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Navigating Complex,
Conflicting Norms

Young Indonesians Experiences of Gender and Sexuality

Youth Voices Research
Phase One Report



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Indonesia



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of PUBLIC HEALTH



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Navigating Complex, Conflicting Norms: Young Indonesians Experiences of Gender and Sexuality

Youth Voices Research Phase One Report

Center for Reproductive Health, Faculty of Medicine, Public Health, and
Nursing, Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 2020

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consists of the following partners: Center for Reproductive Health of Gadjah Mada University,
Rutgers Netherlands, Rutgers WPF Indonesia, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public
Health, PKBI Central Java Province, PKBI Bali Province, PKBI Lampung Province, and
Karolinska Institute.



Executive Summary

Gender and sexual socialisation are important processes that influence sexual behaviour and (risks to) health and wellbeing, yet they are rarely studied from young people's points of view. Furthermore, in Indonesia (as in many other settings), research and interventions related to youth sexual and reproductive health often take a health or risk-based approach, with an explicit or implicit focus on preventing pre-marital sex. Such approaches often omit a broader focus on the context surrounding young people and its influence on their sexual and reproductive values and behaviours. Specifically, there is little examination of how young people in contemporary Indonesia navigate the, often conflicting, forces of traditional Indonesian values, media and globalisation, peer norms, personal and relational interests, and the strong emerging force of conservative Islam.

The Youth Voices Research seeks to address these gaps. Placing young people at the centre by involving them as co-researchers, the study aimed to understand how young people aged 18 to 24 experience and navigate different messages, norms and expectations regarding gender and sexuality and how this is manifest through online romantic and sexual behaviour.

Youth Voices Research is one of three research tracks within a larger four-year Rutgers programme, Explore4Action (E4A), which investigates the factors that influence adolescents to make positive and healthy transitions to adulthood, and if and how

comprehensive sexuality education can support this transition. E4A is carried out in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University, Karolinska Institute, the Centre for Reproductive Health of Gadjah Mada University Yogyakarta (UGM), and PKBI (Indonesia Planned Parenthood Association).

Methodology

Data were collected via 86 in-depth interviews and 24 focus group discussions with 18 to 24-year-olds in three sites: Bandar Lampung in Sumatra, Semarang in Central Java, and Denpasar in Bali. Employing a participatory youth approach, young people were co-researchers, allowing more of an insider perspective and encouraging young informants to talk more freely (van Reeuwijk, 2009; Lushey and Munro, 2015; Devotta et al., 2016; Porter, 2016; Burke et al., 2018). The young co-researchers were supported by older, more experienced researchers, both on site and remotely.

Key findings and implications

1. Young people navigate complex and conflicting norms regarding gender and sexuality

The research illustrates how young people in Indonesia face a range of complex and conflicting normative messages regarding gender and sexuality.

On the one hand, the dominant societal discourse – often emphasised by parents and religious influences – prohibits dating, premarital sex, and same-sex relationships. Sexuality is a highly taboo subject, leading to low knowledge and prevalent myths. On the other hand, young people remain curious about sex, they are easily able to access pornographic material online and increased (social) media access brings in more liberal messaging relating to gender and sexuality.

Young people respond to these conflicting messages in different ways. Some choose to adhere to restrictive norms, drawing on increasingly prevalent conservative (online) social and religious movements. Others find ways to deal with conflicting norms and their own need for information and identity development by keeping their activities and relationships secret or by using cultural 'loopholes' such as *Sing Beling Sing Nganten* (a Balinese tradition translating as "no pregnancy, no marriage") to justify their behaviour. Internet and social media allow young people to construct fake accounts that allow them to circumvent strict norms - in 'real life' - while using their 'fake identities' to experiment with self-expression and various identities.

Navigating complex and conflicting norms does not mean simply "choosing" one narrative. As is true for adults, young people often hold opposing attitudes at the same time, e.g. "I want an equal relationship, but a man should make all decisions". Similar findings of young people concurrently holding stereotypical and more equitable attitudes in relation to gender norms have been found in a various settings including the USA, Nepal, Mexico and Malawi (Kågesten et al, 2016). Rather than choosing the one or the other, many of the respondents' lives, experiences and behaviours seem to take place simultaneously in two separate worlds, the real world where they adhere to parental and societal expectations, and the online and peer world, where they are influenced by different norms and experiment with different identities. In expressing their attitudes and beliefs, they draw from both these worlds. This complex normative landscape underlines the importance of understanding diverse and conflicting moral frameworks in order to situate responses within them.

Implication: Comprehensive sexuality education supports young people to critically assess complex conflicting messages

Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) uses a rights-based and gender transformative approach and approaches sexuality holistically and within the context of emotional and social development, incorporating not only sexual and reproductive health but also gender, relationships, diversity, violence and rights. CSE can play a vital role in helping young people to critically assess complex conflicting messages – whether coming from peers, media, society, media, family, or themselves – and to consider their own position and desired path. CSE can hence help young people to understand conflicts with their parents or others who may have different moral views from them.

2. Social media as a 'game changer' for sexuality in Indonesia

Social media featured heavily in young people's testimonies and reflected Utomo's (2008) concept of social media as presenting "two powerful, conflicting influences" on young people's sexual socialisation: conservative religious voices "promoting idealised morality", and "western" influences, promoting a liberal approach. Respondents who choose to refrain from dating cite online religious and social movements which promote stricter, more conservative norms as sources of inspiration and for their dating choices. Conversely, social media can also allow young people to find alternative normative landscapes that place fewer limits on their sexuality, where they can find information, explore their (sexual) identities, link with others going through similar experiences, date and meet, and view content from outside Indonesia presenting different ideas of sexuality. For LGBT respondents, social media provided particularly valuable opportunities not as in real life, i.e. offline, they often felt stigmatised for their sexuality in a society which places heterosexual monogamous marriage at its centre, and which criminalises same-sex relationships.

Pornographic material can also be accessed via (social) media despite government censorship.

The increasing influences of the internet and social media are often regarded as a threat by politicians and parents in Indonesia, and their response has often been to impose more restrictions and censorship. However, such limitations do not seem to prevent their use and the influence of these channels on youth culture. Conversely it leads to more polarisation, secrecy and vulnerability rather than protecting young people from harm. Ortnor (2006) argues that agency, understood from within existing norms and structures, always reproduces these existing norms and structures, unless a 'game changer' shifts that pattern. Youth Voices Research findings shows that social media offers (some) young people an opportunity to move away from dominant, existing norms through exposure to alternative narratives and opportunities to experiment and date, suggesting it may be seen as a 'game changer'.

Implication: Comprehensive sexuality education which includes a focus on media literacy can help young people to protect themselves online

Information alone is insufficient, instead young people require skills to critically reflect on and navigate the messages they come across including in (social) media, including pornographic and sexual material which youngsters globally are exposed to from a young age (Nelson and Rothman, 2020). Comprehensive sexuality education which includes a focus on media literacy can help young people understand the different messages and images they see in social media and pornography and to protect themselves online.

3. Silence does not equal safety

The research in this report underlines the strength of taboos and restrictions related to sexuality in Indonesia. Young people generally saw sex as risky and dangerous, and those who did engage in dating

or sexual activity felt the need to keep it secret from parents. We heard many myths regarding sex, virginity and sexuality; and respondents explained that sex and sexuality are rarely talked about, seen as only a topic for discussion when a young person is about to get married.

We heard stories of sexual violence, rape and abuse often in childhood. Respondents sharing these traumatic stories often cited a lack of knowledge about sexuality, personal boundaries, and what constitutes abuse and rape as contributing factors to their experiences. It is clear that silence regarding sexuality does not protect young people from harm but may indeed place them in danger. Furthermore, there is no data to support the belief that sexuality education increases sexual promiscuity.

Implication: CSE has a key role in protecting children from sexual exploitation

Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) has a key role to play in helping adolescents to understand their developing bodies, their own and others' personal boundaries, concepts of consent and where and when they can ask for help if they feel unsafe. CSE is not a panacea for preventing sexual abuse and exploitation but it can play a key role in protecting children from harm, preventing intimate partner violence and in creating future societies where harmful gender norms and power structures are reduced (BzGA, 2020, IPPF 2019, IPPF 2020).





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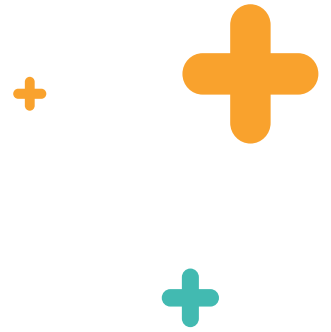
Valuable technical support, comments, input and critical review were gratefully received from Miranda van Reeuwijk and Anna Page at Rutgers in the Netherlands, and also Renske Termeulen.

We are very grateful to all the researchers who gave their best efforts in collecting stories from the students: we have dedicated the appendix of this report to their profiles and stories. Thanks to Fuji Riang Prastowo who coordinated the data collection and undertook initial analysis of the data, also Prof. Siswanto Agus Wilopo and Anggriyani Wahyu Pinandari who led the Gadjah Mada University's team in conducting this research.

This research would not have been a success without the support of local stakeholders, who allowed us to collect the data and eagerly participated in all steps of data collection and dissemination. Finally, our highest appreciation goes to all young people who shared their stories so generously with us.

Explore4Action Team





Preface from Director of UGM Center for Reproductive Health



Youth Voices Research (YVR) is part of collaboration research called Explore 4action (E4A) and is conducted with participatory qualitative approach which focuses on these three locations, namely Lampung (Sumatra), Semarang (Java), and Denpasar (Bali). This two-phased study is aimed at gaining an understanding of the dissemination of gender and sexuality among adolescents and young people in those three areas and how this understanding affects the utilization of sexual and reproductive health services as well as their level of welfare. Through this phenomenological approach, we follow the journey and stories of young people iteratively, and put their experiences as our focus by involving young people as co-researchers.

The findings obtained from YVR Phase 1 provide contextual information that help us better understand the findings of the Global Early Adolescent Study (GEAS), which are the components of quantitative

research in E4A. The transition of young people during the process into adults is marked by various conflicting values and norms related to sexuality that occur not only in real life but also in their virtual world. Adequate knowledge becomes the key element that helps young people through complex navigation process and conflicting value during this transitional period. These findings also reinforce the importance of Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE) and media literacy so that young people may grow healthy and prosperous.

In Indonesia, YVR is held in collaboration with Rutgers WPF, Center for Reproductive Health, Faculty of Medicine, Public Health and Nursing, Universitas Gadjah Mada (FKKMK UGM), and the Indonesian International Planned Parenthood Federation (PKBI). Financial support for this activity was provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation through grant to Rutgers Netherland.

On this occasion, the drafting team would like to express their deepest gratitude and appreciation to all research participants, schools, stakeholders, and government at the national and regional level who have allowed and supported us to collect field data and provided valuable input during the research process. Furthermore, we would also like to express our gratitude to the co-researchers team (coordinators and young researchers) in the field for their participation and cooperation during this research so that it can run smoothly, as well as Miranda van Reeuwijk, Anna Page, Nur Jannah, Amala Rahmah, and Puput Susanto for their continuous assistance and support during this research.

Hopefully this report will provide the maximum benefit for all parties in supporting and assisting young people in Indonesia and the world to create a better future through improving health and well-being in their development period.

Professor dr. Siswanto Agus Wilopo, SU., M.Sc., Sc.D
Center for Reproductive Health
Faculty of Medicine, Public Health and Nursing
Gadjah Mada University





Preface from Director of Explore4Action



Studying adolescents and young people's sexuality is controversial and often only done in relation to public health concerns such as HIV, sexually transmitted infections and unwanted pregnancies. Likewise, interventions such as sexuality education are often framed as a way to prevent these negative health outcomes, and more often than not focus on the risks, dangers and sometimes immorality of sexual activities. But such risk-focused interventions are often not very appealing to young people and often do not match their realities and needs.

