

QURANIC LEARNING AND SEXUAL HEALTH RISK PREVENTION AMONG ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS

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ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a time when individuals begin to search for identity and the meaning of life, explore their identity, and develop an interest in the opposite sex. In the era of globalization and technological advancement, adolescents readily access information that sometimes does not align with moral and religious values. Islamic boarding schools, as educational institutions that provide a moral protection for students who are also in their teens, are also not immune to the influence of the rapid flow of sexual information. Furthermore, the influence of a permissive social environment towards deviant sexual behavior also creates a value conflict for students between what they believe and learn and what occurs in society. This study aims to examine the phenomenon of sexual behavior among adolescent students in two Islamic boarding schools located in Muslim minority areas in one province in Indonesia. The study design used a mixed method to obtain a picture of the sexual behavior of adolescent students and the extent to which learning the Quran plays a role in preventing this deviant behavior. The results showed that more than half (70,1%) of students fell into the category of risk sexual behavior. Furthermore, interview results showed that the busyness of Islamic boarding schools in learning the Quran prevented students from engaging in deviant sexual behavior. The Quran, as the source of Islamic teachings, teaches us to avoid all forms of behavior that lead to deviant sexual behavior. Islamic boarding schools, as Islamic educational institutions, must provide comprehensive Quranic learning, encompassing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, which is realized in the students' attitudes as a moral foundation for adolescent students, helping them avoid things that could lead to deviant sexual behavior.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a crucial phase in human development, marked by the transition from childhood to adulthood. During this time, adolescents begin to search for identity, explore the meaning of life, and show a greater interest in the opposite sex. This state is often accompanied by unstable emotional changes, a need for recognition from their environment, and a desire to try new things as a form of self-expression. Environmental influences, both positive and negative, often shape adolescents' perspectives and behaviors, including those regarding reproductive health and sexual behavior. Therefore, adolescence is a crucial period,

as decisions and experiences during this stage can have long-term impacts on their personal, social, and future health development (Santrock, 2019). Globally, UNICEF stated that by 2023, around 13% of adolescent girls and young women will experience early pregnancy and childbirth during adolescence, namely giving birth before the age of 18 (UNICEF, 2024). In addition, according to WHO data in 2023, there were 1.5 per 1000 women from adolescents aged 10-14 years giving birth and 41.3 adolescents aged 15-19 years giving birth, while in Indonesia it was recorded that 0.3 per 1000 women from adolescents aged 10-14 years giving birth and 36.1 adolescents aged 15-19 years giving birth (WHO, 2024). In many developing countries, including Indonesia, sexual activity among teenagers not only shows an increasing trend but also occurs at an increasingly younger age and even before they fully understand the risks and impacts (Maisaroh & Yuliwati, 2024). In Indonesia, based on data from the 2017 Indonesian Demographic and Health Survey (SDKI), it shows that around 8% of male adolescents and 2% of female adolescents aged 15–24 years admitted to having had premarital sexual relations, with figures tending to increase among urban adolescents and those with high access to social media and the internet (BKKBN, 2017). Cases of unwanted pregnancies in Indonesia occur in teenagers and most of them do not have adequate sexual education (Fauziah et al., 2022).

In an era of globalization marked by rapid advances in information technology, adolescents have extensive access to various forms of digital content, including information about sexuality. While this ease of access provides positive opportunities for gaining useful knowledge, it also presents serious challenges, as much of the information disseminated is misleading, unverified, and even contradicts religious norms and cultural values. This situation places adolescents in a vulnerable position, as their intense curiosity often drives them to explore content without adequate filtering skills. Consequently, if not accompanied by appropriate education, they can fall into misunderstandings about sexuality, which ultimately have the potential to influence their attitudes, behavior, and social relationships (Livingstone et al., 2018). Exposure to pornography among adolescents has been shown to be associated with increased risky sexual behavior and the reinforcement of sexist attitudes that can normalize permissive sexual behavior (Feijóo et al., 2025). This phenomenon occurs not only in urban or secular communities but also in religious-based educational settings such as Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*). This presents new challenges in maintaining the sexual health of Muslim adolescents who are in a critical developmental phase.

