

Factors Influencing Youth's Akhlaq: A Survey in Arfiah Shelter Home

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Abstract

Pregnancy and out-of-wedlock births due to premarital sex are attributed to the free association, incest and rape committed in today's society. This paper is based on case study of premarital pregnancy among youths housed in Arfiah Shelter Home, Shah Alam, Selangor. The objective of this study is to identify the factors influencing the trainees' involvement

which result in premarital pregnancy. This study also examines the trainees' perception of the program conducted. In addition, the study also identifies the changes in the trainees' behavior after being involved in the program.

Keywords: youth, premarital pregnancy, illegitimate child

INTRODUCTION

Previous studies show that youth involvement in risky sex behavior has begun as early as childhood. The involvement of youth in sexual activity at a young age is seen as a big problem and should be taken seriously by the whole society. Youths involved in sexual activity at young age would cause harmful effects on the child's emotion, physical and social development.

A journal analysis conducted by MohdAzriet. al. (2015) which analyzes 30 journal articles between the years 2000 to 2014 found that most journal articles review underage pregnancies because of the rising cases from year to year which seen the states Sabah and Sarawak as the two states in Malaysia with the highest number of premarital pregnancy cases at 62.2%. As of 2013, there are 510,462 illegitimate children registered with the Social Welfare Department. Based on the findings, this study (MohdAzri et. al., 2015) has identified 6 main factors that cause youth premarital pregnancies which are: 1) Poverty; 2) Practicing sex before marriage; 3) No parental monitoring; 4) Low academic achievement; 5) Peer influences and 6) Lack of knowledge about sex, reproduction and health. Most of the articles analyzed by MohdAzriet. al. (2015) had undertaken surveys towards shelter homes which placed youths with premarital pregnancies. Research suggests that further studies are conducted on youths who have been out of shelter home and living with the community to study what happened to them afterwards.

In Malaysia, premarital pregnancy cases among youths have significant relationship to the increase in cases of baby abandonment. Therefore, there is a pressing need to identify factors and causes of youth involvement with premarital pregnancy. In addition, programs conducted at the shelter home should be re-evaluated to ensure that the trainees that live in the shelter home can change and develop towards being a better person.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Life in this modern age has a variety of challenges in raising children. This is due to various social illnesses which are capable of destroying the Muslim civilization especially its teenagers. The highlights in newspapers always report a wide range of news about teenagers getting involved in premarital pregnancy and this issue is very alarming. Statistics from the Ministry of Health in 2015 revealed that a total of 3,980 teenagers aged 10 to 19 were pregnant with premarital children (Utusan, 2016). The scenario of premarital pregnancy among teenagers has been the focus of study conducted by Faizah and Azian (2013). Study by Azriani et al. (2011) and Faizah & Azian (2013) found that the main factor of youths to be involved in premarital sexual relationship which cause pregnancy is due to peer influence. A case study had been conducted by Salmi (2013) regarding premarital sex among Malaysian teenagers in which a total of five Malay Muslim students became the respondents

of the in-depth study. Findings of the study show that teenagers prefer to discuss about sexuality with friends or boyfriends in comparison to parents, relatives, teachers and counselors.

Youths with premarital pregnancy occupying shelter homes are significant samples in the purpose of studies to understand the growing concern of premarital pregnancies which has significantly increased from year to year. Khadijah Alavi et al. (2012) has conducted a study in a shelter home at Taman Seri Perdana, Cheras housing six respondents aged between 13 and 17 years old. The findings show that most respondents have bad relationship with family and spend more time with friends. Peer influence and information gained from the internet are factors identified to encourage the youth to be involved with premarital sex cases. The respondents also stated that friends were the people they turn to when they are in trouble and were able to help deal with stress that they face at home. This study proposes an important solution to address the problem of youths' premarital pregnancy which is through the constant monitoring from parents and the school. Parents and teachers should cooperate and work together in ensuring that students are not involved with this issue. The study also suggest that every member of the community consisting of parents, adolescents, teachers, communities and ministries to play their respective roles to combat this issue.

Syaidatun Nazirah Abu Zarin et.al (2017) studied about "Relationship Between Islamic Concept and Ethical Behaviour (Akhlak) of Being In Love Among Youth". Data were collected among students from three types of higher education institution in Malaysia with a total 599 respondents. Findings show that understanding and attitude towards love in Islam is high however the practical aspect is moderate.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To identify the factors causing the trainee to be involved in moral misconduct
2. To identify the trainee's perception towards the program implemented at Arfiah Shelter Home

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is a quantitative study utilizing a set of questionnaire being distributed to all trainees residing at the Arfiah shelter home, Shah Alam. The sample of this study consists of 34 trainees who occupy Arfiah shelter home.