The Youth Voices Research, aims to take a different approach, putting young people at the centre of the research in order to understand – from young people's point of view – the realities of young people's sexuality and sexual decision making, and how these impact their development and wellbeing. This report presents the findings of the first of two parts to the Youth Voices Research. In this part we

focus on 18 to 24 year olds. We started with this older age group as they can look back on their earlier adolescence and reflect how things have changed for them. The first phase sets the context for the second part, presented in a separate report, which focuses on early adolescents aged 12-15, aiming to provide a deeper understanding of the findings of the Global Early Adolescent Study (GEAS, a quantitative survey measuring a range of health and well-being outcomes of more than 4,000 adolescent boys and girls in three sites in Indonesia: Bandar Lampung (Sumatra), Denpasar (Bali) and Semarang (Central Java).

The Youth Voices Research was carried out by a team of research professionals and young people, who were engaged as co-researchers. We believe young people are experts on their realities, and can help to translate what is at stake for other young people. The young co-researchers were instrumental in creating

a safe and enabling environment for other young people to share their, sometimes heart wrenching, experiences openly and honestly. This collaboration resulted in rich descriptions that explained how the contexts of Bandar Lampung in Sumatra, Semarang in Central Java, and Denpasar in Bali influenced the sexual and romantic experiences and behaviours of young people living there. This report brings together the insights from these 'thick descriptions' and was translated to English to make it accessible to a broader audience.

We learned from this research how young people navigate the multiple and sometimes conflicting norms, messages, expectations, and personal goals, wishes and desires in relation to gender and sexuality. We witnessed how, despite strict norms of taboo and sexual restraint, young people have a need to explore and express their sexuality as a normal part of growing up as a young man or woman. The internet is an important domain where they experiment with self-expression without having to reveal their real identity. Often, conflicting norms and messages are held concurrently by young people, rather than simply 'choosing' one narrative.

So why does this matter for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) programmes?

The findings of this first phase of the Youth Voices Research will be vital in informing future SRHR programmes. The data show that young people actively navigate their social surroundings and manage their expression of identity. But if the context requires secrecy, this can have negative repercussions for young people. The internet may become the most important source of information on sexuality, especially when it is not balanced out by other offline sources or guidance on how to interpret and understand online content. And negative experiences, whether online or in real life, may be very difficult to share or report.

It makes sense that SRHR programs, and comprehensive sexuality education in particular, is cognisant of young people's realities, what matters to them and what supports young people to develop

competencies that support them to navigate ('make sense of') the multiple and sometimes conflicting messages, expectations and wishes. SRHR programmes and education should support young people to critically think about and question the information and messages they receive in particular around gender norms and sexually explicit content on the internet. And building these skills needs to start young, with the age of very young adolescence (10-14 years) being a particularly promising 'window of opportunity' for strengthening more gender equal attitudes and critical reflection skills.

Miranda van Reeuwijk, PhD

Director of Explore4Action Program
Rutgers Netherlands

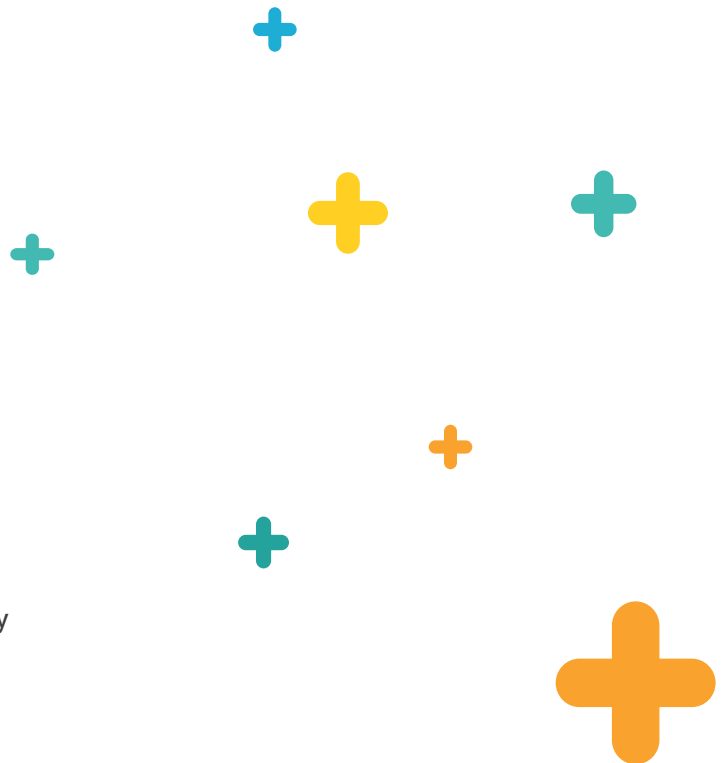


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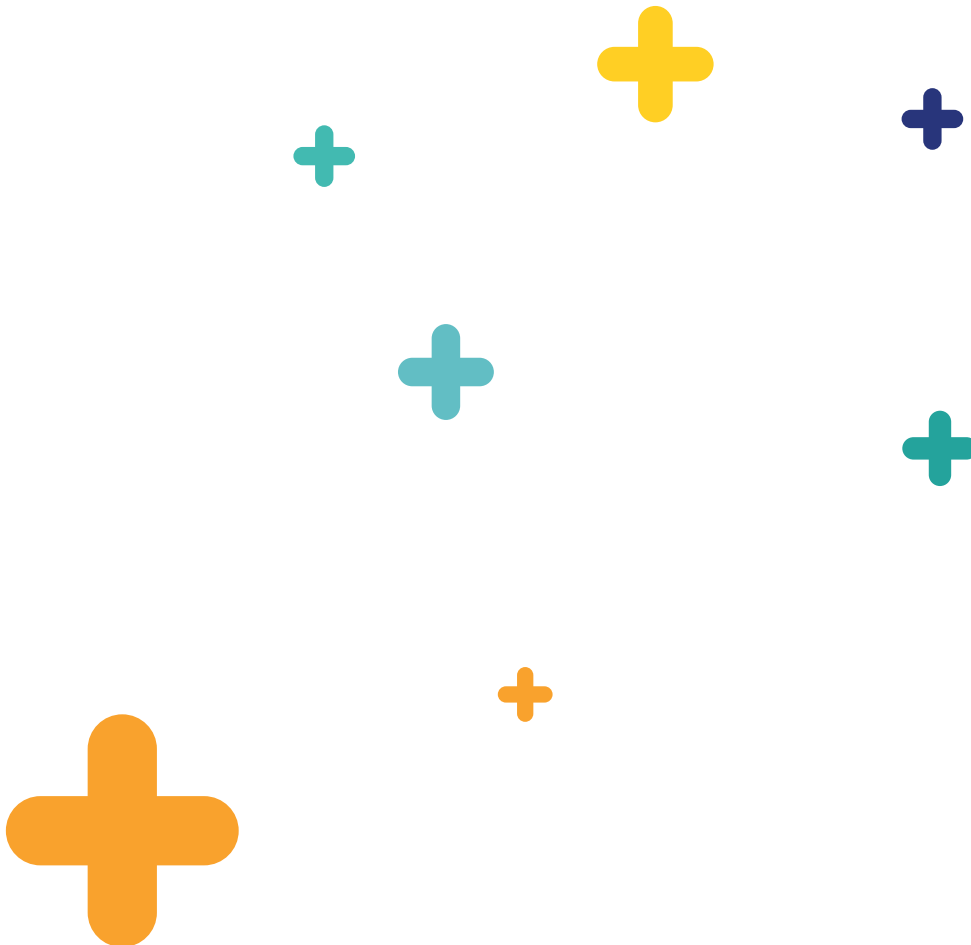
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List of Abbreviations

ARH	Adolescent Reproductive Health
CRH	Center for Reproductive Health
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSS	Comprehensive Sexual Services
E4A	Explore for Action
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FKMKK	Fakultas Kedokteran, Kesehatan Masyarakat dan Keperawatan (Faculty of Medicine, Public Health and Nursing)
GEAS	Global Early Adolescent Study
ITP	Indonesia Tanpa Pacaran/Indonesia Without Dating
MBA	Married by Accident
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
PKBI	Perkumpulan Keluarga Berencana Indonesia (Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association)
SETARA	Semangat Dunia Remaja (The Spirit of Adolescents' World)
SRHR	Sexual & Reproductive Health and Rights
SST	Seka Teruna Teruni
YVR	Youth Voices Research



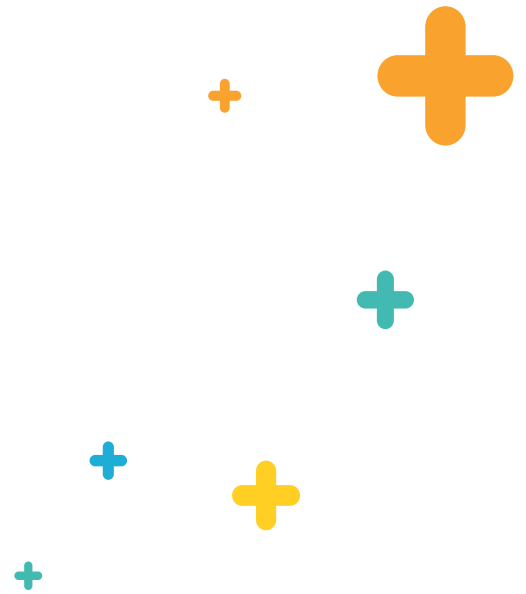


CHAPTER I

Introduction







1.1 Background

Youth Voices Research is a qualitative, participatory study focusing on three sites in Indonesia: Bandar Lampung (Sumatra Island), Semarang (Java Island) and Denpasar (Bali Island). The study aims to understand gender and sexual socialisation of young people in the three sites, specifically how they experience and navigate different messages, norms, expectations and their own feelings and wishes in relation to gender and sexuality, and how this is manifested through online romantic and sexual behaviour. The study places the experiences of young people at the centre by involving young people as co-researchers. Methods include in-depth interviews and FGDs with 18 to 24-year-olds, using participatory techniques to tease out in-depth information.

Youth Voices Research is one of three research tracks within a larger four-year Rutgers programme, Explore4Action (E4A), which is grounded in the recommendations that emerged from the national adolescent reproductive health (ARH) youth summit in 2017 and aims to contribute to and strengthen the collaborative action plan of the Adolescent Reproductive Health Technical Working Group. The central objective of E4A is to investigate the factors

that influence adolescents to make a positive and healthy transition from childhood to adulthood, and if and how reproductive health education can support this transition. E4A is carried out in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University, Karolinska Institute, the Centre for Reproductive Health of Gadjah Mada University Yogyakarta (UGM), and PKBI (Indonesia Planned Parenthood Association)

The programme includes the Indonesian arm of the Global Early Adolescent Study (GEAS), which studies the factors in early adolescence that predispose young people to sexual health risks or that promote healthy sexuality, and the impact of SETARA, the reproductive health education curriculum delivered by Rutgers and PKBI in partnership with local governments. A second research track is an implementation research exploring the processes and the enabling and hindering factors influencing the quality of the SETARA intervention. Findings from Youth Voices provide rich contextual information enabling a deeper understanding of the GEAS findings. Evidence generated will be used to support the enhancement of adolescent reproductive health interventions in Indonesia, particularly the implementation of Reproductive Health Education.

1.2. Rationale

Academic studies have recognised the need to increase understanding of barriers to adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH) if the Indonesian government's ASRH targets to reduce teenage pregnancy are to be met (CRH 2017, Moeliono 2017). Gender and sexual socialisation are acknowledged as important processes that influence sexual behaviour and (risks to) health and wellbeing, particularly during early adolescence. However, these processes are rarely studied from the point of view of young people. The Youth Voices Research intends to fill this gap and create evidence to inform interventions that support adolescents' safe and healthy transition into adulthood and improve ASRH.

In Indonesia (as in many other settings), both research and interventions related to ASRH often take a risk-based approach, with an explicit or implicit focus on preventing pre-marital sex, a position closely linked to dominant socio-religious norms which posit pre-marital sex as immoral (Holzner & Oetomo 2004, Pakasi & Kartikawati 2013). Stories of pre-marital sex, abuse, and teenage pregnancies provoke much moral debate, as do discussions around interventions that attempt to address these issues. Such health or risk-focused approaches often omit a broader focus on the context surrounding young people and its influence on their development of sexual and reproductive values and behaviours. Specifically, there is little examination of how young people in contemporary Indonesia navigate the, often conflicting, forces of traditional Indonesian values, media and globalisation, peer norms, personal and relational interests, and the strong emerging force of conservative Islam. Little research has been done that provides insight into how young people themselves perceive and experience sexuality and gender and how this influences their attitudes, goals and behaviours.