Historically, Islamic boarding schools are Islamic educational institutions that function not only to transmit religious knowledge but also as a moral fortress in the face of moral decadence (Idris, 2013). However, recently, quite a few Islamic boarding schools have faced internal challenges in the form of deviant behavior among students, including in terms of sexuality, and ironically, this behavior occurs in an environment that is symbolically very religious, where students study the Qur'an, hadith, and Islamic values every day (Wibowo et al., 2021). The paradox between mastery of religious material and behavioral deviations has become a critical question in the world of contemporary Islamic education in relation to sacred teachings which do not always shape moral behavior and the method of learning the Qur'an in Islamic boarding schools which does not necessarily internalize the values of *iffah* (maintaining self-respect), *haya'* (shame), and controlling lust (Nurulhaq et al., 2021).

With an educational system that emphasizes mastery of religious knowledge, including Quranic recitation, Islamic boarding schools are expected to serve as a moral bulwark amidst the rapid flow of globalization. However, as adolescents, students remain exposed to external influences, both through digital media and social interactions with the surrounding community. Hayward (2019) research shows that religiosity plays a significant role in delaying and reducing the likelihood of adolescents engaging in premarital sexual behavior, but this influence does not completely eliminate the risk. This emphasizes that religious education needs to be complemented by a more comprehensive approach to be effective in preventing risky sexual behavior in adolescents.

This situation is exacerbated by the conflicting values experienced by the students. On the one hand, they receive Quranic teachings that emphasize morals, maintaining honor, and prohibiting deviant sexual behavior. On the other hand, they live in a society that is permissive of sexual promiscuity and are exposed to digital media that often normalizes extramarital sex (Prabamurti et al., 2024). This struggle between normative teachings and social reality often leads to confusion, moral dilemmas, and even contradictory behavior among some students. Therefore, it is important to further examine how Quranic learning can serve as a preventive measure against risky sexual behavior among adolescents in Islamic boarding schools. This study aims to examine the sexual behavior of adolescent students (santri) at two Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) located in Muslim-minority areas in one province in Indonesia. The focus of the study is directed at how learning the Quran contributes to the internalization of moral values and sexual ethics in the students' daily lives. By examining the context of Islamic boarding schools in minority areas, this research is expected to contribute to the study of Islamic bioethics and adolescent health, as well as enrich the literature on the role of Quranic education in preventing risky sexual behavior in the era of globalization.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Adolescent Development Theory and Sexual Risk

Adolescence is a transitional phase marked by interconnected biological, cognitive, and socio-emotional changes. During this stage, adolescents actively explore their identity and search for meaning in life, but they also become more vulnerable to risky behavior. Puberty triggers increased sensitivity to social reinforcement and rewards, while cognitive control functions in the brain, particularly the prefrontal cortex, develop more slowly. This developmental imbalance explains why adolescents are more likely to engage in risky behavior, including sexual behavior (Feldstein Ewing et al., 2016). Teenagers explore a wide range of issues, from friendships to relationships to how they view rules and values. Religious teachings or family norms can serve as protective factors in this process. However, when these internal values clash with social influences or exposure to more permissive media, potential value conflicts arise, which can increase adolescents' vulnerability to sexual behavior that deviates from cultural or traditional norms (Sekar Arumi & Faradilla, 2023).

According to Santrock (2019), adolescents are more susceptible to environmental and media influences in determining their behavior. This aligns with Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework, which emphasizes that adolescent sexual behavior is influenced by a multi-layered interaction between individual, family, school, media, and societal factors. Research by Rizvi et al. (2020) supports this view by showing that risky sexual behavior among adolescent girls in Southeast Asia is influenced not only by personal factors but also by peer norms, family parenting patterns, access to health services, and broader cultural and economic values. Exposure to sexual content from the internet and mass media then reinforces these dynamics, as it encourages the normalization of premarital sexual behavior and unsafe sex.

