan Perawat Nasional Indonesia*, 11(2), 487–490.
- Berkmen, B. (2022). Examining the awareness levels of parents on child sexual abuse. *Journal of Indian Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 18(4), 348–357. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09731342231156498>
- Cezimbra, G. S. S., Campos Junior, D., Araujo Júnior, E., Guazzelli, C. A. F., & Atallah, Á. N. (2020). Increased vulnerability to pregnancy and sexual violence in adolescents with precocious menstruation. *International Journal of Reproductive Medicine*, 2020, 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2020/5237814>
- Citak Tunc, G., Gorak, G., Ozyazicioglu, N., Ak, B., Isil, O., & Vural, P. (2018). Preventing child sexual abuse: Body safety training for young children in Turkey. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 27(4), 347–364. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2018.1477001>
- Gustina, E. (2017). Komunikasi orangtua-remaja dan pendidikan orangtua dengan perilaku seksual berisiko pada remaja. *Unnes Journal of Public Health*, 6(2), 131. <https://doi.org/10.15294/ujph.v6i2.13734>
- Handayani, L., Ritonga, M., Parinduri, A. G., & Fathurrahman, H. (2023). Gambaran karakteristik kasus kekerasan seksual yang diperiksa di RS Bhayangkara Tingkat II Medan pada Tahun 2020-2021. *Jurnal Ilmiah Kohesi*, 7(4), 281–285.

- Lestari, N. E., & Herliana, I. (2020). Implementasi pendidikan seksual sejak dini melalui audio visual. *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Indonesia Maju*, 1(01), 29–33. <https://doi.org/10.33221/jpmim.v1i01.566>
- Mataraarachchi, D., Buddhika Mahesh, P. K., Pathirana, T. E. A., & Vithana, P. V. S. C. (2024). Development and implementation of a worksite-based intervention to improve mothers' knowledge, attitudes, and skills in sharing information with their adolescent daughters on preventing sexual violence: Lessons learned in a developing setting, Sri Lanka. *BMC Public Health*, 24(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-024-18416-x>
- Maurida, N., & Silvanasari, I. A. (2023). Personal safety skills as a prevention of sexual violence in adolescent women. *Jurnal Kesehatan Dr. Soebandi*, 11(1), 23–30. <https://doi.org/10.36858/jkds.v11i1.415>
- Polit, D. F., & Beck, C. T. (2018). Essentials of nursing research appraising evidence for nursing practice: Ninth Edition. Wolters Kluwer.
- Septiani, R. D. (2021). Pentingnya komunikasi keluarga dalam pencegahan kasus kekerasan seks pada anak usia dini. *Jurnal Pendidikan Anak*, 10(1), 50–58. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jpa.v10i1.40031>
- Tenkorang, E. Y., Amo-Adjei, J., Kumi-Kyereme, A., & Kundhi, G. (2021). Determinants of sexual violence at sexual debut against in-school adolescents in Ghana. *Journal of Family Violence*, 36(7), 813–824. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-020-00220-x>
- Thomas, T. M., George, S., Sarma, U. A., Prabhakar, B., & Menon, J. A. (2022). Predictors of resilience among survivors of child sexual abuse in institutional care in Kerala, India. *Journal of Indian Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 18(1), 54–62. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09731342221096497>
- Torazzi, E., Merelli, V., Barbara, G., Kustermann, A., Marasciuolo, L., Collini, F., & Cattaneo, C. (2021). Similarity and differences in sexual violence against adolescents and adult women: The need to focus on adolescent victims. *Journal of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology*, 34(3), 302–310. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpjag.2020.11.018>
- Verelst, A., Bal, S., De Schryver, M., Say Kana, N., Broekaert, E., & Derluyn, I. (2020). The impact of avoidant/disengagement coping and social support on the mental health of adolescent victims of sexual violence in Eastern Congo. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 11(June), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsy.2020.00382>
- WHO. (2017). *Responding to children and adolescents who have been sexually abused who clinical guidelines*.
- Wulandari, M. D., Hanurawan, F., Chusniyah, T., & Sudjiono. (2020). Children's knowledge and skills related to self-protection from sexual abuse in Central Java Indonesia. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 29(5), 499–512. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2019.1703231>