



The Effect of Psychoeducation on Sexual Behavior Knowledge Among Adolescents at SMP Negeri 1 Telaga, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Adolescent sexual behavior is a significant public health concern due to its association with sexually transmitted infections, unintended pregnancies, and psychosocial problems. Limited knowledge about reproductive health increases adolescents' vulnerability to risky sexual behavior, highlighting the importance of effective educational interventions. This study aimed to analyze the effect of psychoeducation on adolescents' sexual behavior knowledge at SMP Negeri 1 Telaga, Indonesia. A quantitative quasi-experimental design with a one-group pretest-posttest approach was used. The sample consisted of 38 students selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire before and after psychoeducation intervention and analyzed using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. The results showed an improvement in knowledge after the intervention, with the mean score increasing from 2.05 to 2.39. Statistical analysis indicated a significant effect of psychoeducation on adolescents' knowledge ($p < 0.05$). Psychoeducation is an effective strategy for improving adolescents' understanding of sexual health and can be implemented as a school-based health promotion program to support healthy behavioral development.

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a developmental stage characterized by rapid biological, cognitive, emotional, and social changes. During this period, individuals begin to develop their identity and show increased curiosity about various aspects of life, including sexuality. The rapid advancement of information technology has facilitated adolescents' access to diverse sources of information; however, not all available information is accurate or reliable. Exposure to misleading or incorrect information may shape inappropriate perceptions of sexual behavior and increase adolescents' vulnerability to risky behaviors. Therefore, appropriate reproductive health education is essential to help adolescents understand the consequences of their actions and promote responsible decision-making (Apriliana & Rahayuningsih, 2024; Ilham et al., 2024; Kristianti & Widjayanti, 2021).

Risky sexual behavior among adolescents has become a major public health concern due to its association with sexually transmitted infections, unintended pregnancies, and psychological consequences such as anxiety, social stigma, and decreased quality of life. In addition, unhealthy sexual behavior may negatively affect adolescents' educational continuity and hinder their developmental tasks. Knowledge plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' attitudes and health behaviors. Adolescents with adequate knowledge are more likely to assess risks accurately and make responsible decisions, whereas limited knowledge contributes to unsafe

behaviors and increased health risks (Adjie et al., 2022; Aprilia et al., 2025; Cicek Ozdemir & Cevik, 2025; Eyeberu et al., 2023)

Schools play a strategic role as environments where structured learning and behavioral development occur. Educational institutions serve not only as centers for academic learning but also as important settings for promoting healthy behaviors and character development. School-based health education programs have been shown to improve health literacy and encourage preventive thinking among adolescents. However, reproductive health education is often delivered using conventional approaches that limit student engagement, resulting in suboptimal understanding. This situation highlights the need for innovative and interactive educational strategies that are more responsive to adolescents' developmental needs (Ekklesia et al., 2025; Fardiansyah et al., 2025; Nurhayati et al., 2025; Nurjanah, 2026; Ropitasari, 2024)

One educational approach considered effective is psychoeducation, which integrates educational principles with psychological interventions to enhance individuals' understanding and coping skills. Psychoeducation is designed to help participants comprehend information rationally, manage emotional responses, and develop positive attitudes toward healthy behaviors. This approach is typically delivered through interactive methods such as discussions, simulations, and educational media that encourage active participation. Therefore, psychoeducation not only improves knowledge but also promotes awareness and readiness among adolescents to make responsible health-related decisions (Basaria et al., 2022; Hamid & Taslim, 2024; Isna et al., 2025; roni et al., 2024).

Previous studies have reported that health education interventions significantly improve adolescents' reproductive health knowledge. Interactive educational methods are more effective than passive approaches because they enhance attention, comprehension, and information retention. However, research examining the effectiveness of psychoeducation among junior high school adolescents remains limited, particularly in improving sexual behavior knowledge. Early adolescence is a critical period for establishing accurate knowledge before exposure to higher behavioral risks. This lack of empirical evidence indicates the need for further research to support the development of effective school-based reproductive health education programs (Cicek Ozdemir & Cevik, 2025; Isna et al., 2025; Setyandari & Rahayuningsih, 2023; Texeira et al., 2024).

A preliminary study conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Telaga revealed that some students had insufficient understanding of healthy sexual behavior. Several students were unable to distinguish between risky and non-risky behaviors and had misconceptions about the consequences of sexual activity. This condition indicates the need for structured educational interventions to provide accurate information and support the development of healthy behaviors among adolescents.

Based on this background, this study contributes to strengthening school-based health promotion practices by evaluating the effectiveness of psychoeducation in improving adolescents' sexual behavior knowledge. The findings are expected to provide evidence for developing comprehensive and sustainable reproductive health education programs. Therefore, this study aimed to analyze the effect of psychoeducation on adolescents' sexual behavior knowledge at SMP Negeri 1 Telaga, Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design to analyze the effect of psychoeducation on adolescents' sexual behavior knowledge. The study was conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Telaga, Indonesia, in 2025. The sample consisted of 38 students selected through purposive sampling based on predetermined inclusion criteria. The independent variable in this study was psychoeducation, while the dependent variable was adolescents' knowledge of sexual behavior. The psychoeducation intervention was delivered through structured educational sessions designed to improve students' understanding of healthy sexual behavior and reproductive health. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered before and after the psychoeducation intervention. The questionnaire measured the level of adolescents' knowledge regarding sexual behavior. Data analysis was performed using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test to determine differences in knowledge scores before and after the intervention, with a significance level set at $\alpha = 0.05$. The results were presented in tables and narrative form.