Media and various digital platforms have been shown to play a role in accelerating adolescent sexual engagement. Exposure to sexual content is not only associated with more permissive attitudes toward extramarital relationships but also increases the likelihood of engaging in risky sexual behaviors, such as unprotected sex. Several meta-analyses and systematic reviews have shown a consistent pattern between sexual content consumption and an increased likelihood of risky sexual behavior in adolescents, although the magnitude of this effect may be influenced by other factors such as family support, sexuality education, and adolescents' level of media literacy. This aligns with the findings of a meta-analysis reported by Mori et al. (2023), which showed that exposure to sexual content is consistently associated with increased problematic sexual behavior in children and adolescents. However, the extent of this media exposure can still be influenced by family factors, sexuality education, and adolescents' level of media literacy.

The Concept of Sexual Health in a Global Perspective and Islamic Bioethics
Sexual health is an integral part of human well-being and is globally recognized as a fundamental right of every individual. According to the World Health Organization, sexual health means not only the absence of disease or reproductive dysfunction but also encompasses a positive physical, emotional, mental, and social state related to sexuality. A global approach to sexual health emphasizes the importance of respect for human rights, gender equality, and personal responsibility in sexual relationships (WHO, 2015). Sexuality is understood holistically to encompass physical satisfaction, emotional closeness, mutual trust, and safety from violence and exploitation. During adolescence, sexual health is inseparable from bodily comfort, the ability to build healthy relationships, and a supportive social environment. Therefore, approaches to sexual health require comprehensive consideration of biological, psychological, and social aspects so that adolescents can grow with a healthy, responsible, and dignified understanding of their lives (Kågesten et al., 2021)

However, this perspective is often rooted in liberal and secular paradigms that place individual autonomy at the center of morality, thus giving rise to debate in societies with strong religious values, including within the Islamic context. In Islamic bioethics, sexual health is assessed not only from a physical and psychological perspective but also from its compliance with sharia principles and moral values derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Sexuality is viewed as a human trust and natural right that must be safeguarded through marriage and supported by the values of 'iffah (self-respect) and haya' (shame) as ethical principles to protect human dignity (Bakour, 2023). Every sexual expression in Islam must be directed towards the benefit and must not cause damage (mafsadah) to the individual or society. The principle of maqāṣid al-sharī'ah serves as the primary framework for assessing sexual behavior, with the aim of protecting religion, life, intellect, offspring, and property. Therefore, practices such as extramarital sex, pornography, and sexual exploitation are considered contrary to universal humanitarian and moral values. In the Indonesian legal context, this aligns with discussions regarding pornography regulation, viewed from the perspective of maqāṣid al-sharī'ah, where pornography is considered detrimental to moral and social order and must be prevented to maintain human dignity and honor (Ikhsan et al., 2020).

Conceptually, the global perspective and Islamic bioethics converge on the importance of maintaining health, preventing sexual violence, and respecting human dignity. The difference lies in the moral foundation, which encompasses a global approach that emphasizes individual freedom and human rights, while Islamic bioethics emphasizes the balance between freedom and moral responsibility toward God and society. Therefore, in the context of Muslim adolescent education and health, integrating Islamic bioethical principles with a global health approach is crucial to foster a balanced understanding of spiritual values and contemporary social realities (Akrami et al., 2022).