The Youth Voices Research seeks to address this gap in both academic literature and programmatic implementation. This study aims to shed light on the complex social worlds which young people navigate and the implications of these for gender and reproductive health (RH) values and behaviours.

Complementing the Global Early Adolescent Study (GEAS), Youth Voices Research will provide rich contextual information enabling a deeper understanding of the GEAS findings. These insights will provide vital information to inform services and interventions that support adolescents and young people in their healthy and safe transitions into adulthood, and that are contextually appropriate and relevant. The information presented in this report is the first of two phases of the Youth Voices Research. This focuses on 18 to 24-year-olds. An accompanying report on the second phase focuses on adolescents aged 12 to 15.

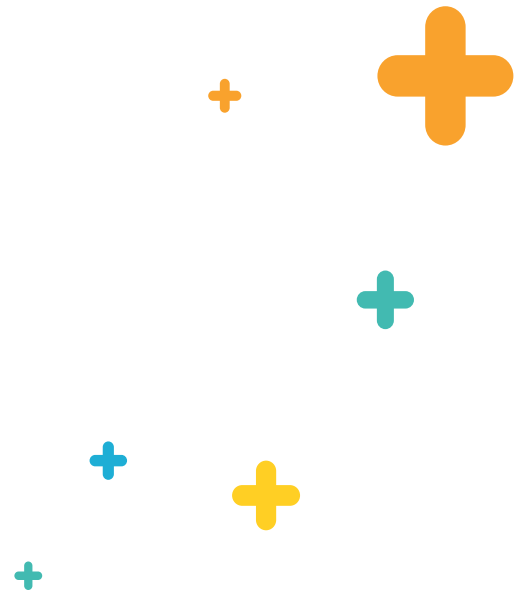
The following report opens with an outline of the research design, including the participatory youth research methodology. A contextual chapter sets the scene, outlining norms on gender and sexuality in Indonesia and the role of social media. Findings are then presented over two chapters, the first outlining the inputs young people receive in terms of norms, values and messages. The second findings chapter explores the different strategies engaged to navigate these, often conflicting, norms and messages. Finally, the concluding section draws out key overarching findings and provides recommendations for education and services for young people in Indonesia and beyond.

CHAPTER II

Research Design







2.1 Research questions

The research is guided by the following principal and sub-research questions:

How do young people (aged 18 to 24) navigate between conflicting messages, norms, expectations and their own feelings and wishes in relation to gender and sexuality, and how is this manifested through online romantic and sexual behaviour?

What conflicting messages, norms and expectations do young people experience?

What different strategies do young people employ to deal with these conflicts?

What roles, if any, do online platforms and the internet play in these strategies?

2.2 Participatory youth research methodology

The Youth Voices Research is a qualitative, participatory study based on principles of meaningful youth participation (Rutgers & IPPF, 2013). Rutgers and UGM trained and engaged six young people as co-researchers (two per site), who worked alongside adult, professional researchers (the site coordinators) who supported, trained and coached the young researchers and verified data quality. The goals of engaging young people as co-researchers in this research are manifold. Working with young people as researchers can significantly reduce the power differentials between the researcher and the informant, increasing validity and reliability of data collected (Kellett, 2005; van Reeuwijk, 2009; Bradbury-Jones and Taylor, 2013). Young

co-researchers can more easily use language and methods that closely fit the knowledge, understanding and interests of their peers than older researchers. This familiarity helps to create space for children and young people to express themselves more freely and honestly, especially when talking about sensitive issues such as sexuality (Rutgers & IPPF 2013; Burke et al, 2018). In this research, the young co-researchers were involved in all stages of the research, including research design (for example, contributing to the design of focus group discussion and interview guides), recruiting participants, data collection, analysis and verification and dissemination of findings.

2.3 Sampling

Data were collected at three sites in Bandar Lampung (Sumatra), Semarang (Java) and Denpasar (Bali). The three sites are the same as the sites for the GEAS and implementation research tracks within E4A, enabling data from each research track to reinforce each other. The sites were selected through convenience sampling as areas where Rutgers has existing links

with schools, communities and local PKBI¹ chapters. The three sites also provide contrasting examples of cultural-religious influences, with Bandar Lampung believed to represent an area with more conservative Islam compared to Java, while Bali is a more open, Hindu culture.

Data were collected during five weeks of fieldwork in October and November 2018. Data included a total of 24 facilitated focus group discussions and 86 in-depth interviews (see Table 1 below).

Table 1. Youth Voices Research Phase I Informants

Data Collection Method	Bandar Lampung	Semarang	Denpasar	Total
Focus Group Discussions	8	8	8	24
In-depth Interviews	26	32	28	86

¹ PKBI is the Indonesian International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

In line with the project title, Explore4Action, the research employed exploratory techniques to recruit diverse informants in three sites. Respondents for the first and second weeks of fieldwork were selected through snowball sampling, starting with existing contacts involved with local PKBI chapters as volunteers. In the third, fourth and fifth weeks, the research teams deliberately explored the field by expanding their informants beyond PKBI's connection to reach a broader range of youth voices. Specific marginal groups were targeted, including young people with disabilities (all sites), LGBT community (all sites), punk community (Lampung and Semarang), industrial labourers (Semarang), tourism workers (Denpasar), young people affiliated to cultural-based organisation Seka Teruna Teruni/SST (Denpasar), young people affiliated to religion-based organisations (all sites), and young people living in slum area in Semarang port.

2.4 Analysis

Data analysis started with a five-day training on computer assisted qualitative data analysis techniques using the NVivo program version 12, provided by a qualitative research specialist. All site coordinators and young researchers took part in the training before returning to their sites to carry out analysis, with support from colleagues in Indonesia and the Netherlands. Using NVivo, all data (including interviews and FGD transcripts, field notes from observations, video and audio recordings and secondary sources) were coded using open coding, systematically identifying themes related to the research questions and themes. Computer-based coding using NVivo had been triangulated with paper-based coding carried out in the field and during initial analysis. The research team then used axial coding to identify relationships between codes and connections between them. Identifying the causal conditions, strategies for addressing, interaction and consequences related to various phenomena, responses to the research questions were sought (Bryman, 2012; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). All quotes provided in this report are translated from Bahasa Indonesia (or local dialects) into English. Untranslated Indonesian words are indicated in italics.

2.5 Ethical considerations

Before its commencement, everyone involved in the research was trained in human subject protection and the research protocol by UGM, including ethical research training materials. Research team members all signed a code of conduct. All informants gave informed consent prior to data collection, and were reimbursed their travel costs as appropriate. Interview and FGD sessions were designed to provide free, encouraging, and safe spaces for sharing. In recognition that the process might reveal information about exposure to abuse and violence, interviewers emphasised the right of respondents to refuse to share information or stop the interview at any point if they did not wish to continue sharing. The privacy of participants was protected during data collection by conducting procedures in a private, safe, discreet location wherever possible or, when this was not possible, by agreeing a location with interviewees where they felt comfortable. The interviewers were not allowed to discuss any information related with this study with other people outside the research team. The discussions were audiotaped after the interviewer had explained information about the study and only if all participants agreed. Transcriptions of the interviews did not include personal identifiers, and audio, video, photographic recordings from all interviews and group discussions were stored in secure locations.



2.6 Limitations

This ambitious study of young adolescents in Indonesia gathered data across three communities using a participatory methodology. The large number of interviews and focus groups complicated the data analyses, which most likely resulted in more in-depth findings being lost. Additionally, while the original vision was for all data to be analysed by youth researchers, the volume of material required the groups to be augmented with researchers with more qualitative analytic experience. With both Indonesian- and English-speaking researchers carrying out the analysis and writing, we faced challenges in translation, which likely also resulted in some nuances being missed.

Sites were given the freedom to take their own iterative approach, choosing which minority groups they would engage with in order to increase the diversity of the respondents. This iterative and independent approach resulted in challenges in comparing sites and difficulties drawing conclusions across the three sites. In this report, of the minority groups that were interviewed, only the findings related to LGBT young people (from all three sites) are presented as data on other groups were not sufficiently strong. LGBT young people were interviewed in all sites and the interviews were more in depth, whereas other groups were only interviewed in one or two sites, and the interviews were less rigorous.



CHAPTER III

Setting the scene







3.1 Religious and cultural norms

Religious values are an important part of daily life in Indonesia. With almost 270 million inhabitants, Indonesia is the fourth most populous country and the most populous Muslim-majority country in the world. The country is also home to sizeable Hindu and Christian communities. Across all denominations, religious values are central to contemporary conceptualisations of morality in Indonesia. Marriage is universally seen as desirable, inevitable and as the “business of the whole family” (Bennett, 2002: 100). Pre-marital sex is seen as dangerous, risky and immoral (Holzner & Oetomo, 2004; Pakasi & Kartikawati, 2013). However, religious values are also intertwined with diverse ethnic and cultural values, derived from more than 300 ethnic groups scattered across the 17,504 islands. Cultural values, based on the local adat, the Indonesian word for local ethnicity-based laws and customs that differ per region (Buttenheim & Nobles; 2009: 277), are prevalent in daily life and often closely linked with people’s cultural identity. Despite local variance, these generally have common strong patriarchal themes and focus strongly on the family as the centre of society. As Dwyer (2000: 27) summarises, “marriage, gender and sexuality are non-negotiable attributes of national identity in Indonesia”.

3.2 Politics, conservatism and sexuality

The influence of religious values, in particular regarding sexuality, has seen a marked increase in recent years in Indonesia. During the Reformasi era, that started in 1998 after 32 years of dictatorship, Indonesian citizens gained more freedom and there was space for progressive voices. However, the opening up of discourse also made way for previously silenced religious voices to gain more standing, and for conservative Islamic scholars, in particular from Saudi Arabia, to have more influence. Conservative Islam progressively became more prevalent in daily life, and as politicians saw this as an opportunity for public support, religious morality and piety became foundational in shaping citizens and the nation (Platt et al, 2018; Bruinessen, 2011). As Bruinessen explains, “the smiling face” of tolerant Islam in Indonesia started to disappear in 1998, making way for a more conservative Islam, a “conservative turn”, that had definitively taken place by the end of 2005 (2011: 3). Today, this influence continues, with movements like the Hijrah movement, which purports abandoning ‘bad’ behaviour in favour of a religious life according to Islam, gaining strength.

Moral discourses spread via conservative Islam include strong messages regarding sexuality, love

and marriage and have significant influences on gender and sexuality (Wijaya Mulya, 2018; Platt et al, 2018; Slama, 2017). So called immoral behaviour, in particular any sexual activity outside heterosexual marriage, became further condemned (Platt et al, 2018). The influence of conservative religious values makes it difficult to negotiate contestations and expressions of sexuality and morality in Indonesia (Wijaya Mulya, 2018: 54; Platt et al, 2018: 7). Conservative Islam changes the dominant discourse in Indonesia, making morality the basis for judgments of love, sexuality and marriage and constructing female sexuality and premarital sex as “a dangerous moral threat” (Davies, 2018: 69, Platt et al, 2018). The ideal of the nuclear family became central to nation building and (economic) development after Indonesia became independent in 1945. The Suharto regime² relied on ideologies of the family and morality. This discourse – focusing on morality with heterosexual monogamous marriage at its centre – shaped and continues to shape identities in Indonesia (Platt et al, 2018: 1-5; Brenner, 2011: 480). In September 2019, the Indonesian parliament proposed new laws that would criminalise premarital sex, living together unmarried and abortion. On 24th September 2019 young people protested against these laws and the growing conservatism in Indonesia³.

3.3 Social media: three influences

In contemporary Indonesia, social media are used to spread, reinforce and strengthen these changing religious and cultural norms. In 2006, it became possible to access wireless mobile internet via 3G in Indonesia, and, in 2011, 82% of Indonesians reported mobile phones as their primary device for accessing the internet (Puspitasari, 2016). Platt et al (2018: 13) argue that through social media a “machinery of moralisation” – influenced by conservative

Islam – has become pervasive in people's lives. Research on Facebook in Semarang suggests that this social medium does not liberalise, but rather provides a forum to publicly express religious piety and to control, stigmatise and gossip about other's religious behaviour (Hartono, 2018: 39). Slama (2017: 94) states that conservative Islam – from Middle Eastern countries like Saudi-Arabia – is increasingly introduced to Indonesia via social media, giving rise to new conservative Islamic organisations and networks. Social media is thus used to spread conservative religious ideas. Different authors see social media as political tools to promote religious identities and create “good and moral citizens” in a nation by endorsing moral messages or popularising particular narratives (Abu-Lughod, 2002: 129).

