

PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS AT PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS AND ISLAMIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN SERANG CITY ON THE USE OF CONTRACEPTIVES

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Abstrak

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This study aims to determine the perceptions of public high school and Islamic high school students in Serang City regarding the use of contraceptives and to identify whether there are differences in perception between the two groups. The study employed a quantitative approach by distributing questionnaires to 99 respondents from public high schools and Islamic high schools in Serang City. The research instrument measured perceptions based on three aspects according to Walgito, namely cognitive, affective, and conative. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, validity tests, reliability tests, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test, and the Mann-Whitney U test using IBM SPSS. The results showed that respondents' perceptions of contraceptive use were generally in the positive/fairly good category, with an overall mean score of 64.56 and a standard deviation of 11.82. The research instrument demonstrated high reliability, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.950. The normality test yielded a significance value of 0.008 (<0.05), indicating that the data are not normally distributed. The Mann-Whitney test yielded a U value of 628.500 with an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) of 0.735 (>0.05). Thus, there was no significant difference in perceptions between students at public high schools (SMA) and public Islamic high schools (MA) in Serang City. The findings indicate that basic knowledge and acceptance of reproductive health education are already quite good; however, understanding of government regulations and openness to discussions regarding contraceptives still need to be strengthened.

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INTRODUCTION

Reproductive health is an important part of public health because it relates to physical, mental, and social conditions, as well as reproductive functions and processes. During adolescence, reproductive health issues become increasingly important because adolescents are in a transitional phase marked by physical, psychological, and social changes. Limited knowledge and inadequate information can influence how adolescents understand sexual and reproductive issues and determine their responses to the information they receive.

Appropriate reproductive health education and information are necessary so that adolescents can understand health risks and obtain information from reliable sources. In this context, contraceptives are not only related to pregnancy prevention but are also part of the discourse on reproductive health and public policy. Knowledge regarding the types, benefits, purposes, access, and regulations related to contraception plays a crucial role in shaping adolescents' perceptions.

The policy context has become increasingly relevant following the issuance of Government Regulation No. 28 of 2024 as the implementing regulation for Law No. 17 of 2023 on Health. The research in this thesis positions reproductive health policy as a crucial context for understanding how students view the use of contraceptives. From a Public Administration perspective, this issue relates to the government's role in delivering public services, protecting the public, implementing policies, and providing health information.

Perception is the process by which individuals receive, organize, and interpret stimuli to produce specific meanings. Walgito (2002) divides perception into cognitive, affective, and conative aspects. The cognitive aspect relates to knowledge and understanding; the affective aspect relates to feelings and emotional attitudes; while the conative aspect relates to the tendency to act or the drive to do something. This framework is used to examine the perceptions of students at public high schools (SMA) and Islamic high schools (MA) in Serang City regarding the use of contraceptives.

This study is important because public high schools (SMA) and Islamic high schools (MA) have different educational contexts. Public high schools are more oriented toward general education, whereas Islamic high schools integrate general education with Islamic religious education. Theoretically, these contextual differences can shape distinct experiences and information environments. However, advancements in information technology and social media also enable students from both groups to access relatively similar sources of information. Based on these considerations, this study aims to answer two questions: what are the perceptions of public high school (SMA) and Islamic high school (MA) students in Serang City regarding the use of contraceptives, and are there differences in perception between these two groups?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Adolescent Reproductive Health

Adolescent reproductive health refers to physical, mental, and social conditions related to reproductive functions and processes. Adolescence is a transitional period characterized by physical, psychological, and social changes. During this stage, adolescents increasingly encounter information concerning sexuality, reproduction, and health. Limited knowledge and inadequate access to information may influence how adolescents interpret reproductive health issues and respond to information. Therefore,

reproductive health education is important to help adolescents understand risks, make informed decisions, and recognize appropriate sources of health information. The World Health Organization emphasizes adolescent sexual and reproductive health as an important component of overall health and well-being. In the context of contraception, reproductive health education should provide information about definitions, purposes, benefits, types, access, and appropriate use. Education should also consider adolescents' social and cultural environments because reproductive health can remain a sensitive topic. Literature cited in this study indicates that counseling, information, and reproductive health education can support adolescent understanding. Schools therefore have an important role in providing age-appropriate and reliable information. Families, health workers, government institutions, and digital information environments may also contribute to adolescents' reproductive health literacy. Adequate reproductive literacy can support informed perceptions of contraception and reproductive health policies among adolescents in different educational settings.

Contraceptive Use

Contraceptives are methods or instruments used to prevent pregnancy and relate to reproductive health. Knowledge about contraception includes understanding its definition, purposes, benefits, types, access, and appropriate use. Hartanto (2004) and Saifuddin (2006), as cited in the study, discuss contraception within the context of family planning and contraceptive services. For adolescents, discussion of contraceptives requires information that is accurate, age-appropriate, and connected with reproductive health education. Understanding contraception is not limited to knowing methods; it also involves recognizing relevant regulations, service contexts, limitations, and responsible use. Government policy provides an additional dimension because reproductive health services and information are influenced by regulations and public service arrangements. The study places Government Regulation No. 28 of 2024, as the implementing regulation of Law No. 17 of 2023 on Health, within this policy context. Students' perceptions may therefore involve understanding and interpretation of government guidance. The study findings show that students generally understood basic contraceptive concepts better than government regulations. This distinction indicates that knowledge of contraceptive definitions and benefits does not automatically mean that students understand the policy framework surrounding adolescent reproductive health. Consequently, reproductive health education should integrate basic contraceptive information with clear explanations of relevant policies, services, and responsibilities.

