

## ANALYSIS OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS' RESPONSES REGARDING SECONDARY SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT DURING PUBERTY AT SMP NEGERI 1 BISKANG DANAU PARIS DISTRICT, ACEH SINGKIL DISTRICT, ACEH PROVINCE, 2024

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### ABSTRACT

Puberty is an important transition period in a teenager's life, marked by physical, hormonal and psychological changes, including secondary sexual development. This study aims to analyze the level of knowledge of young women regarding secondary sexual development during puberty. This research method uses a quantitative descriptive design with a total sampling technique of 30 female students at SMP Negeri 1 Biskang. Data was collected using a questionnaire and analyzed using a Likert scale. The results showed that the majority of respondents (63.4%) had high knowledge about puberty, but only 43.4% had high knowledge about reproductive organs. The highest knowledge was found in the 14–15 year age group and respondents who were raised by their parents. The most dominant sources of information come from parents and schools. The conclusion from this research is that there is still a need for ongoing education regarding secondary sexual development, especially from parents and educational institutions.

**Keywords:** Puberty, Secondary Sexual Development, Adolescent Girls

### Introduction

Adolescence is a critical period of human development characterized by rapid biological, psychological, and social changes as individuals transition from childhood to adulthood. One of the most prominent and defining features of this stage is puberty, a process through which the body undergoes physical maturation, including the development of reproductive capability and the emergence of secondary sexual characteristics. Puberty typically begins between ages 8–13 in girls and 9–14 in boys, and involves significant changes such as breast development, growth of pubic hair, and hormonal

fluctuations that are universal yet vary individually in timing and sequence. (Maulida and Syeh, 2025) Adolescent girls tend to experience higher levels of stress, especially regarding physical (body) issues. Adolescent girls often respond to pubertal changes with a range of emotional experiences, from curiosity and confusion to anxiety and uncertainty. Lack of adequate knowledge about these changes can lead to less adaptive responses, such as shame, stress, and even unhealthy reproductive health behaviors. Therefore, understanding adolescent girls' secondary sexual development is crucial to helping them manage physical and psychological

changes healthily.(Shalahuddin and Rosidin, 2024).

### Research Method

This research uses a descriptive design, which is research conducted with the aim of gaining knowledge about an objective situation. Descriptive surveys are conducted on a group of objects, usually with the aim of obtaining a picture of the phenomena occurring within a specific population (Natoatmojo, 2015). By collecting data through interviews, documentation and distributing questionnaires to respondents regarding the knowledge of adolescent girls during puberty regarding the development of sexual organs.

Population is the total number consisting of objects or subjects, which have certain characteristics and qualities determined by the researcher and then drawn by the conclusion (Sulaikha, 2018) Population is the entire object of research, where the population is a group of objects that are the target of research that are included in the criteria set by the researcher to be studied and can be drawn conclusions. In this study, the population is meant by the female adolescents at SMP Negeri 1 Biskang, Danau Paris District, Aceh Singkil Regency, Aceh Province in 2024.

The sample is an object studied and is considered to represent the entire population (Notoatmodjo, 2012). Sampling in this study uses total sampling, namely sampling is carried out from the entire population, with a total of 30 respondents. With special criteria, namely all female adolescents at SMP Negeri 1 Biskang, Danau Paris District, Aceh Singkil Regency, Aceh Province in 2024.

### Result

This research was conducted on 30 teenage girls at SMP Negeri 1 Biskang, Danau Paris District, Aceh Singkil Regency. The research aims to determine and analyze the level of knowledge of young women about secondary sexual development during puberty, as well as its relationship with age characteristics, caregivers, and sources of information obtained.

Based on the research results, it is known that the majority of respondents were aged between 12 and 13 years (60%), while the remainder were aged 14 to 15 years (40%). The majority of respondents were raised by their own parents (76.7%), while the rest were raised by other family members. The most dominant source of information is parents (33.4%), followed by school (23.3%), internet (20%), peers (13.3%), and mass media (10%).

In terms of knowledge about puberty, 63.4% of respondents had high knowledge, while 36.6% of respondents were in the low knowledge category. These results show that the majority of young women are familiar with the changes that occur during puberty, such as breast growth, first menstruation, and changes in body shape. This knowledge is likely to be obtained through personal experience, education at school, and communication with parents.

However, when explored further regarding knowledge about reproductive organs, the results showed that only 43.4% of respondents had high knowledge, while 56.6% of respondents were in the low knowledge category. This indicates that teenagers still lack understanding about the anatomy and function of their reproductive organs. The lack of comprehensive sexual education and cultural taboos that inhibit discussion of matters relating to reproductive organs are the main causes of this low level of understanding.