However, social media also provide a platform for more liberal voices from within and outside Indonesia. Harding (2008) states that media in Indonesia are often seen as influencing youngsters with ‘western’ and ‘liberal’ ideas regarding love, sex and marriage, and therefore leading young people to practise seks bebas (free sex), a ‘dangerous’ and ‘deviant’ sexual behaviour according to the majority norm in Indonesia. As surmised by Utomo (2008) young Indonesians are subject to “two powerful, conflicting influences” through social media which influence their sexual socialisation: conservative religious voices “promoting idealised morality”, and “western” influences, promoting a liberal approach.

However, as evidenced by research on social media in China and Turkey, alongside a role in spreading conservatism, social media have a liberalising effect through private channels – such as WhatsApp and Facebook – which create possibilities for cross-gender contact, experimentation with identity, and the fulfilment of romantic aspirations. In Indonesia, the most popular activity on social media is exchanging private messages (Puspitasari, 2016). Kooij (2016) furthermore highlights social media's liberalising role offering a space for relationships without parental interference in Indonesia. Social media thus strengthen existing and dominant ideas and discourses, while also leading to transformations in existing practices (Costa, 2016; McDonald, 2018).

² Suharto seized power from Sukarno in 1966, governing Indonesia as a dictator until 1998 with his widely feared New Order regime, trying to build and construct an Indonesian nation. This regime kept political order with the use of the military, tried to achieve economic development and oppressed and controlled the population with violence.

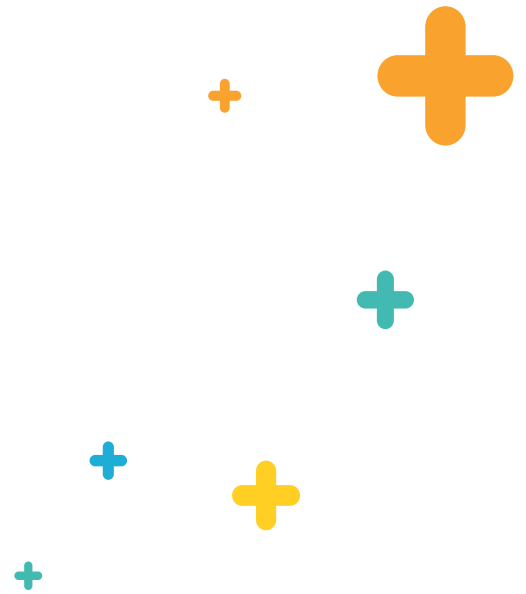
³ The Jakarta Post: <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2019/09/24/students-throng-in-front-of-house-more-flood-into-jakarta-as-protests-continue.html>
The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/sep/24/thousands-protest-against-new-criminal-code-across-indonesia>
BBC: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-49810741>

CHAPTER IV

Results I: Conflicting, internalised and changing norms







4.1 Religious proscriptions against premarital sex and dating

Reflecting the dominant religions in each site, most respondents in Lampung and Semarang are Muslim, and most in Denpasar are Hindu, with small numbers of Christians in each site. Religious values were strongly endorsed by respondents of all faiths. For example, as one young man in Denpasar said, *"I put my religion first"*. Respondents explained that religious norms and values are made clear to them through religious *aturan* (rules), communicated first by their parents, but also by religious leaders and institutions and the wider community.

Across faiths, religious norms place high value on virginity and have strong proscriptions against *zina* (any sexual activity that is not between a heterosexual married couple). There is a widespread fear and moral panic about young people having premarital sex, and dating is widely discouraged. If permitted, dating is only allowed under parental supervision and couples are only allowed to hold hands, although some respondents said they were too shy to even do this. Many respondents spoke of wanting to follow religious norms, so they can be 'good boys and girls' and condemned dating and premarital sex, for reasons of immorality:

"If he has a girlfriend, pray and pray so he breaks up." (Male, Lampung)

"Don't have sex before you marry. That is just not right." (Female, Lampung)

"If a boy plays with a girl this is forbidden. Very forbidden." "I do not have sex and I do not do Zina [pre-marital sex]. And they told me not to date. In my opinion it works." (Two male respondents, Lampung)

"I do not want to have sex before the marriage. It is part of the norms of decency. So, if a child has been educated with reason, has a good example at home, we have reason, we can think and analyse correctly. We think with a strong faith, so it [premarital sex] will not happen, unless it [premarital sex] is really tempting." (Male, Lampung)

4.2 The taboo of sexuality

Many young people see sex as risky and dangerous: *"It is full of risks to have sex ... it causes so many worries for young people,"* (Male, Semarang). Many described sex as being dangerous and addictive: *"People who have already done it [sex] definitely get addicted. They want it all the time,"* (Female, Semarang). *"Don't have free sex, if you are addicted you cannot stop,"* (Female, Semarang). Many respondents accepted that curiosity and feelings of lust are normal and part of human nature, yet felt they should hold themselves back and refrain from acting on such feelings: *"That is why I do not want to date, if there are two people, the third will be the devil. But, yes there will be lust, definitely lust,"* (Male, Lampung). Seen as taboo, sexuality is rarely discussed, and this lack of discussion about sexuality was cited by respondents as a factor in harassment and abuse.

4.3 Forms of dating

Despite taboos and restrictions around dating, respondents spoke of a range of different types of dating. In Bandar Lampung, a number of terms appear that relate to dating type describing different forms of their dating models, including "Photo 3x4" (which limits the area for touching area to the face and kissing), "Photo 4x6" (extends the range to the chest), and "Photo Full Body" (to include the genital area). In Semarang, the terms *Takbiran* and *Tarik bibir Pelan-pelan* (literally translated, "to pull lip slowly") is for expressions of love that only dare to kiss but do not having sex. The meaning of these terms from Semarang is that kissing is considered the limit in courtship, that only kissing by biting the lips slowly is permitted in respondents' perspective, not having genital sex which, according to respondents, is prohibited in Islam. Whereas in Bali, *Sing Beling Sing Nganten* ("no pregnancy, no marriage") describes a permissive value for intercourse before marriage during dating.

4.4 Violence, abuse and harassment

Stories of (sexual) violence, abuse and harassment were widespread among male and female respondents, occurring in different forms including verbal, physical and online, and in many contexts including within families, at school, in dating relationships and via social media.

For example, one respondent explained that she had experienced violence at home: *"Often ... when I played something that went too far, I was beaten up by a huge wooden beam right on my back. My mother used to tell me that she regretted giving birth to me, cursed me like an animal."* (Female, Lampung)

These experiences had profound effects on young people.

"I wanted to kill myself, I was just thinking, 'Why did people treated me like this?' It was not about the physical thing, but their verbal abuse was just painful. It's more painful than physical one." (Male, Denpasar)

We heard several stories of young women in dating relationships being expected to accept violence from a man if they had had sex with him.

We heard stories of sexual and physical abuse in childhood; in these stories respondents had often not realised what was happening to them while they endured traumatic experiences during their childhood.

"At the pesantren [Islamic boarding school] I was close with the father, he already called me sayang [sweetheart]. Then he asked me into the room to give him a massage. Also his penis. Until the sperm came out. I did not want to, but I did it. He wanted to take my heart. It happened many times he asked for massage. And then one time it felt like wood entered my vagina. I thought it was a penis but now I think it was wood. It hurt. I did not talk, I did not cry, I just was silent. I don't know what I did, until now, because in my village we do not talk about sex education, it is taboo."

In this account, as in many others, respondents cited a lack of knowledge about sexuality, personal boundaries, and what constitutes abuse or rape. They had not learned about this in school and did not talk about any of these issues with their parents, being told, "We will tell you about it the night before you get married". Young people reported not knowing how to respond, even when things "felt wrong" and many said they did not know where to go for psychological help.

"He brought me to the bed and did that, but I did not understand what it was ... I did not know the word rape. It continued from third to sixth grade ... But now I understand the power relations ... Now I understand. I was afraid so I could not fight. I could only be silent and obey."

4.5 Cultural expectations of gender roles

From the respondents' accounts it became clear that – next to religious norms – cultural norms and values are widely acknowledged and important for young people in Indonesia. These cultural beliefs vary between sites, but have in common strong, patriarchal themes which prioritise family and heterosexual marriage, and embed gender roles of women as homemakers and mothers, and men as providers and protectors of the family. For example, in Semarang, a famous and widely cited Javanese phrase *maja, mana, masa* (make up, childbearing, cooking) explains the three expected roles for women as wives, mothers and homemakers. Meanwhile, in Denpasar, Bali, men have a higher status and extensive responsibilities to uphold the *banjar* (neighbourhood) and the *pura* (temple), which together form the centre of social life. As one male respondent from Denpasar explained, "*being a boy in Bali is glorified. Balinese men must uphold custom*". Another explained that "*no matter how naughty, Balinese men have to come back to Pura*" (male, Denpasar). *Pura*- and *banjar*-based community organisations enforce strict supervision of young people, in particular young men. Furthermore, the

caste system plays an important role in Balinese daily life. This will be elaborated in the next chapter regarding the local custom of *Sing Beling Sing Nganten* in Bali ("no pregnancy, no marriage").

These cultural expectations of gender roles often seemed deeply internalised by respondents. Across sites and religions, respondents made statements endorsing expectations for women to stay at home, to cook, raise the children, and to do everything in the home, and for men to go out, work hard and uphold the family's status.

"The most important thing is that she stays at home, raises the children and washes all the clothes." (Male, Lampung)

"Women are into words, men into deeds." (Male, Semarang)

Strong gendered expectations were also reflected in conversations about the ideal partner. Female respondents generally wanted a young man with money, a motorbike or a car. This is considered more important than being handsome. Young female respondents explained this is an expectation from their parents. Also, it is generally acceptable for women to ask for things from a man but not too much, because a man must maintain his independence. Men are thus expected to be independent while a wife depends on her husband. Young men want a beautiful woman as a sign of prestige. Also, she should be pious and religious and cover her body. However, both male and female respondents also wanted someone they can talk with, who is interesting and well educated.

However, as outlined above, we also heard signs that these norms are changing.

"Yes, it was like that before. Before, women could not go to school, could only cook in the house. But now they can, and they can work outside. I do not agree that women should raise the children, because men also have to do that." (Male, Semarang)

4.6 Myths

We heard a range of widely believed myths regarding gender and sexuality which illustrate deep rooted gender norms prioritising virginity and fertility and stigmatising promiscuity. For example, many myths exist regarding how to tell whether a girl is a virgin: *"I was judged by my friends that I was not a virgin anymore. I don't understand. They said it was because of the way I walk"* (female, Semarang); or that you can lose your virginity from masturbation, having a wet dream or riding a bike.

"A woman [or] a man ... is not a virgin [when they] have already had sexual relations, if for example, you try sex with your hands, girls and boys who are used to masturbating." (Male, Semarang)

"Usually men have a wet dream, are you then not a virgin anymore?" (Male, Semarang)

"There might be an accident or something, if she fell of a bicycle, she was not virgin anymore." (Female, Lampung)

Other myths exist on when and how women get pregnant, for example *"Having sex only one time cannot make you pregnant."* Particularly concerning was another myth we heard, that a woman who does not want to have sex cannot get pregnant. Furthermore, if a woman cannot clean the house or cook, she is not able to have children, while girls get big breasts if they are "touched a lot", meaning bigger breasted girls must have been touched by a lot by men. *"I used to be in Padang, and there they say, 'Do not let your breasts be held by men, because your breasts will later become bigger because of this'"* (Female, Semarang). The existence of the myths reflects deep-rooted patriarchal norms while the fact that they are widely believed illustrates the low levels of SRHR knowledge among young people in Indonesia.