Perception Theory

Perception is the process through which individuals receive, organize, and interpret stimuli and assign meaning. Walgito (2002) divides perception into three aspects: cognitive, affective, and conative. The cognitive aspect concerns knowledge and understanding of an object. In relation to contraceptive use, it can include students' understanding of definitions, benefits, types, access, purposes, and government regulations. The affective aspect concerns feelings, emotional responses, attitudes, curiosity, fear, embarrassment, and openness toward an issue. In reproductive health discussions, this aspect can be reflected in students' comfort when receiving education or discussing contraceptives. The conative aspect refers to behavioral tendencies, including support for regulations, participation in health education, and attitudes toward

contraceptive discussions. Walgito's framework allows perception to be examined as a multidimensional construct rather than as knowledge alone. The framework is particularly relevant because adolescent students may possess adequate basic knowledge while experiencing discomfort when discussing sensitive reproductive topics. It helps distinguish understanding from emotional acceptance and behavioral tendencies. In the study of students in Serang City, these three dimensions were used to measure perceptions of contraceptive use among public high school and Islamic high school students. Thus, perception theory provides a basis for describing how students understand, feel about, and respond to contraception.

Educational Context and Policy

Public high schools and Islamic high schools provide educational environments that may differ in curriculum orientation. Public high schools generally emphasize general education, while Islamic high schools integrate general education with Islamic religious education. These differences may create different experiences and information environments. In studies of perception, educational context is relevant because students' understanding and attitudes may be influenced by information available. However, school context is not the only source of information. Adolescents can also obtain reproductive health information through families, peers, health workers, digital media, the internet, and social environments. The study in Serang City considers these contexts when comparing perceptions between public high school and Islamic high school students. From a public administration perspective, reproductive health is also connected with government responsibility in delivering public services, implementing policies, and providing health information. Government Regulation No. 28 of 2024 is a policy context because it implements Law No. 17 of 2023 on Health. Policy communication is relevant because the study found that students' understanding of government regulations was lower than their understanding of basic contraceptive concepts. Therefore, educational institutions and government agencies have roles in communicating reproductive health policies in age-appropriate language. This approach can support clearer understanding while considering adolescents' educational and social contexts.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach with a descriptive-comparative design. The research locations are public high schools (SMA) and public Islamic high schools (MA) in Serang City. The study population consists of students from these schools who are the targets of the research, while the sample analyzed comprises 99 respondents. Based on the research data, the respondents consist of 83 public high school students and 16 public Islamic high school students.

Data collection was conducted using a closed-ended questionnaire with a four-point Likert scale: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Agree (3), and Strongly Agree (4). The instrument was designed based on Walgito's three aspects of perception: cognitive, affective, and conative. The cognitive aspect covers knowledge and understanding regarding the definition, benefits, types, access, and intended use of contraceptives, as well as knowledge of government regulations. The affective aspect covers feelings, fear, shame, curiosity, and openness to discussions about reproductive health. The conative aspect includes support for regulations, participation in health education, and a tendency not to attach negative labels to the use of contraceptives.

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, validity tests, reliability tests, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test, and tests for differences. The reliability test yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.950. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to determine the data distribution. Since the significance value for normality (0.008) was less than 0.05, the data were deemed not normally distributed. Therefore, comparisons between two independent groups were performed using the nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test. The significance level for the test was set at 0.05.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

The study involved 99 respondents from public high schools and public Islamic high schools in Serang City. The public high school group consisted of 83 respondents, while the public Islamic high school group consisted of 16 respondents. Based on gender, the composition of respondents was relatively balanced, with 52% male and 48% female.

Perceptions Based on Cognitive Aspects

Cognitive aspects were measured through 12 statements regarding the respondents' knowledge and understanding of contraceptives. The research results indicate that the respondents' basic knowledge was fairly good. Statements regarding knowledge of the definition of contraceptives yielded a mean of 2.97, and statements regarding understanding of the definition of contraceptives yielded a mean of 2.85. Knowledge regarding the benefits of contraceptives yielded a mean of 2.82. Overall, the 12 statements in the cognitive aspect yielded a mean of 2.59, which falls into the "Agree" category.

However, indicators related to regulations showed lower scores. Knowledge regarding the existence of government regulations on contraceptive use among adolescents had a mean of 2.47, while understanding of the content of these regulations had a mean of 2.42. These findings indicate that respondents were relatively more knowledgeable about the basic aspects of contraceptives compared to aspects of government policy or regulations.