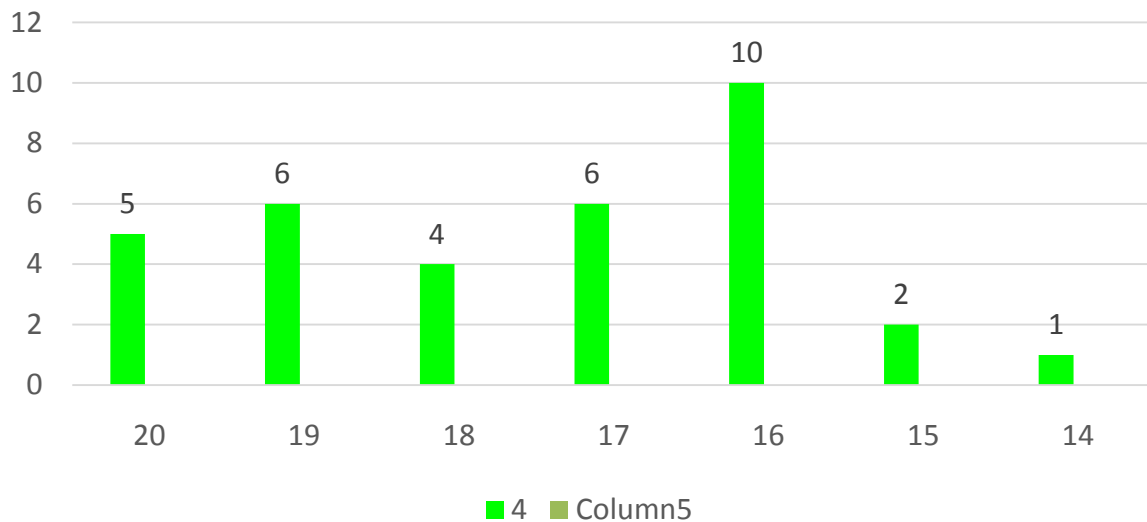
RESEARCH FINDINGS

The discussion of the research findings is based on the sections found in the questionnaires that have been answered by the respondents of the study. Part A focuses on the respondent's background, Part B investigates on the factors influencing morality and Part C is the perception of the trainee towards the program that has been implemented.

Respondents' Background

Trainee Age

Table 1.1. The Age Range



Based on Table 1.1, the age range of the trainee who lives in Arfiah shelter home is between 20 and 14 years old. Research data show that the most number of residents in the Arfiah shelter home is trainees of 16-year-old of age; followed by trainees aged 19 and 17 who have the same number of six trainees. There are five trainees whom are 20-year-old; followed by four trainees aged 18-year-old. A total of two trainees are aged 15 years and the youngest trainee is 14 years old.