4.7 Strong influence of parents

Respondents from all three sites repeatedly emphasised the importance of respect, obedience and responsibility towards parents and the extended family. *"I do what my parents told me to do"* (Male, Semarang). Decisions around dating, marriage and work are strongly influenced by parental aspirations, and many respondents said they felt they are "living in the parent's dream". Reflecting Bennett's (2002) description of marriage and love life as a family business in Indonesia, choices on who to date are often strongly influenced by parents, for example one male respondent from Lampung explained, *"I do not care about her [possible girlfriend's] physical appearance. The most important is that my parents agree."* Respondents also explained that parents have substantial influence in when and whom they will marry. In some cases, young people enter *Ta'aruf* (marrying directly, with someone of your parent's choice, without having met your future partner) for their parents. Parents have high aspirations for their children to complete their education and get a good job, with civil servant jobs being particularly highly valued.

"My parents do not give permission to have a girlfriend before I have finished my education"

4.8 Importance of marrying someone of the same religion/ethnicity

Religion and ethnicity were cited as important in finding a marriage partner, and many respondents emphasised that a potential partner should be of the same religion (or convert to the religion of the male partner) and ethnicity.

"The point is, if looking for a partner, he must have the same Islamic religion, one faith. We don't want LDR [Long Distance Relationship] because we are separated by religion." (Female, Semarang)

"Most important is that she understands and knows my religion." (Male, Lampung)

"They are Christian. We have to live side by side, but we cannot marry. What is the point if we are still different?" (Female, Lampung)

"She must cover. Sholihah⁶. For her face, cover it. And she has to be clever in the Quran. And, her face and eyes have to shine." (Male, Lampung)

Even when another factor – such as physicality – was cited as more important, religion remained a vital factor. *"Yes religion is also a matter, as long as he is handsome. And his personality. So the most important is the physical part. Second is religion,"* (Female, Lampung). Another example is told by a young woman from Lampung: *"Her ethnicity is Batak. She was dating her Lampungnese boyfriend and visited him in his house. The mother of her boyfriend asks: 'What is your name?' 'I am Putri,' she says. 'Where are you from?' 'I am of the Batak people.' The mother did not say anything anymore and disappeared. After this, boyfriend and girlfriend broke up."*

In Bali, it is particularly challenging because of the caste system which discourages inter-caste marriage. *"In Bali, we have a very strict caste system." "For those who come from different castes it is difficult to marry."*

"We have a high caste, so we maintain a high attitude. We dress and talk politely. So, we want to find someone from the same blood, the same caste, so the ancestors can continue." (Male, Lampung)

If young people from Bali fall in love with someone from a different caste, they will sometimes date secretly – called "backstreet dating" explored further below – however, they cannot marry him/her. However, this norm is starting to change as this young man from Denpasar explains: *"In Bali, we have castes. So, I have to find someone in my caste. But recently, my parents say it is okay, it is hard, but the*

*most important things is that the girl can accept me the way I am." As explained in the next chapter, by using the local rule of *Sing Beling Sing Nganten* young people in Bali find a way to marry when they are from different castes.*

4.9 Strengthening patriarchal norms

Taken together, we see that the combination of religious and cultural norms forms strong, patriarchal gendered norms and expectations which strongly impact the lives of young Indonesians. Respondents explained that in recent years these norms have strengthened in a context of increasing conservatism. For example, Semarang residents explained that in the 1990s only a few women wore hijabs in the city, whereas now it is the norm. We also heard how the Hijrah movement, which promotes a strict conservative interpretation of Islam⁴, has become popular among young people, especially Lampung respondents. One young man from Lampung explained that the *"Hijrah philosophy is the shift from dark to light or taking the right path."* A young woman explained, *"I follow Hijrah ... I often read astagfirullah-astagfirullah⁵ and I save it. Earlier, at junior high school, I had boyfriends, but now I don't want to anymore. And now almost everybody wears a hijab or a cadar. So now I feel shy to wear jeans,"* (Female, Lampung). Other respondents explained how they were hoping to have *Ta'arauf* (a form of arranged marriage where prospective spouses do not date or get to know each other before marriage).

⁴ See: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Islamic-Hijrah-movement-changing-Indonesian-society-47855.html>

⁵ Astagfirullah-astagfirullah is a social media profile of a popular imam

4.10 Online conservative movements

Social media use was ubiquitous amongst almost all respondents. As respondents explained, "Social media influences me so much, it is accessible to everyone." "That is why I always hold my phone in my hand. It is a source of information."

We heard of several different conservative social media accounts and movements, including the Front Pembela Islam (FPI) meaning The Islam Defenders Front, and various Islamic prophets including Astagfirullah and Hanan Attaki who promote messages through Instagram and other platforms. One movement that is particularly relevant for Explore4Action is the increasingly popular youth movement Indonesia Tanpa Pacaran (ITP) meaning Indonesia Without Dating, which encourages young people not to date. ITP is highly active on Facebook⁶ and Instagram⁷ and via WhatsApp groups. Posts preach about the importance of marriage and family life, instruct young people not to date, present clear messages on what being a "good man" and a "good woman" entails, encourage women to wear a veil or burka and promotes practices such as *Ta'aruf* (See Figure 1). One young man from Lampung said, "Yes, I want to do *Ta'aruf* like that, because if I see people do *Ta'aruf* until marriage at Instagram, it is so sweet."



Figure 1. Post from Indonesia Tanpa Pacaran Facebook site, translating as: "The most important medicine for a person who is being intoxicated by the creatures of love, is the marriage."

⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/IndonesiaTanpaPacaranID/> with half a million followers

⁷ <https://www.instagram.com/indonesiatanpapacaran/> with one million followers

An example from an online post describes dating as the behaviour of a "*Kafir* (disbeliever) who does not want to be ruled by the religion of his life." Another post asks women, "*Do you want to be the best woman? Men say that the most pleasant woman for a man is one who always obeys*", while another says, "*Get busy studying religion. Do not date.*"

4.11 More liberal norms and messages

At the same time, messages of patriarchal gender norms and increasing conservatism are not the only inputs which young people receive in the online and offline world. In an increasingly globalised and connected world, young Indonesians are subject to a range of other influences shaping their ideas from within Indonesia and from outside. As one Lampung respondent explained, "*Right now we live in an era of globalisation.*"

Social media have a key role in promoting and spreading so-called globalised values, providing exposure to global voices from outside Indonesia, in particular from Korea, Western Europe, and America. Respondents particularly emphasised the influence from Korea and Korean popular culture such as movies, series and K-pop (Korean pop music). When asked what their ideal future boy- or girlfriend should look like, many responded that they should look Korean. As these respondents from Lampung and Semarang explain for example:

"*Movies from Korea influence me a lot. I understand how boys tease girls, how boys have lust, how they move ... Now I want a boy like that.*"

"*I watch Korean movies and I like the boys - they are white and funny.*"

"*I want my boyfriend to be like a Korean boy.*"

"*I want a girl like a with hair and skin like a Korean girl.*"

Respondents told us how they had seen people kissing in public on Instagram and this made them

want to try it. Respondents spoke widely about how they follow social media celebrities known as “selebgrams” and how these profiles offer ideas about romanticism and relationships, following the hashtag #relationshipgoals. These profiles influence young people with ideas and ideals about how their bodies and dating life should look. Young people reported feeling pressure to have ideal relationships, for example when they see pictures of people kissing online. These ideals often contradict local cultural expectations.

These young women from Lampung said in a focus group discussion:

“What is trending overseas can be trending here too.”

“I read about reproductive and sexual health on Facebook. I do not follow those profiles, but I read it, this is me.”

“I am stalking male celebrities online, they look so good with many muscles and healthy lifestyle and can sing very well.”

4.12 Pornography

Pornography is heavily censored in Indonesia. Yet respondents explained that through the internet and social media, “access to porn is so easy,” (Male, Denpasar). Clearly, government attempts to censor pornographic websites are not working. As one respondent explained, “the government blocks porn websites but it does not make sense. They should provide it,” (Male, Lampung).

Young people explained that they are motivated to watch pornography because “we are curious, we want to explore [our sexuality], so we open the internet,” (Male Lampung).

Many respondents reflected the prevailing criticism of pornography that it encourages young people to have sex. For example:

“If I watch porn it goes to my imagination. So, I want to date and have sex.” (Male, Lampung)

“I used to have a full playlist with porn on my phone at Senior High School. My lust was so high.” (Male, Denpasar)

“He was influenced by watching porn and now he has a sexual relationship.” (Male, Denpasar)

However, pornography was also seen as something to laugh about. “I used to be shy about watching porn. But now, we are open and making jokes about it.” (Male Denpasar)

4.13 Peer pressure to date and have sex

Messages which conflict with prevailing conservative norms do not only come from social media and from outside the country. As is the case around the world, we heard from young people about being pressured by their peers to date or have sex. One respondent explained that “If you have never dated, you are obsolete”. This young man from Bali explains, “When at high school, having sex was only to get recognition from friends, it was not really a need.” While another explained, “He had sex because his friends challenged him to do that with his girlfriend; if he fails, they will make fun of him in every single conversation.” Another male respondent from Lampung had a similar experience, “I did it [premarital sex] at Junior High School, my friend forced me to do it.” And, “To do it [sex], my friends do it, so I feel like I want to do it all the time too.”

4.14 Internalised conflicting norms

In sum we see that young people in Indonesia are subject to a range of often conflicting messages and norms. On the one hand they are warned against dating and sex, while, on the other, they are encouraged by friends and social media to explore them. Cultural concepts of gender norms are deeply internalised, yet young people also strive for gender equality. We heard many young people express contradictory ideals, supporting both conservative patriarchal gender norms and more liberal concepts of gender equality, seeing men and women as “the same” and citing girls’ right to, for example, education. This is illustrated by contradictory statements from both male and female respondents.

“Men and women are equal, but my sister should stay at home. The man is the head of the household.” (Male, Semarang)

“I want an equal relationship, but a man should take all decisions.” (Female, Lampung)

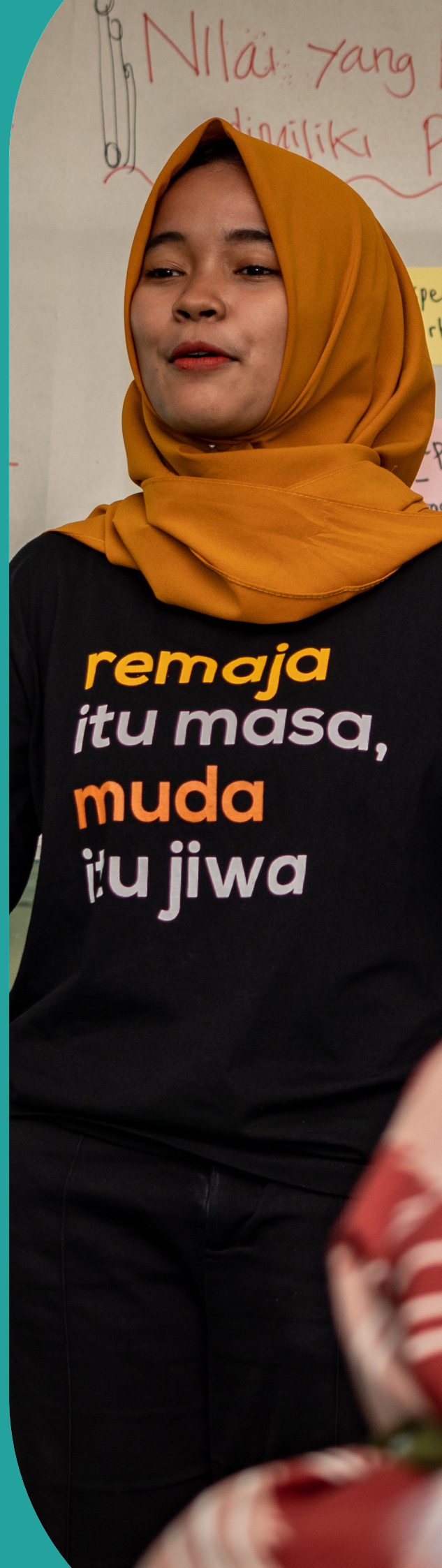
“The point is, in Javanese culture the woman works in the kitchen, the man makes a living. But I think we are the same. The man just has to do more physical work and the woman the mental work.” (Male, Semarang)

“Boys and girls are the same. The only difference is the vagina and the penis. But the woman dominates the kitchen and the man upholds dignity.” (Male, Lampung)

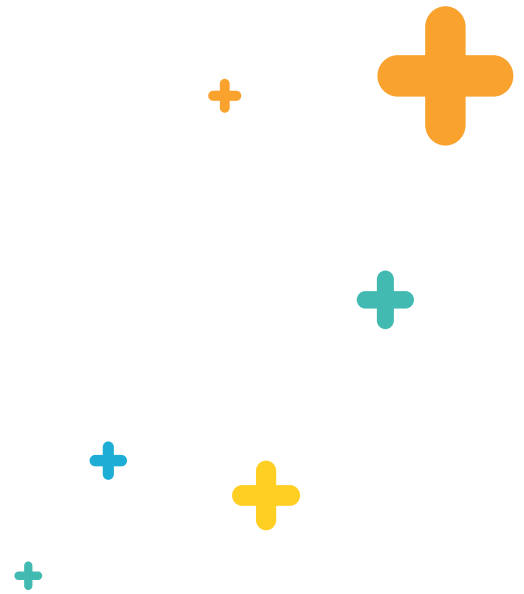
Discussing these contradictory ideas, respondents often did not see a conflict between them. In the next chapter, we explore how young people respond to these complex and often conflicting norms and messages.