Perceptions Based on the Affective Aspect

The affective aspect was measured through six statements regarding respondents' feelings and openness toward discussions about contraceptives. The results showed varying attitudes. The statement that respondents had ever discussed contraceptives with peers scored a mean of 2.29, and the statement regarding open discussions scored a mean of 2.13; both fell into the "Disagree" category. These findings indicate that peer-to-peer communication about contraceptives is not yet common.

On the other hand, some respondents showed openness toward education. The statement regarding the courage and curiosity to ask questions received a mean score of 2.63, while the statement regarding not feeling embarrassed when receiving sexual education about contraceptives received a mean score of 2.86. An open attitude toward receiving education also scored a mean of 2.79. Thus, there are indications that the main barrier is not merely a rejection of information, but rather a lack of comfort in discussing the issue openly among peers.

Perceptions Based on the Conative Aspect

The conative aspect measures respondents' tendencies in their attitudes and actions toward policies and education regarding contraceptives. One indicator regarding

approval of government regulations had a mean of 3.03 and fell into the “Agree” category. A total of 79.8% of respondents stated that they agreed or strongly agreed with government regulations regarding contraceptive use among adolescents. These results indicate that the majority of respondents accept the government’s role in providing guidelines and protection related to reproductive health.

Reliability, Normality, and Mann-Whitney Tests

TESTING	RESULTS
CRONBACH’S ALPHA	0.950
KOLMOGOROV-SMIRNOV SIG.	0.008
MANN-WHITNEY U	628.500
Z	-0.338
ASYMPT. SIG. (2-TAILED)	0.735

The reliability test results show a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.950, indicating that the instrument has high internal consistency. The normality test yielded a p-value of 0.008 (<0.05), indicating that the data are not normally distributed. Furthermore, the results of the Mann-Whitney test showed a U value of 628.500, a Z value of -0.338, and an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) of 0.735. Since $0.735 > 0.05$, there is no significant difference in perception between public high school (SMA) and public Islamic high school (MA) students in Serang City.

Descriptively, the public high school group had a mean rank of 49.57, while the public Islamic high school group had a mean rank of 52.22. This difference in ranks indicates a tendency for the Islamic high school scores to be slightly higher; however, the results of the inferential test show that this difference is not statistically significant.

Discussion

The results of the study show that the perceptions of public high school and MA students in Serang City regarding the use of contraceptives are generally in the positive or fairly good category. The overall average score of 64.56 indicates that respondents have a basic understanding of contraceptives and are relatively receptive to the importance of reproductive health education. These findings align with Walgito’s (2002) framework, which positions knowledge, feelings, and behavioral tendencies as interrelated components in the formation of perceptions.

The cognitive aspect reveals that respondents have a better understanding of the definition, benefits, and purposes of contraceptives than they do of the substance of government regulations. This is significant from a public policy perspective because the existence of regulations does not automatically lead to public understanding of the policy’s content. Low scores on the indicators of knowledge and understanding of regulations highlight the need to communicate policy information using language appropriate to adolescents’ characteristics.

The affective aspect reveals a gap between openness to education and openness in peer conversations. Respondents tend to accept education about contraceptives but are not always comfortable discussing them with friends. This is understandable because reproductive health remains a sensitive issue in some social contexts. Therefore, education in schools needs to create a safe, informative, and non-judgmental learning environment.

The conative aspect indicates a tendency to accept the government’s role in providing regulations and health education. This finding is relevant to the perspective of

Public Administration because reproductive health policies concern not only the content of regulations but also the policy communication process, public acceptance, and implementation at the public service level. The government, schools, and health workers play a role in ensuring that information regarding policies is conveyed clearly, in an age-appropriate manner, and with consideration for the prevailing social context and values.

The Mann-Whitney results, which showed no significant difference between SMA and MA, provide an important finding. Although the two types of schools have different curriculum characteristics and educational environments, respondents' perceptions regarding contraceptive use did not differ statistically. One possible explanation relevant to the study's findings is the availability of relatively similar information sources outside of school, particularly digital media, the internet, and social environments. However, this study did not specifically examine these factors; therefore, this explanation cannot be treated as a cause-and-effect relationship.

The study's findings also indicate that a fairly positive perception does not necessarily mean that all aspects of understanding are adequate. There are still gaps in knowledge regarding regulations and open peer-to-peer communication. Therefore, the implications of this study should be directed more toward strengthening reproductive health literacy and policy literacy rather than merely increasing knowledge about the definition of contraceptives.

CONCLUSION

A study of 99 public high school and Islamic high school students in Serang City showed that respondents' perceptions regarding contraceptive use were generally in the positive or fairly good category, with an average score of 64.56 and a standard deviation of 11.82. The cognitive aspect indicated that respondents relatively understood the definition, benefits, types, and purposes of contraceptive use, while their understanding of government regulations remained relatively low. The affective aspect showed that some respondents were quite open to receiving education, but discussions about contraceptives with peers were still limited. The conative aspect indicated a tendency to support the existence of regulations and counseling related to contraceptives.

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test yielded a p-value of 0.008, indicating that the data are not normally distributed. The Mann-Whitney test yielded a U value of 628.500 and an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) of 0.735. Thus, based on the data from this study, there is no significant difference in perceptions between public high school and Islamic high school students in Serang City regarding the use of contraceptives.

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