Table 1.2: Parents Marital Status

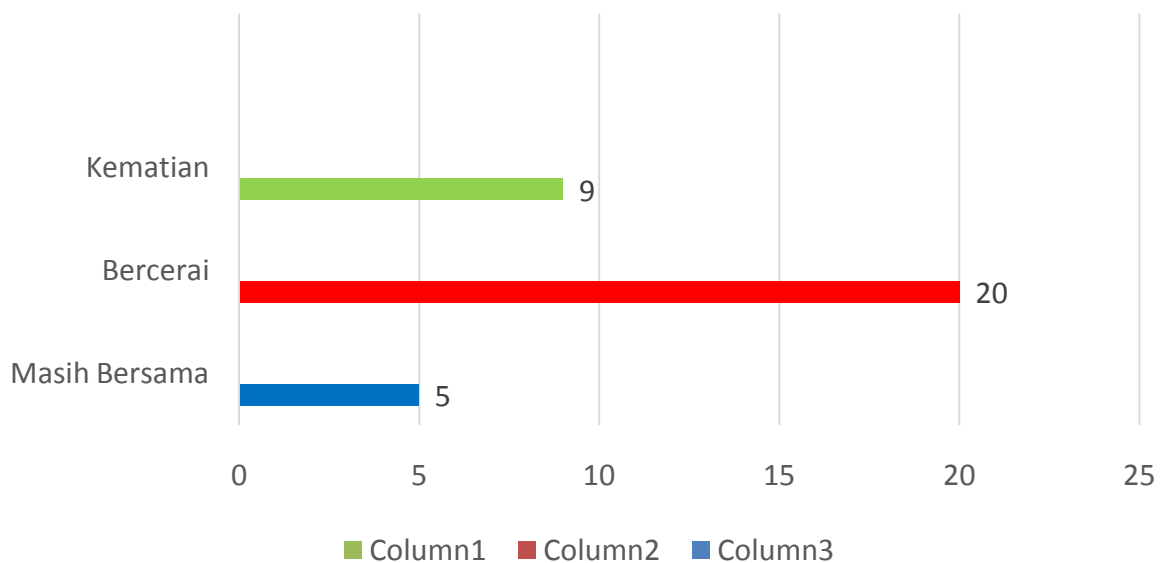
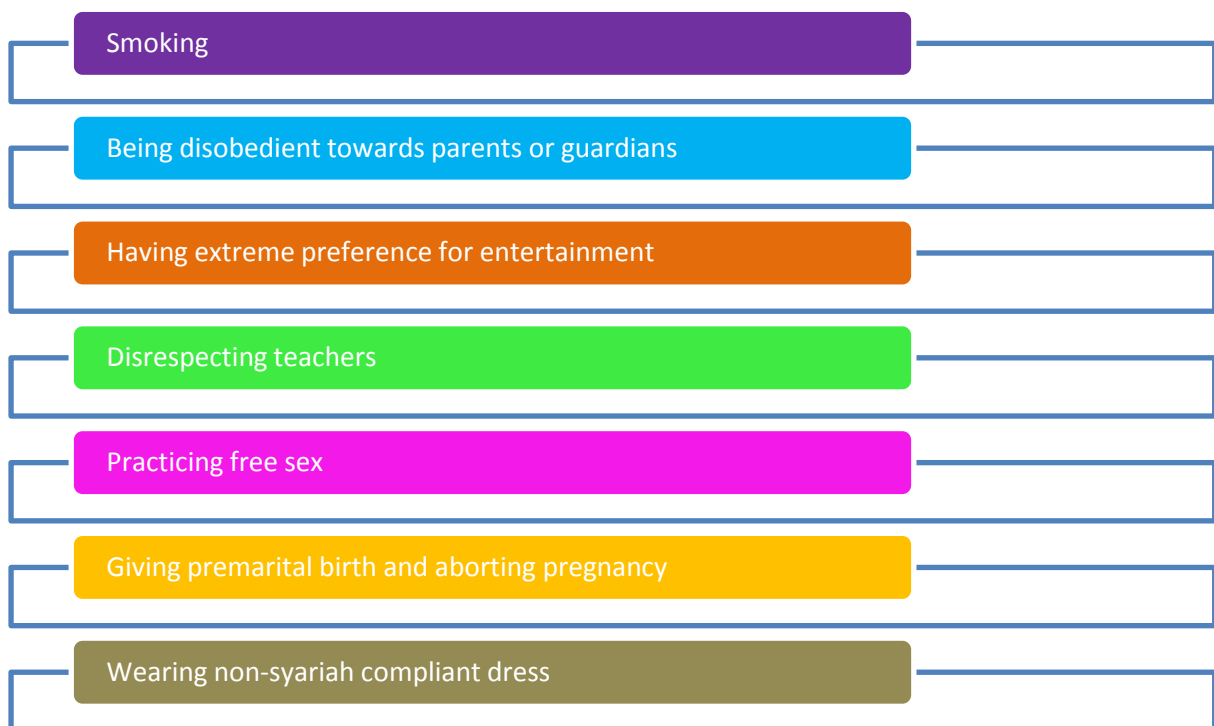


Table 1.2 shows the marital status of the Arfiah shelter home trainee's parents. Most trainees come from divorced families. Based on Table 1.2, 20 trainees stated that their parents were

divorced. Meanwhile, nine trainees have lost either their mother or father; and five trainees are still living with their parents.

Trainees' Involvement in Immoral Activities

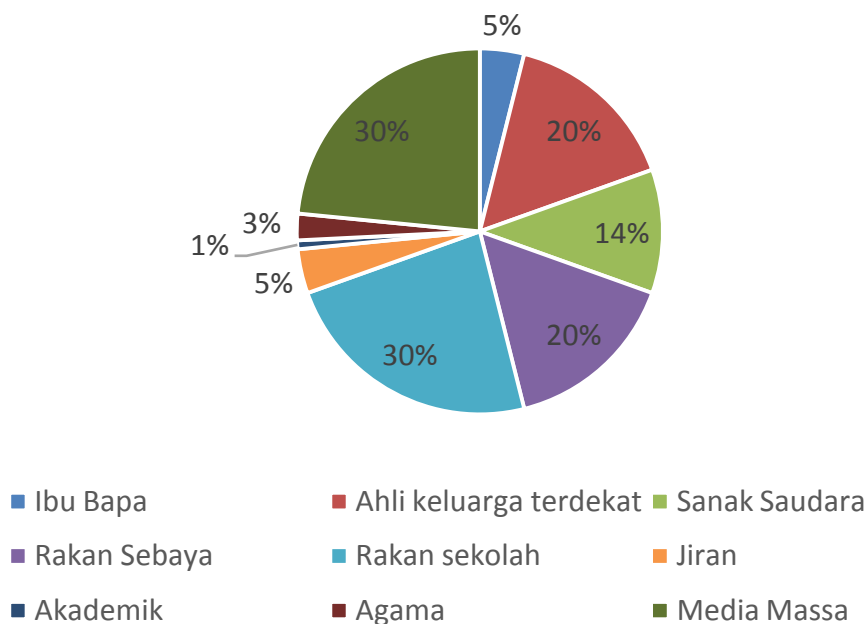
Based on the findings of the study, all trainees living in Arfiah shelter home were involved with immoral activities such as smoking, being disobedient towards parents or guardians, having extreme preference for entertainment, disrespecting teachers, practicing free sex, giving premarital birth and aborting pregnancy and wearing non-syariah compliant dress. All trainees state their involvement in the immoral activities as listed in the questionnaire.