CHAPTER V

Results II: Young people's agency and navigation







5.1 Adherence to increasingly conservative norms

As discussed above, many respondents spoke of their devotion to their religion and desire to avoid the “immoral” practices of premarital sex and dating. Many respondents spoke of adhering to the expectation to “stay within limits” and avoid *seks bebas* (free sex). For example, one young man from Denpasar explains, “I know so many boys and girls date outside. They hold hands, they kiss, they even have sex. But I have my own limits. I take responsibility.” We heard often of the Hijrah movement, which promotes a strict interpretation of Islamic teachings, and many aspired for *Ta’aruf*, a form of arranged marriage where young people are married without first dating or getting to know their prospective spouse (Dessy, 2015). We heard from respondents in all three sites how *Ta’aruf* is becoming more popular among young people. It is seen as a way of protecting young people from the immoral practices of premarital sex and dating. As a young man from Lampung explains: “Maybe because of dating, it is better to do *Ta’aruf*.”

“Ta’aruf is now a trend, it’s good to prevent us from adultery ... If I choose Ta’aruf, I tend to be acquainted with her family, talk to her parents about my plans for their daughter. I will not date, but it is more like acquaintances and plans for the future.” (Male, Semarang)

Young people who adhered to conservative expectations were often damning of others who did not. For example, one young man from Semarang purported, “The young people here, they drink alcohol and bring girls. Then they get drunk. People who are drunk, you know, they will do negative things. But they think it is positive.”

We also saw more secular strategies, amongst young people who proudly choose to remain *jombloh* (single), prioritising education instead, drawing on the narrative *sukses dulu* – “success first”. Some had had boy/girlfriends before, “for fun” or “to try”, but now want to focus on their education and future careers.

"I only want a girlfriend when I have a job. My parents say: first study and work hard and then find a girl. But I had a girlfriend anyway at SMP (Junior High School) just to try how it feels."
(Male, Denpasar)

5.2 Social media as a tool for dating and experimentation

The use of some social media was described by respondents as a way to secretly explore the world of sexuality and dating, to find information, to meet people online and to explore themselves, as this young man from Lampung illustrates: *"In my opinion, before the internet it was so hard to find information and to express myself. But now we can express ourselves and explore ourselves."* Young people talked about how they use social media to "stalk" people they are attracted to, to flirt and to chat online, which may not be possible in real life. A young man from Denpasar describes, *"We date using our phones. Using WhatsApp, Facebook or Instagram, we message online, we have more freedom."* Young people from Semarang in Java were particularly grateful for the freedom allowed by social media as, in Javanese culture, it is generally not acceptable to directly express one's feelings. In some cases, meeting people online led to real life meetings, but several also described "love experiences" conducted solely online, such as this young man from Lampung: *"I have love experience through Facebook only."* A young woman from Lampung said, *"Although we are far from each other, we can communicate online."*

A popular way of navigating online – especially for young women – is to use fake accounts from which they can *"give codes and reactions again and again"* (Female, Lampung). As a female respondent from Lampung explains: *"I know boys through Facebook. With another fake account I follow him, it seems strange, but I like to stalk."* Fake accounts were seen as very normal and "not a problem". *"The real, first*

account is for communication and sharing, it is more personal, and the followers are true friends." The secret accounts offer young women in particular an opportunity to be more assertive than they may be in real life.

"Women like to do stalking, have other [fake] accounts, follow them [people they are attracted to], they don't know that we follow them just for stalking so that we don't look like aggressive girls." (Female, Lampung)

Social media provide young people with opportunities to find a middle way between the restrictive norms from parents and society versus peer norms and what seems to be their own need for information and exploration. Through social media, young people can experiment with self-expression, flirting and romantic relationships, and still feel they adhere to parents' wishes and cultural norms of not engaging in "real" romantic, intimate or sexual relationships. Also, the online space allows for anonymity, and makes it easier for young people to keep these experiences secret.

However, the online space is not always safe, as respondents in this research gave examples of online bullying, online harassment, abuse, violence and body shaming. For example, a group discussion with young women in Denpasar included this exchange:

Female respondent 1: *"When I was in high school ... a guy followed me [on social media] and sent me an online message. He wanted to introduce himself. I had no problem with that because we're just getting to know each other, that's more friends for me. And then he asked 'PAP, PAP [post a picture]' ... I immediately blocked him."*

Female respondent 2: *"On Facebook many people direct-message me and sent... like, things. Once I was sent... it was an old guy's account, or something, he direct-messaged me and sent a weird picture. ... Sexual photos ... so I blocked him. His picture looked like he was around forty years old."*

Female respondent 3: *"That happens a lot on Facebook, that's why I don't activate my Facebook."*

Another respondent explained that social media can become harmful when people post "comments on other people's statuses, now that's real, it becomes problematic. The important thing is not to harm others." (Male, Semarang)

In conclusion we see that social media provide a platform that gives opportunity to express oneself and to explore dating and relationships. But this also runs the risk of online bullying, online abuse and violence, and body shaming.

5.3 Secret dating

Despite proscriptions against dating, many young Indonesians find ways to do so in secret. We heard extensively about secret relationships, secret activities and meeting in secret locations. One male respondent from Bali explained, *"Do not do it [dating] in front of your parents. Just go to the backstreets."* Three other young men from Semarang had similar experiences:

"For me my parents do not allow me to date, but I just do it and keep it quiet," and:

"Same for me, if my parents find out they will be mad."

"Well, in love, as a young couple, we only try. If we got busted by our parents, we can still date secretly. Just to try and feel it."

For young women in particular, it was important to keep relationships secret for fear of recriminations from their parents.

Interviewer: *"If a girl is forbidden from going out and date, does she obey?"*

Respondent: *" ... behind [her parents] she will still date."*

Interviewer: *"So, it's like dating in secret, right?"*

Respondent: *"Yes, in the backstreets. If a guy already has a girlfriend ... he will definitely say so, if a girl has a relationship she would never tell."*

Interviewer: *"Means that there is a secret relationship, usually to whom do they keep it a secret?"*

Respondent: *"To the parents, because they are afraid of their parents."* (Male, Denpasar)

As a young man in Semarang explains, dating can look like a normal meeting: *"If you look at it from the outside, it seems normal, we are just chatting. But actually, we go very much in depth and we meet very often with our girlfriend."* The same respondent went on to pose the question, *"But where can we go together? We want to be alone."* Locations for secret dating ranged from *"home, when the house is quiet, and everybody is at work"* (Male, Semarang), to hotels, and to secluded places out of town.

Many respondents said that they experience internalised feelings of guilt when they secretly date, either online or in real life. As this young man from Lampung says, *"I was dating through social media or WhatsApp, and then I always got home very late and then I forgot to recite the Quran."*

5.4 Sex

Despite the moral panic regarding "free sex", many respondents also saw dating and having sex before marriage as normal and part of humanity: *"Sex among young people is now considered normal"*, said a young woman from Semarang, while a male respondent from Semarang said that *"here, drugs, and sex before marriage are common"*.

Despite restrictive norms and the social risks involved, several respondents (more men than women) reported engaging in sexual activity before marriage. One male respondent in Semarang explained he had *"hugged a girl, and ... held her breasts"* while another male respondent said, *"I have already done it [sex] once, when I was invited, it is hard to refuse, because I was so curious, my lust was so high. The boy was hot, and the girl was also hot."* A smaller number of young women also talked about sexual experiences. One said, *"I date, and I*

kiss etcetera. My parents for sure do not know their daughter is kissing ... but I hide it and as long as I am safe and not pregnant it is okay for me." And another young woman says, "Why don't you just marry him? they ask me often. But I am just enjoying myself! I just want to have sex, and also with different people."

Young people said that they feel their relationship is more serious after having sex, as described by these three young men from Semarang:

"She was so pretty, her body, and she felt like she wanted to try sex. After that, our relationship was more intimate."

"We were just chatting, hanging out, dating. And then, after doing it [sex], it was more romantic. Before, we were shy to hold hands, but after doing it [sex], we were brave to hug, to walk together."

"People can say what they want, the most important is that it [sex] is delicious."

5.5 Contraception and abortion

In Indonesia, access to contraceptives is restricted and they are only provided to married people. Although condoms are widely available in convenience stores, young people are often refused when they try and buy them or face stigma and shame in attempting to buy them. *"I have trouble asking for a condom,"* (Female, Semarang). Some respondents talked about ordering condoms through online (and hence more anonymous) motorbike delivery service (GoJek), but this is more common in the capital Jakarta. Some who had experienced condoms said they did not like them. One young woman from Semarang said about sex, *"We both [she and male partner] think the sensation with condom is not good. The skin feels like plastic."* Others, like this young man from Semarang felt embarrassed by condoms: *"Maybe the girl knows when she is fertile, but maybe she does not know, maybe she is distracted by her lust. So, we can use a condom, but we just do not want it, we are embarrassed."*

Some young women spoke of using the morning-after pill, although this also has barriers to its use. This limited access to contraception for unmarried (young) people means that those who are having sex often do so without protection, increasing the risk of unplanned pregnancy. The most popular method of contraception was the withdrawal method. Young women from Semarang explained, *"Don't let him come inside you. I say: come outside! Like a smart girl."* *"My friends do not use condoms. We do 'coming outside'."* Some respondents cited Islamic teachings to justify preferences for the withdrawal method over condoms: *"It was already written in the Arabic book: 'Come [sperm] outside.'" (Male, Semarang)*

Since many young people have unprotected sex, unwanted pregnancies (known as KTD - *Kehamilan Tidak Diinginkan*) are common, or as one respondent from Semarang said, *"There is no information, so many girls get pregnant."* Respondents held strong opinions about abortion. These young women from Semarang say, *"If you abort you are a murderer."* *"My friend said the other day 'Shit, I am pregnant.' Then she bought some medicine online and the baby was gone."* And, *"My sister also had an unwanted pregnancy. She went to the doctor and solved the problem with a lot of money."* *"If you want to abort you can also eat a lot of pineapple and drink Sprite, it is cheaper."* *"Abortion is haram [forbidden by Islam], but I think if you get pregnant unmarried you must think with your reason and not with religion."* Since many young women decide not to have an abortion, as it is stigmatised and seen as a sin, their pregnancies often lead to marriage, since there is a strong pressure for men to "take their responsibility". If the young couple then marry, the respondents call this MBA, "Married By Accident".