The Role of Quranic Learning in Preventing Sexual Risks in Islamic Boarding Schools

As Islamic educational institutions, Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) play a strategic role in shaping the character and morality of students, including maintaining sexual behavior in accordance with religious teachings. Quranic learning in Islamic boarding schools focuses not only on cognitive aspects such as reading and memorization, but also on internalizing the moral and spiritual values contained within the Quranic verses. These values serve as a guide for students in facing moral challenges in the digital age, including exposure to permissive sexual behavior and information. According to Putri et al. (2024), Quran-based education can foster moral awareness and self-control, which are the primary bulwarks against deviant behavior. Quranic values instilled through moral development can shape an understanding of right and wrong and train adolescents to control negative impulses arising from their environment and digital media.. The Qur'an pays great attention to maintaining one's honor and purity (iffah) and emphasizes the prohibition against adultery and deviant sexual behavior. God's Word in QS. An-Nur verses 30–31:

Meaning: Say to men who believe: "Let them restrain their gaze and guard their private parts; that is purer for them. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing of what they do."(30). Say to the believing women: "Let them restrain their gaze and guard their private parts, and let them not reveal their ornaments (their private parts), except what is (normally) visible from them. And let them cover their veils over their breasts, and let them not reveal their ornaments except to their husbands, or their fathers, or their husbands' fathers, or their sons, or their husbands' sons, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or Muslim women, or slaves they own, or male servants who have no desire for women, or children who do not yet understand the intimate parts of women. And let them not stomp their feet so that the jewels they hide are known. And repent to Allah, O you who believe, so that you may be successful." (31)

This verse emphasizes the importance of lowering the gaze and guarding one's modesty as a form of self-control rooted in spiritual awareness. In the context of Islamic boarding school education, Zaman & Kusumasar (2019) explain that these verses are taught not only as memorized texts but also as a means of instilling ethical interactions between men and women based on good manners and moral responsibility. This process of internalizing Qur'anic values reinforces the concept of tazkiyatun nafs (purification of the soul), which aims to train students to subdue their lusts and build spiritual intelligence as a foundation for self-control over sexual urges. In addition to formal teaching, Qur'anic values in Islamic boarding schools are also instilled through daily practices such as habituating worship, memorizing the Qur'an, supervising ustaz (teacher), and a social environment that supports a culture of shame and politeness. Muniroh et al. (2021) found that Quranic learning integrated with moral development can reduce the tendency for risky sexual behavior among Islamic boarding school students (pesantren). However, challenges remain with increasing access to digital media, which often displays explicit sexual content. Therefore, strengthening media literacy based on Quranic values is a crucial step in balancing religious knowledge and critical thinking skills in dealing with the flow of information. Quranic learning in Islamic

boarding schools plays a strategic role not only in the cognitive aspect of transferring religious knowledge, but also in shaping character and protective mechanisms for adolescents. Through the interpretation of verses emphasizing purity, responsibility, and piety, adolescents are equipped with religious coping skills that help them deal with social and psychological pressures. This aligns with the Quranic educational approach, which emphasizes internalizing values as a moral bulwark, thus enabling students to better resist the influence of permissive behavior in the external environment and avoid the risk of deviant sexual behavior.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses a mixed method approach, namely a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods carried out sequentially (Justan et al., 2024). This approach was chosen to obtain a comprehensive picture of the sexual behavior of young Islamic boarding school students (santri) and the extent to which Quranic learning plays a role in preventing such deviant behavior. Quantitative methods were used as an initial step to explore and map empirical data on the sexual behavior of young Islamic boarding school students, while qualitative methods, including interviews and critical literature reviews, were used as follow-up to deepen and analyze the data within the framework of Islamic and Quranic education. The research was conducted from October 2021 to January 2022.

Quantitative data in this study were collected through closed questionnaires distributed to students of Islamic boarding schools at the Madrasah Aliyah level. The sampling technique used total sampling because the entire population that met the criteria was considered eligible to be used as a research sample, namely 127 respondents from two Islamic boarding schools in Bali Province. The questionnaire consisted of 8 closed questions designed to measure adolescent sexual behavior tendencies including touching, kissing, deep kissing, oral sex, petting, and sexual intercourse. The category of risky sexual behavior was when respondents chose to have engaged in one or more of the sexual behaviors presented. The data obtained were analyzed using frequency distribution techniques. The qualitative method used in this study was interviews with two Islamic boarding school leaders regarding the extent to which Quranic learning can act as a religious coping mechanism for deviant sexual behavior. This research was also supported by a critical literature review focusing on thematic interpretation books, particularly those discussing sexual morality, iffah (protecting honor), the prohibition of adultery and controlling lust, the Islamic boarding school curriculum, and the Quranic learning model generally implemented in Islamic boarding schools.