In contrast to knowledge about reproductive organs, teenagers' knowledge of diseases and risks of pregnancy shows quite encouraging results, namely that 70% of respondents have high knowledge, and only 30% are classified as low. This can happen because of health education, campaigns about the dangers of HIV/AIDS, and wider access to information media. However, even though the level of knowledge is quite high, this understanding is not necessarily accompanied by appropriate attitudes and behavior because not all the information obtained comes from reliable sources.

Analysis based on age shows that adolescents aged 14–15 years have a higher level of knowledge compared to those aged 12–13 years. As many as 11 out of 12 respondents aged 14–15 years were classified as having high knowledge. This suggests that as they get older, adolescents are more likely to receive and understand information about sexual development. This can be caused by the increased capacity for abstract and logical thinking as well as the direct experiences they experience.

From the perspective of caregivers, adolescents who are cared for by their parents have more high levels of knowledge (14 out of 23 respondents) compared to those who are cared for by other family members. The role of parents

## Discussion

One prominent aspect observed in this study was the correlation between girls' understanding of secondary sexual changes and their attitudes toward these changes. Research in similar adolescent populations has shown that improved knowledge about pubertal development is often associated with more positive attitudes and reduced anxiety during physical transition. For example, studies

is very important in providing correct sexual education, because they are the main figures in children's lives. Lack of parental involvement in providing open and scientific understanding can cause teenagers to seek information from other sources that is not necessarily correct.

Furthermore, analysis based on information sources shows that respondents who obtain information from parents and schools have a higher level of knowledge than those who obtain it from the internet and peers. Information from friends or the internet can be inaccurate and contain misleading myths, while information from parents and teachers tends to be more accurate and responsible. However, there are still many teenagers who feel awkward talking to their parents about sexual issues, so there needs to be a more communicative and educative approach from families and educational institutions.

Overall, the results of this study show that although most adolescents have a fairly good understanding of puberty and the risks of pregnancy, they still lack an overall understanding of reproductive organs and sexual health. This is an important indicator that reproductive health education needs to be improved, both through formal education in schools and open communication in the family environment

have demonstrated that adolescents with higher knowledge about pubertal processes tend to exhibit greater acceptance and fewer negative emotional responses to bodily changes compared with those with limited knowledge. (Kebidanan *et al.*, 2025)

However, knowledge gaps remain a challenge. Some respondents in this study expressed confusion, embarrassment, or discomfort when first experiencing or

recognizing signs of puberty (D Julianti, K Sinaga, 2024). This aligns with evidence from previous research indicating that inadequate health education about puberty is associated with negative attitudes and emotional distress among girls, especially when communication about these changes is limited or taboo in cultural and family contexts. (Kemakes, 2024)

The emotional component of responses to secondary sexual development was also evident. Many adolescent girls reported feelings of anxiety, self-consciousness, or worry about peer perceptions — experiences that have also been described in the literature. Pubertal changes can influence self-image and psychological adjustment, with some studies linking physical maturation signs (e.g., breast development) to both positive and negative self-evaluations depending on broader social and personal contexts (A Sinaga. *et al*, 2023).

### Conclusion and Suggestion

1. Based on high knowledge levels, the highest number of respondents were 14-15 years old (11 respondents (36.6%), while the lowest level of knowledge was found in 12-13 years old (10 respondents (33.4%).

2. Based on high knowledge levels, the highest number of respondents were parents (14 respondents (46.6%), while the lowest level of knowledge was found in other family members (2 respondents (6.7%).

3. Based on high knowledge levels, the highest sources of information came from parents (7 respondents (23.3%) and schools (5 respondents (16.6%). Meanwhile, in the low knowledge group, the most common sources of information were the internet (4 respondents (13.3%) and parents (3 respondents (10%).xxxx.

Suggestions

Based on the conclusions above, the researcher offers the following suggestions:

#### 1. For Researchers

To increase the author's knowledge and experience regarding the Analysis of Adolescent Girls' Responses to Secondary Sexual Development During Puberty at SMP Negeri 1 Biskang, Danau Paris District, Aceh Singkil Regency, Aceh Province in 2024.

#### 2. For Respondents

To increase respondents' insight regarding the Analysis of Adolescent Girls' Responses to Secondary Sexual Development During Puberty at SMP Negeri 1 Biskang, Danau Paris District, Aceh Singkil Regency, Aceh Province in 2024.

#### 3. For Research Sites

It is hoped that this study can serve as a source of knowledge for clients, especially pregnant women, regarding the Analysis of Adolescent Girls' Responses to Secondary Sexual Development During Puberty at SMP Negeri 1 Biskang, Danau Paris District, Aceh Singkil Regency, Aceh Province in 2024.

#### 4. For Educational Institutions

We hope that this information and knowledge regarding the Analysis of Adolescent Girls' Responses to Secondary Sexual Development During Puberty at SMP Negeri 1 Biskang, Danau Paris District, Aceh Singkil Regency, Aceh Province will be helpful. Aceh Singkil, Aceh Province in 2024. Can be used as reading material in the library of STIKes Mitra Husada Medan.

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