5.6 Sing Beling Sing Nganten

In Bali, a way for young people to navigate the different norms about sex is to use the rule of *Sing Beling Sing Nganten*, although this is not straightforward. Within Balinese culture, the custom of *Sing Beling Sing Nganten*, meaning “No pregnancy, no marriage”, allows (and even encourages) premarital sex in order to test the woman’s fertility. A young man from Bali explained, *“The girl’s fertility needs to be checked before marriage. Pregnancy first, then marriage is accepted.”* This tradition stems from the aforementioned pressure for men continue their family line through offspring. *“Men are exalted, they are considered to be the successors of the family, so the boys are expected to continue the offspring”* (Male, Denpasar). Another male respondent from Denpasar adds, *“This rule is especially common when a family has only one son. The custom results in social pressure for boys. As the only boy in family, I always think about my responsibility, I need to marry, I need to have a son. What if I fail? I feel mentally burdened.”*

Some respondents acknowledge this rule can be harmful for young people, especially young women. Within Hinduism – the biggest religion in Bali – *Sing Beling Sing Nganten* is seen as a sin: *“Hinduism condemns it [Sing Beling Sing Nganten]: it is proved when the ceremony of marriage, there is a ritual that symbolises the virginity of the boy and the girl and after that, they can have sex,”* explains a young woman from Bali. A young woman who becomes pregnant from *Sing Beling Sing Nganten* before her marriage will face stigma and discrimination: *“She is not allowed to enter the temple, before the marriage ceremony. And, there will be rumours in the community about her pregnancy.”* A male respondent from Denpasar states, *“Sing Beling Sing Nganten is a sin because the child who is born is not Suputra⁸ and when the girl is pregnant and unmarried, she will receive comments like: ‘Oh her belly is big and she is unmarried.’”* *“Some people see Sing Beling Sing Nganten as normal, but other people think that best is*

having Suputra children.” A young woman from Bali explains the complexity:

“If the girl is not pregnant, it is a pity for the girl. She gets thrown away and is not a virgin anymore. And who knows if the guy is infertile, why always blame the girls? My Mom told me if we want to get married, it is okay as long as we really want it, and not because we get pregnant, because we are being tested by our boyfriend.”

Thus, within Balinese culture men experience high pressure to reproduce, but the Balinese custom of *Sing Beling Sing Nganten* leads to stigma and can be harmful for the woman and stigmatise the baby who is not *Suputra*.

However, some young people in Bali consciously make use of this ancient cultural rule of *Sing Beling Sing Nganten*, as a way to have premarital sex and to have an (otherwise prohibited) relationship with someone from a different caste. If the young woman gets pregnant, the young couple use the *Sing Beling Sing Nganten* rule to get permission for marriage from the parents. *“We will have feelings of sin if we do it,”* explains a Balinese young woman, but in the end two people from a different caste can get married:

“If the caste of the boy is lower than the one of his girlfriend, the solution is to do this. If the daughter is pregnant, the parents can do nothing, because there is a need for the boy to take the responsibility for the pregnancy, so they will allow him to marry their daughter.” (Female, Denpasar)

These findings parallel other research in Nepal and Lombok, Indonesia where young people have consciously made use of ancient cultural rules to be able to elope and marry (Ahearn, 2001; Termeulen, 2019).

⁸ Suputra means a “good child” born within a marriage and within one caste in Bali

5.7 Experiences of LGBT young people

The Youth Voices Research specifically aimed to include a diverse range of young people in our sampling, including LGBT young people. Strong conservative norms not only forbid pre-marital sex and dating, they also forbid non-heterosexual relationships and expressions. We heard from LGBT youth how the LGBT community is excluded and their voices muffled, leading to a broad range of problems and challenges.

"If you are a lesbian you experience violence. I am lucky that my family loves me. But some lesbians are not so lucky. They get raped by family members to make them not lesbian anymore to make them normal. But we are normal!" (Female, Semarang)

"You can marry [a man]. But if you don't like him, it feels like you get raped every day. Because I have lesbian friends and they had to marry, and she told me she already has children but every time her husband wants to have sex it feels like rape." (Female, Semarang)

"Since I was a child I was bullied because they said I act like a girl. People call me sissy and ladyboy. And I experienced sexual harassment." (Male, Semarang)

Several LGBT respondents reported finding it challenging to accept their identity and sexuality. For example, a young man from Denpasar explained, *"I was worried, and I did not want to be gay like this. I got stressed, I cried."*

"I don't know, I cannot imagine myself telling this [that I am gay], I do not dare to say. Because my family is very religious. My first sister studies the Al Quran, my second sister is caretaker of the mosque, the third is also diligent. So, that's why I can't." (Male, Semarang)

"I am in the middle between boy and girl and I learned about sexual orientation and gender identity. From

birth, I felt boy and girl, I want to be myself, but it is difficult with all the neighbours and the community. It is hard to be independent and free. I cry in my room because I am crazy, I am not normal.' (Transgender respondent, Lampung)

Bali was seen by respondents as "the best place for gay people" in Indonesia due to a perceived greater opportunity for self-expression. One young man from Bali explained how he felt freer to show himself in Bali than in more conservative Java. *"I dared to have sex with a man and even when I did it, I regretted, I felt guilty, but I was curious too. In Bali, I dared to show myself more than in Java ... I was in [tourist area in Bali]."*

Respondents outlined how, using social media, LGBT people can find out more information. For example, one young transgender respondent in Lampung explained, *"I was looking up information about androgyny online."* Other respondents talked about using social media to find other LGBT people, *"It turns out we are not alone. Initially I was confused, I thought I was the only one, but there are many, we are many,"* (Transgender respondent, Lampung) and to meet others in real life, *"There are LGBT hotspots we find online. We tell each other we go to this hotel."* (Transgender respondent, Lampung). In Bali, respondents explained that in Balinese tourist areas dating applications such as Tinder helped young LGBT men in Bali to link with tourists for romantic or sexual encounters *"if you want to find a Bule (foreigner) there, you have to use Tinder,"* (Male, Denpasar).

Social media was also seen as a way to express oneself anonymously. A male LGBT respondent in Denpasar explained, *"I had a fake account on Facebook. I did not want to use the real one because I still felt like I was a sin. So, I used the secret one to meet people to have sex."* However, fake profiles were not always well received, especially by foreigners. *"In Bali there are many foreign gay people, but they do not like if I use a fake profile on Tinder. They don't like if I lie,"* (Male, Denpasar).

Further, respondents of a range of sexualities explained how social media helped them to

understand the experiences of different LGBT people and therefore to feel less stigmatisation. One male respondent from Semarang said, *“On social media I saw a girl who transformed into a boy with hormone injection. Now she is even better than a normal boy.”* On the other hand, the conservative Islamic profiles on social media mentioned before decrease the acceptance and increase the stigma towards the LGBT community.

For LGBT youth as for young people of all sexualities, social media is important for accessing information, identity development and for dating and finding sexual partners. But even more than heterosexual youth, LGBT youth have to use secrecy as a strategy to avoid stigma and discrimination and suffer heavily from feelings of guilt, shame and anxiety.





CHAPTER VI

Conclusion and implications



This Youth Voices Research sought to understand how young people aged 18 to 24 navigate between different messages, norms, expectations and their own feelings and wishes in relation to gender and sexuality, and how this is manifested through online romantic and sexual behaviour. The following section sets out the three overarching conclusions of this research, and highlights implications for education and health services arising from each of these conclusions.

6.1 Young people navigate complex conflicting norms regarding gender and sexuality

The research has illustrated how young people in Indonesia face a range of complex conflicting normative messages regarding gender and sexuality. On the one hand, dominant societal discourse – often emphasised by parents and religious influences – prohibits dating, premarital sex, and same-sex relationships. Sexuality is a highly taboo subject, leading to low knowledge and prevalent myths. On the other hand, young people remain curious about sex, they are easily able to access pornographic material online and increased (social) media access brings in more liberal messaging relating to gender and sexuality, which increases the complexity of messaging.

Young people respond to this in different ways. Some choose to adhere to restrictive norms, promoted by increasingly prevalent conservative (online) social and religious movements. Others find ways to deal with conflicting norms and their own need for information and identity development, by keeping their activities and relationships secret, or by using cultural “loopholes” like *Sing Beling Sing Nganten* to justify their behaviour. Internet and social media are particularly well used for this purpose. Young people construct fake accounts, that allow them to deal with the strict norms (in ‘real life’), while using their online

identities to experiment with self-expression and various identities.

Navigating complex and conflicting norms does not mean simply ‘choosing’ one narrative. Young people in this research often held opposing attitudes at the same time, e.g. “I want an equal relationship, but a man should take all decisions”. Similar findings of young people concurrently holding stereotypical and more equitable attitudes in relation to gender norms have been found in a various settings including the USA, Nepal, Mexico and Malawi (Kågesten et al, 2016). Rather than choosing the one or the other, many respondents’ lives, experiences and behaviours seem to take place simultaneously in two separate worlds, the real world where they adhere to parental and societal expectations, and the online and peer world, where they are influenced by different norms and experiment with different identities. In expressing their attitudes and beliefs, they draw from both these worlds. This complex normative landscape underlines the importance of understanding diverse and conflicting moral frameworks in order to situate responses within them.

Implication: Comprehensive sexuality education enables young people to critically assess complex conflicting messages

Using a rights-based and gender transformative approach, comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) seeks to equip young people with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values they need to determine and enjoy their sexuality – physically and emotionally, individually and in relationships – whether or not they engage in sexual intercourse or other sexual behaviours (IPPF, 2010). “Sexuality” is approached holistically and within the context of emotional and social development, incorporating not only sexual and reproductive health but also gender, relationships, diversity, violence and rights.

CSE can play a vital role in helping young people to critically assess complex conflicting messages – whether coming from peers, media, society, media,

family, or themselves – and to consider their own position and desired path. CSE can thereby help young people to understand conflicts with their parents or others who may have different moral views to theirs.

6.2 Social media as a 'game changer' for sexuality in Indonesia

Perhaps unsurprisingly, social media featured heavily in young people's testimonies. Our findings support Utomo's (2008) claim that social media present "two powerful, conflicting influences" on young people's sexual socialisation: conservative religious voices "promoting idealised morality", and "western" influences promoting a liberal approach. On the one hand, some respondents reported being influenced by online religious and social movements which promote stricter, more conservative norms including refraining from dating. Conversely, social media allows others to find alternative normative landscapes that place fewer limits on their sexuality, where they can find information, explore their (sexual) identities, link with others going through similar experiences, date and meet, and view content from outside Indonesia presenting different ideas of sexuality. Pornographic material is also accessed via (social) media, despite government censorship. The opportunities provided by social media are particularly clear for LGBT young people who may feel particularly stigmatised for their sexuality in a society which places heterosexual monogamous marriage at its centre and which criminalises same-sex relationships.

The increasing influences of the internet and social media are often regarded as a threat by politicians and parents in Indonesia, and their response has often been more restrictions and censorship. However, such limitations do not seem to prevent the use and influence of these channels on youth culture. Rather, it leads to more polarisation, secrecy

and vulnerability rather than protecting young people from harm.

The importance of social media in young people's sexual development and exploration can be seen as what Ortner (2006) refers to as a "game changer". Ortner argues that agency, understood from within existing norms and structures, always reproduces these existing norms and structures, unless something shifts that pattern. Literacy, for example, is a game-changer in Ahearn's (2001) ethnography. She shows how being able to read and write in a remote village in the mountains of Nepal changed marriage and love behaviour through the writing of love letters. Ahearn asserts that this new medium changed the game: it changed the possible personal projects and therefore changed existing structures (relating to love, sex, gender and marriage) in Nepal (Ahearn, 2001; Ortner, 2006). Youth Voices Research findings show that social media offer (some) young people an opportunity to move away from dominant, existing norms through exposure to alternative narratives and opportunities to experiment and date, suggesting it may be seen as a game changer.

Implication: Comprehensive sexuality education which includes a focus on media literacy can help young people to protect themselves online

Nelson and Rothman (2020) have demonstrated how solely giving information is insufficient, and that that young people require skills to critically reflect on and navigate the messages they come across including in (social) media, including pornographic and sexual material which youngsters globally are exposed to from a young age. Comprehensive sexuality education which includes a focus on media literacy can help young people understand the different messages and images they see in social media and pornography and to protect themselves online.

6.1 Silence does not equal safety

The research underlined the strength of taboos and restrictions related to sexuality in Indonesia. Young people generally saw sex as risky and dangerous, and those who did engage in dating or sexual activity felt the need to keep it secret from parents. We heard many myths regarding sex, virginity and sexuality, and respondents explained that sex and sexuality are rarely talked about, seen as a valid topic for discussion only when a young person is about to get married.

We heard stories of sexual violence, rape and abuse often in childhood. Respondents sharing these traumatic stories often cited a lack of knowledge about sexuality, personal boundaries, and what constitutes abuse and rape as contributing factors to their experiences. It is clear that silence regarding sexuality does not protect young people from harm but may indeed place them in danger. Furthermore, there are no data to support the belief that sexuality education increases sexual promiscuity.