FINDING & DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Islamic Boarding School Youth

The following is a description of the characteristics of Islamic boarding school youth including class and gender which are analyzed using frequency distribution.

Table 1. Characteristics of Islamic Boarding School Youth

Characteristics of Teenagers	f	%
Class		
X	42	33,1
XI	38	29,9
XII	47	37,0
Gender		
Male	38	29,9
Female	89	70,1

Source: Primary Data

The results showed that respondents involved in this study were evenly distributed between grades X, XI, and XII, with the highest frequency coming from grade XII (37.0%). This indicates a relatively proportional representation of each educational level, although a greater tendency was seen among final-year students. In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were female (70.1%), reflecting the dominance of female students in the Islamic boarding schools where the study was conducted. This distribution provides an initial indication that the characteristics of the Islamic boarding school adolescents in this study are quite varied, both in terms of educational level and gender, thus allowing for a more comprehensive analysis of their sexual behavior.

The higher proportion of respondents in grade XII indicates that more mature students play a significant role in the dynamics of adolescent sexual behavior. This can be explained by adolescent development theory, which states that as individuals grow older, they are increasingly exposed to social interactions and information, including sexual issues (Santrock, 2019). Based on these results, students in grade XII have the potential to face higher risks in terms of exposure to sexual behavior compared to students in grades X or XI. This finding aligns with research by Amalia et al. (2025) that found that students at higher levels of education, such as grades 11 and 12, tend to face more complex moral dilemmas due to their increasingly intense interactions with the social and cultural environment outside the Islamic boarding school. Wider access to digital media and the process of self-discovery often cause Islamic boarding school values to clash with more permissive modern social realities..

The predominance of female respondents in this study also has important implications for understanding the sexual behavior of adolescents in Islamic boarding schools. Several studies have shown that female adolescents have a higher tendency to refrain from sexual behavior than males due to cultural values, social norms, and religious teachings that are stricter toward women (Alomair et al., 2020). However, at the same time, women are also vulnerable to social pressure and exposure to sexual information from digital media which can influence their perceptions and attitudes towards sexuality (Livingstone et al., 2018).

Portrait of Sexual Behavior of Islamic Boarding School Youth

Sexual behavior in adolescents can be categorized into two large groups: risky sexual behavior and non-risky sexual behavior. The following table presents a comparison between the two types of behavior.

Table 2 Portrait of Sexual Behavior

Sexual Behavior	f	%
No Risk	44	29,9
Risk	83	70,1

Source: Primary Data

The research results showed that the majority of respondents (70.1%) had engaged in risky sexual behavior. This figure indicates that even though adolescents are in a religious-based educational environment such as Islamic boarding schools, they are not completely free from exposure to sexual behavior that deviates from Islamic norms and teachings. These findings confirm that risky sexual behavior remains a serious problem faced by adolescents in Islamic boarding schools, requiring greater attention in educational and development strategies. The high number of respondents who admitted to having engaged in risky sexual behavior reflects that Islamic boarding school youth remain vulnerable to the influence of a permissive social environment and digital media on sexuality. This is in line with research by Livingstone et al. (2018) which confirms that uncontrolled internet access can increase adolescents' exposure to sexual content and normalize risky behavior. This finding also supports the research of Umam (2023) that even though Islamic boarding school students receive intensive religious education, they still face moral dilemmas when confronted with

social realities that differ from Qur'anic teachings. From an Islamic bioethics perspective, this phenomenon demonstrates the urgency of strengthening the internalization of the value of iffah (maintaining honor) through more contextual and applicable Qur'anic learning. Therefore, Qur'anic education in Islamic boarding schools needs to be integrated with an adolescent health approach to be more effective in preventing risky sexual behavior among Islamic boarding school students..