Part B of the questionnaire aims to identify factors that influence trainees' involvement in the social misconduct.

Factors Affecting Trainees' Involvement

Chart 1.1: Influences' Factor



Based on Chart 1.1 above, peers and mass media are reported as the main factors affecting the youths' morality which contributes to 30%. Barbara (2006) stated that youths' behavior stems from the pressure faced due to peer pressure. The influence of peer pressure causes teenagers to have sex due to lack of skills to dismiss friends' requests due to the urge to be accepted by their peers.

Part C aims to examine the perception of the trainee on the program that has been conducted in the Arfiah shelter home.

Perception of Trainee on the Program Conducted

PP	Program	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	S.D.
PP1	Religious Class	-	-	-	70%	30%	3.09	1.60
PP2	al-Quran Class	-	-	-	70%	30%	3.09	1.60
PP3	Hadith Class	-	-	30%	50%	20%	3.47	0.78
PP4	Mukmin Guidance Class	-	-	30%	50%	20%	3.47	0.78
PP5	Individual Counseling	-	-	21%	45%	34%	4.56	0.79
PP6	Group Counseling	-	-	30%	50%	20%	3.47	0.78
PP7	Motivation Program	-	-	30%	50%	20%	3.47	0.78

PP8	Self-development Program	-	-	21%	45%	34%	4.56	0.79
PP9	Exercise	-	-	30%	50%	20%	3.47	0.78
PP10	Rest	-	-	30%	50%	20%	3.47	0.78
PP11	Out Door Games	-	-	21%	45%	34%	4.56	0.79
PP12	Nasyid	-	-	70%	-	30%	3.09	1.60
PP13	Zikir	-	-	70%	-	30%	3.09	1.60
PP14	Computer Class	-	-	-	-	100%	5.00	1.00
PP15	Cooking Class	1%	5%	40%	30%	24%	3.59	0.59
PP16	Sewing Class	-	-	-	20%	80%	4.56	0.79
PP17	Craft Class	-	1%	19%	70%	10%	4.59	0.64

Based on Table 1.3, the frequency distribution analysis by item or statement for the trainee's perception of the program conducted at Arfiahshelter home shows that the 'computer class' program receives the highest mean score (mean = 5.00, s.d = 1.00). The finding shows that 100% of the trainees strongly agree that the computer class is the most favorable program among the trainee. Next, the 'individual counseling' and 'outdoor game' programs get the second highest mean score (mean = 4.56, s.d = 0.79).

On the other hand, 'nasyid' and 'zikir' programs score the lowest mean (mean = 3.09, s.d. = 0.59) which shows that 70% of the trainers agree with the program. This shows that trainees are less interested in nasyid and zikir programs. Overall, the trainee's perception of the programs implemented at the Arfiah shelter home is at good level.

DISCUSSION

Based on the findings of the study, trainees living in the Arfiah shelter home are teenagers aged 14 to 20 years old. The findings show that the main factor influencing teenage morals are peers and mass media. This finding is consistent with the study of Azriani et al. (2011) and Faizah and Azian (2013) which found that peers is the main factor of teenagers involved in committing premarital sex.

Next, the mass media is also reported as a major factor affecting youths' morality. Study conducted by KhadijahAlavi et al. (2012) is parallel to the findings of this study which show that the factors that encourage teenagers to be involved with the premarital pregnancy are peers and the internet. Most of the applications available on the internet such as WeChat, Facebook, and WhatsApp are among the applications that contribute to social interactions that cause youths to be involved inpremarital pregnancy.

CONCLUSION

Premarital pregnancy and births are associated with premarital sex due to free association and cohabitation. Most teenagers who are pregnant out-of-wedlock are easily influenced by peers and mass media. Trainees living in the Arfiah shelter home have participated in the programs conducted as best as possible. Computer classes, individual counseling and outdoor games are programs that are highly sought after by the trainees and affect the development of the trainee's personality.

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