Implication: Comprehensive sexuality education has a key role in protecting children from sexual exploitation

Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) has a key role to play in helping adolescents to understand their developing bodies, their own and others' personal boundaries, concepts of consent and where and when they can ask for help if they feel unsafe. CSE is not a panacea to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation but it can play a key role in protecting children from harm, preventing intimate partner violence and in creating future societies where harmful gender norms and power structures are reduced (BzGA, 2020, IPPF 2019, IPPF 2020).



Appendices

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Appendix 1:

Youth Voices Research Phase I Research Team Profiles

1. Renske Termeulen, BS, MS.

Renske Termeulen is a researcher. Currently, she is a consultant in Share-New International, and working on a knowledge product based on experiences from low and middle income-countries, in delivering CSE (Comprehensive Sexuality Education) in non-conventional settings, based on the experiences with the restrictions imposed during COVID-19. Since 2019, she is part of the MISTY research project (focus on the relationship between sustainability and migration) as a research assistant at the University of Amsterdam. Renske holds a BS in Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology from Leiden University and MS in Medical Anthropology and Sociology from University of Amsterdam. She wrote her thesis about sexuality and child marriages in Indonesia titled "Love, sex and marrying early in Lombok, Indonesia - researching young people's agency and the influence of social media", which was part of the 'Yes I Do' project.

2. Fuji Riang Prastowo, SSos., M.Sc

Fuji is a lecturer in Sociology at the Universitas Gadjah Mada in Indonesia whose a master's degree from the Department of Anthropology and Development Studies at Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands in 2015. He is a phenomenology-based ethnographer with a focus on multi-sited ethnography (ethnohistory and netnography), anthropology of mobility (diaspora, migration, identity), and development studies (social inclusion, youth, and sexuality). Some of his latest professional positions are Director at Golong Gilig Institute of Nusantara and Diaspora Studies (2015-now), Ethnohistorian/Research Fellow at National Library Board of Singapore

(2017-2019), Qualitative Research Specialist in the YVR project of CRH UGM-Rutgers (2018-2019), Consultant at the Asia Foundation (2019), Field Supervisor at SGP-UNDP Project in Semau Island (2018-2020), Research Manager in the ICLD Sweden Project (2020-2021).

3. Anna Page, BA (hons), MSc

Anna Page is a Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Adviser at Rutgers, center of expertise on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, based in the Netherlands (<http://www.rutgers.international/>). Anna is the Rutgers lead for the Youth Voices Research, playing a key role in capacity building for young researchers, advising on and managing the study and co-authoring this report. Anna holds an MSc in International Development Studies from the University of Amsterdam. Anna's previous experience includes leading participatory youth research in Kenya and managing policy, advocacy and research programs tackling social exclusion in the UK, with a focus on service user involvement.

4. Miranda van Reeuwijk, PhD

Miranda is a Senior Researcher for Rutgers, center of expertise on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, based in the Netherlands (<http://www.rutgers.international/>). Miranda holds a PhD in Medical Anthropology and her expertise includes research relating to children, adolescents and young people's sexuality, particularly in Africa and Asia. Central to her work is the active participation of children and young people in various levels and stages of (operational) research, intervention development, implementation, and Monitoring & Evaluation.

"I work for Rutgers WPF because I believe it is the best place to link research, policy and practice, to conduct meaningful research of which the results are immediately translated to improvement of SRHR strategies and implementation and that supports NGOs to work effectively, evidence based and demonstrate the important work they do and results they achieve."

Field Research Team:

a. Bandar Lampung

Field Coordinator: Asnani

Dr. Asnani, M.A was born in Srimenanti Village, Negara Batin Subdistrict, Way Kanan Regency, Lampung Province on March 13, 1985. In 2003, she was a student of the Department of Sociology at the University of Lampung and then graduated in 2007 as the best graduate at university level. In 2010 she became a graduate student in a master's education program and then graduated in 2012. In the same year she applied for a Domestic Postgraduate Education Scholarship (BPPDN) for prospective lecturers and in 2013 officially became a doctoral graduate student in the Study Program of Regional and Rural Development Planning at Faculty of Economics and Management, IPB University then graduated in 2020. Since 2005 until now, she has been researching and serving community empowerment both with universities, ministries, private companies and local and international NGOs. She is lecturer in the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Lampung University.

Young Researcher:

1. Rizkia Meutia Putri, SP

Rizkia Meutia Putri was born in Bandar Lampung. She completed her undergraduate degree at the Department of Agrotechnology, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Lampung (2013-2017). In 2015, she was elected as the faculty ambassador and carried out activities that were directly involved with the community. Her busy life during college did not dampen her high interest in social activities. She also joined many on-campus and off-campus organizations and communities. The Path of Social Innovation (Janis) is one of the organization she was involved in that fulfilled her passion for children and society's issues. She was invited as a young speaker at the "Voices and Actions of Young People"

(2017) organized by Save the Children about the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, she was a facilitator of the Empowomen social project (2017-2018) which has the full support of the Alumni Grant Scheme (Australian Embassy) which focuses on increasing the capacity of women in Lampung. Previously, she was facilitator for North Lampung district (2018) for "Integration Strategy for the Sustainable Development Goals Program (TPB) to the Region" by the United Nation Development Program (UNDP). She is currently a young researcher for the Explore 4 Action (E4A) program, working in Bandar Lampung since June 2018.

2. Ines Sherly Zahrina, S.Tr.AK

Ines Sherly Zahrina was born and raised in Bandar Lampung. She completed her undergraduate degree in health analyst program at the Tanjungkarang Polytechnic in 2017 as the best graduate. During her study, she was a teaching assistant of a course on health research. Ines realized that she has a lot of interests in health, women and social issues that she joins several social communities that focus on various issues as administrators and facilitators, such as Janis (Social Innovation Path) which focuses on social and environmental issues; Empowomen which is directly supported by the Australian Grand Scheme to empower Lampungnese women; and IMATELKI which is the Association of Students of medical laboratory technology program. In addition, Ines is also a medical volunteer of the National Gas Company and Zakat House which focuses on improving the health status of people in disadvantaged areas (2016- present). In 2017 she joined as a volunteer in Indonesian Family Planning Association (PKBI) Lampung's program addressing reproductive health and child protection in the. This activity introduced her to the Explore 4Action research program, and she was selected as a young researcher for the Bandar Lampung region.

b. Denpasar

Field Coordinator: I Gusti Agung Agus Mahendra, SKM., MPH

I Gusti Agung Agus Mahendra was born in Bali. Since 2009, he has been actively volunteering at KISARA (Kita Sayang Remaja) which is a youth center managed by the Indonesian Family Planning Association (PKBI) Bali. In 2010, he was selected as a youth staff member to be in charge of research and empowerment, then in 2011 was selected as the KISARA coordinator. In addition, in the same year he was selected as the "I am young with Choices" Project Manager, a project that implements comprehensive sexuality education in schools, aims to increase visits to youth-friendly health services, and increase the awareness of program and policy makers on reproductive health issues and teen sexuality. I Gusti Agung Agus Mahendra completed his undergraduate degree in public health at Udayana University in 2012, then obtained his master's degree in public health at Gadjah Mada University in 2017, majoring in Maternal and Child Health - Reproductive Health. Upon graduation, he joined the Center of Public Health Innovation (CPHI) at the Faculty of Medicine, Udayana University as a research staff. In 2018 he joined the Explore4Action project research team, as the coordinator of the Denpasar area researchers. In addition, I Gusti Agung Agus Mahendra is also a lecturer in the Public Health, Technology and Science Study Program at Dhyana Pura University, Bali. His recent organizational activities include: member of the Association of the Public Health Educators, chair of the research division of PKBI Bali.

Young Researcher:

1. Iwan Abdi Suandana, SKM

Iwan Abdi Suandana graduated from Public Health undergraduate degree program, Faculty of Medicine, Udayana University and currently is a young researcher in the Explore 4 Action program for Denpasar region. Before joining the Explore 4 Action program, he was a research assistant in a research project organized by the Department of Community Medicine and Disease Prevention

(IKK-IKP) Faculty of Medicine, Udayana University and Center for Public Health Innovation (CPHI) Faculty of Medicine, Udayana University in 2018. In addition, he was also a volunteer in KISARA PKBI Bali on reproductive health, sexuality and HIV/AIDS.

2. Putri Septyaning Rahayu Ariesta S.Sosio., M.Sosio

Putri Septyaning Rahayu Ariesta was born in Surabaya. Septy obtained her undergraduate degree at the Sociology study program (2010-2015) and master's degree at Airlangga University. Sociology is the opening door for Septy to dig deeper into people's lives through conducting research or doing community services. She also has special interest in gender issues. She has been involved in a number of social researches, including a research project conducted in collaboration between the provincial government and several agencies in East Java Province (2012-2017); a research for Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education (2015-2018); and the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (2016). She is currently research assistant at the Center for Gender and Child-LPI Studies at Airlangga University (2015-present), member of the PUSPA Forum for research and women of the East Java Provincial Office of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, and young researcher for the Explore 4Action (E4A) program since June 2018 for the Denpasar City area.

c. Semarang

Field Coordinator: Solia Mince Muzir, S.Sos

Solia Mince Muzir is a Minangnese woman who migrated to Yogyakarta to do her undergraduate study in the Department of Sociology of Religion, Yogyakarta State Islamic University in 2004. Since college, she has actively participated in training, seminars and workshops related to gender and reproductive health issues. Since her introduction to PKBI DIY in 2009, she has begun to focus on the research and services/ assistance on reproductive health for young

people. She joined the Explore4Action program as research coordinator for the Semarang Region in Central Java. Previously, she was a facilitator for reproductive health education program for female domestic workers in the Tjoet Njak Dien Grass Institute. She was also involved in humanitarian work in conducting studies on the fulfillment of reproductive health rights of victims of disasters by joining the Gender Working Group of Yogyakarta. Being a R&D staff at the Center for Advocacy for Women, Children and Disabilities, she focuses on conducting research on reproductive health for persons with disabilities. Her work on reproductive health and sexuality that has been published is "Lost Weed", a Teenage Short Story in "Different and Colored", Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Education with disabilities; Parental Guidance and Child Assistance with Disabilities.

Young Researcher

1. Lina Agnesia, S.Sos

Lina Agnesia is a graduate of the Anthropology Study Program (2012-2016), Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Brawijaya University, Malang, Indonesia in 2016. Lina has an interest in the social field, especially on religious and gender issues. Through anthropology, Lina explores qualitative research using ethnographic approaches and life history. Anthropology has led Lina to devote herself to research, especially social research. From 2013 to 2016, Lina was involved as a surveyor and observer in political activities with the MNC Group. In 2016, Lina was involved as a researcher from the Indonesian Human Service Foundation (IIM). In 2017, Lina was involved in several studies in Faculty of Cultural Sciences and Institute for Research and Community Service (LPPM)

Universitas Brawijaya, Airlangga University and Bogor Agricultural Institute, and UNICEF CRBP. Lina also served as an administrative apprentice staff in the Anthropology Study Program from 2016-2017. At present, Lina is part of the Explore4Action program as a young researcher in the Semarang area. By raising the issue of reproductive health and sexuality in adolescents and youth, the Explore4Action program makes Lina increasingly interested in exploring the issue, and sees the phenomenon from a social, religious and gender perspective. She is currently a young researcher for the Explore4Action program since June 2018 for the Semarang City area.

2. Putri Indah Novitasari, SKM

Putri Indah Novitasari is a young person who has been concerned in the world of reproductive health and teen sexuality for the past 5 years. She graduated from the undergraduate Public Health program at Muhammadiyah University Semarang (UNIMUS) in 2017. Between February 2014 and October 2017 she volunteered at PKBI Central Java for the PILAR teenage program (Youth Information and Service Center). She was a research assistant in several research projects on Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE), Comprehensive Sexual Services (CSS), Child Marriage and Maternal and Child Health (MCH) in several institutions such as the UI Gender and Sexuality Study Center, the Women Research Institute, Rutgers WPF Indonesia and ASEAN Regional UNFPA. She is currently a young researcher for the Explore4Action program, since June 2018, for the Semarang City area. The existence of young researchers is an important value in this study in voicing the voices of young children.



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