Qur'anic Learning in Protection of Sexual Deviance

Qualitative findings were used to deepen quantitative findings regarding the portrait of risky sexual behavior among adolescents in Islamic boarding schools. Researchers conducted in-depth interviews with teachers and caretakers at the Islamic boarding school. This qualitative approach aimed to gain a broader understanding of how Qur'anic learning can shape preventive behaviors against sexual risks. Through the interviews, information was obtained regarding Qur'anic learning practices that are not only oriented towards cognitive aspects but also contain spiritual and moral values that are expected to serve as a bulwark for adolescents in facing the challenges of a social environment and the flow of digital information that is permissive towards sexuality.

"Ya kan memang kita di pesantren belum pernah ada penelitian yang medetil begitu ya. Tetapi, kita melihat bahwa, ya alhamdulillah. Satu hal lagi kemudian kan, di aliah khususnya ya, itu kan kita memang, sudah dari dulu kita melakukan program ODOJ, One Day One Juz... Nah, alhamdulillah trimester ini, tapi memang tidak bisa setiap bulan karena memang kegiatan pesantren penuh ya. Jadi, sering sekali tidak bisa mencapai target hampir tiga hari satu pekan... Tetapi, setiap hari kita tanya ada perkembangan, ya alhamdulillah ya, kelas ini sudah datang, Sir... Kalau kita hitung per bulan ini sudah tanggal 4, kita sudah 4 JUS, ada yang 3 JUS... ada lomba dalam membaca... sehingga ketika satu bulan, kita tunda satu hari untuk menghatamkan, mereka baca masing-masing kelas, baru kita hatamkan bersama... Ya ini kita lakukan dan alhamdulillah, mereka bersemangat ya... semoga se-Indonesia Raya, se-dunia, remaja-remaja kita setiap hari bisa membaca Al-Quran, sehingga ada detoksifikasi ya, detoksin hati dan pikiran, sehingga mereka lebih terlindungi." ("Yes, we haven't had such detailed research at Islamic boarding schools. But, we see that, thank God. One more thing, in Islamic boarding schools in particular, we've been running the ODOJ (One Day One Juz) program for a long time... Well, thank God, this trimester, but it's not possible every month because the Islamic boarding school is so busy. So, we often can't reach the target for almost three days a week... But, every day we ask if there is any progress, yes thank God, this class has arrived, Sir... If we calculate it per month, it's already the 4th, we have had 4 JUS, some have had 3 JUS... there is a reading competition... so when one month, we postpone one day to finish, they read each class, then we finish together... Yes, we do this and thank God, they are enthusiastic... hopefully throughout Indonesia, throughout the world, our teenagers can read the Quran every day, so that there is detoxification, detoxification of the heart and mind, so that they are more protected") (Islamic Boarding School Supervisor, W1)

The quote shows that the One Day One Juz (ODOJ) program in Islamic boarding schools is a routine and systematic strategy for learning the Quran. Although its implementation is not always consistent every month due to the busy schedule of Islamic boarding schools, teachers continue to monitor the progress of students' reading. This program encourages active student involvement through memorization targets, dividing the Juz into sections by class, and collective Khataman (community recitation). Implicitly, teachers view Quran reading as a form of "detoxification of the heart and mind" that can strengthen students' morality and protect them from negative influences, including risky sexual behavior.

This is in line with research by Salsabela et al., (2023) which states that learning the Qur'an not only functions to increase religious literacy, but also contributes to the formation of self-control and healthy behavior among adolescents.