RESULTS

Respondent Characteristics

Table 1. Respondent characteristics based on age and gender

Characteristics	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age		
14 years	20	52.6
15 years	18	47.4

Total	38	100
Gender		
Male	13	34.2
Female	25	65.8
Total	38	100

Data Source: Data Primer 2025

Based on Table 1, most respondents were aged 14 years (52.6%), while 47.4% were aged 15 years. In terms of gender, the majority were female (65.8%), whereas male respondents accounted for 34.2% of the total sample.

Adolescents' Sexual Behavior Knowledge Before and After Psychoeducation

Table 2. Adolescents' sexual behavior knowledge before and after psychoeducation

Knowledge Level	Before n (%)	After n (%)
Good	9 (23.7)	19 (50.0)
Moderate	18 (47.4)	12 (31.6)
Poor	11 (28.9)	7 (18.4)
Total	38 (100)	38 (100)

Data Source: Data Primer 2025

Based on Table 2, prior to the psychoeducation intervention, most respondents had a moderate level of knowledge (47.4%), followed by poor knowledge (28.9%), and good knowledge (23.7%). After the psychoeducation intervention, there was a noticeable improvement in knowledge levels, as the proportion of respondents with good knowledge increased to 50.0%. Meanwhile, the proportion of respondents with moderate and poor knowledge decreased to 31.6% and 18.4%, respectively. These findings indicate that psychoeducation contributed to improving adolescents' knowledge of sexual behavior.

Effect of Psychoeducation on Adolescents' Sexual Behavior Knowledge

Table 3. Effect of psychoeducation on adolescents' sexual behavior knowledge

Psychoeducation	Mean	Standard Deviation	p-value
Before	8	2.05	0.595
After	8	2.39	0.733
			0.004

Data Source: Data Primer 2025

Based on Table 3, the mean knowledge score before the psychoeducation intervention was 2.05 (SD = 0.595). After the intervention, the mean score increased to 2.39 (SD = 0.733). Statistical analysis using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed a p-value of 0.004 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a statistically significant effect of psychoeducation on improving adolescents' sexual behavior knowledge at SMP Negeri 1 Telaga, Indonesia.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrated an increase in adolescents' sexual behavior knowledge following the psychoeducation intervention. Before the intervention, the mean knowledge score was 2.05 (SD = 0.595), indicating that most students had moderate to low levels of understanding. After psychoeducation was provided, the mean score increased to 2.39 (SD = 0.733), reflecting a positive improvement in students' understanding of healthy sexual behavior. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed a p-value of 0.004 ($p < 0.05$), confirming that psychoeducation had a statistically significant effect on improving adolescents' sexual behavior knowledge at SMP Negeri 1 Telaga, Indonesia.

This improvement indicates that psychoeducation is an effective health education intervention for strengthening adolescents' cognitive capacity in understanding reproductive health, identifying sexual behavior risks, and making responsible decisions. Structured and interactive educational sessions allow students to receive accurate information and correct misconceptions related to sexual health. Increased knowledge among adolescents may also be influenced by developmental factors such as curiosity, peer interaction, and access to digital information. When supported by appropriate educational guidance, these factors can enhance adolescents' learning processes and contribute to the adoption of healthier behaviors.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research showing the effectiveness of psychoeducation in improving adolescents' sexual health knowledge and preventing risky behaviors. Susanti et al. reported that psychoeducation significantly contributed to the prevention of premarital sexual behavior among adolescents by improving their understanding and behavioral control. Similarly, Ofole (2022) through a randomized controlled trial, found that psychoeducation was an effective intervention for improving sexual health literacy among at-risk adolescents, thereby supporting HIV prevention efforts. Furthermore, Teixeira et

al. (2024) emphasized that psychoeducation plays an important role in helping adolescents cope with psychological and social challenges while promoting positive behavioral changes through increased knowledge and skills.

From a public health perspective, psychoeducation serves as an important promotive and preventive strategy that can be integrated into school-based health programs. Schools provide an ideal environment for delivering structured and sustainable health education interventions due to their direct access to adolescents during critical developmental stages. Implementing psychoeducation programs on a regular basis may not only improve knowledge but also contribute to the development of positive attitudes and healthier behavioral patterns. Therefore, psychoeducation represents a practical and evidence-based approach for strengthening adolescent reproductive health promotion within educational settings.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrated that psychoeducation had a statistically significant effect on improving adolescents' sexual behavior knowledge at SMP Negeri 1 Telaga, Indonesia, as indicated by the increase in mean knowledge scores after the intervention. These findings confirm that psychoeducation is an effective educational strategy for enhancing adolescents' understanding of reproductive health and supporting responsible health-related decision-making.

SUGGESTION

Schools are recommended to integrate psychoeducation into school-based health education programs as a promotive and preventive strategy to improve adolescents' reproductive health knowledge. Collaboration between educators and health professionals is essential to ensure the delivery of accurate, comprehensive, and sustainable health education. Future research is recommended to involve larger sample sizes and more rigorous study designs to provide stronger scientific evidence regarding the effectiveness of psychoeducation in improving adolescent health behaviors.

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