“Ya, dengan tahfidzul Qur'an siswa tahu batasan pergaulan” (“Yes, by memorizing the Qur'an, students know the limits of social interaction”)(Islamic Boarding School Supervisor, W2)

This statement demonstrates that Quran memorization learning not only focuses on memorization but also provides a practical understanding of social interaction norms. Students recognize that the Quranic values they learn can serve as guidelines for protecting themselves from risky sexual behavior. This aligns with Qiso (2020) opinion, which asserts that internalizing Quranic values in adolescent education serves as a protective mechanism against negative environmental influences. Activities such as memorizing the Quran, praying in congregation, and participating in religious activities not only help adolescents gain an understanding of religious literacy but also develop self-control and positive behavior. This Quranic values education helps adolescents cope with social pressures and potential negative behaviors, enabling them to make decisions aligned with Islamic principles. Thus, internalizing Quranic values serves as a moral bulwark that strengthens adolescents' character and guides them in healthy interactions within their social environment.

Studying the Qur'an as a Prevention Instrument

A literature review of thematic commentaries shows that the Qur'an has a very clear framework of values regarding maintaining self-respect (iffah), avoiding adultery, and controlling lust as integral parts of developing noble morals. In Tafsir Al-Misbah, Quraish Shihab interprets Surah Al-Isra' verse 32: (Shihab, 2023)

وَلَا تَقْرُبُوا الزَّوَاجَ إِذْ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا

Meaning: "And do not approach adultery, in fact adultery is a cruel act and a bad way"

This verse contains a prohibition on approaching adultery, not only as a prohibition against the act of adultery alone, but also against all forms of behavior that lead to or open the way to it (Rozy & Nirwana AN, 2022). This demonstrates that sex education from an Islamic perspective must begin with preventative efforts, not merely repressive ones. Similarly, in his Tafsir Fi Zhilâl Al-Qur'an, Sayyid Qutb emphasizes the concept of jihad as a moral and spiritual struggle within a Muslim, encompassing control of lust and character development. This concept aligns with the Islamic boarding school educational approach, which emphasizes spiritual development and self-control as part of the moral formation of adolescents. Therefore, religious education not only imparts knowledge but also equips them with the skills to face moral challenges in everyday life (Shomad, 2011).

The interpretation and teaching of Quranic verses prohibiting adultery and adultery tend to be normative and symbolic, rather than contextual and applicable to the realities of today's youth. Ideal Quranic learning should not only focus on reading and memorization skills but also address affective and practical aspects. In the context of preventing deviant sexual behavior, the Quran serves as a warning (maw'izhah), a healing (syifa'), and a guidance (hudā) for life (Bestari, 2020). Internalizing Quranic values can strengthen adolescents' self-control against sexual temptation if done through a reflective and dialogical approach. Students who only learn to read the Quran without understanding its meaning or connecting it to the realities of their lives tend to experience moral dissonance between knowledge and practice (Yunus, 2023).

CONCLUSION

This study shows that Islamic boarding school youth continue to face the risk of sexual behavior despite being in a religious-based educational environment. Quantitative results revealed that the majority of respondents (70.1%) had engaged in risky sexual behavior. Meanwhile, qualitative results from interviews confirmed that learning the Quran, especially through the Quran memorization program, plays a significant role in shaping students' awareness of social boundaries and the value of *iffah* as a protective mechanism against the influence of a permissive external environment. These findings demonstrate a duality: on the one hand, students are exposed to the risk of sexual behavior, while on the other, Quranic learning remains a potential moral bulwark for prevention.

Islamic boarding schools need to integrate Quranic learning with an Islamic reproductive health education approach to be more contextual in addressing the challenges of today's youth. Strengthening Quranic values also needs to be expanded beyond memorization to include internalizing their meaning and application in daily life, particularly regarding social etiquette. Furthermore, the involvement of parents, religious teachers (*ustadz/ustadzah*), and health workers is needed to build a synergistic *pesantren* educational ecosystem that combines religious values and health. Finally, further research is recommended to explore models for integrating Quranic education with *pesantren*-based adolescent health programs so that they can be developed as best practices in Islamic educational environments.

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