Portrait of Digital Safety Issues Between Parents and Adolescentin Banten Province

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

A B S T R A C T

The rise of information technology provokes problems around the use of incorrect information flows that could lead to a dangerous circumstance. Data from a study conducted by KPAI in 2011-2014 reported 932 characteristics of pornography and cyber-crime that made children the main target. Hence, parents and adolescents must understand how to protect their teens from the abuse of social media. However, according to a digital literacy survey conducted by Kominfo, the central part of Indonesia such as Bali, Kalimantan and Sulawesi, has a relatively better digital literacy status compared to the western and eastern regions. Furthermore, the survey also stated that Banten is an area with a lower status compared to Eastern regions such as Maluku and Papua regarding information and data literacy (Kominfo, 2020). Therefore, this mini research was conducted in Banten Province in order to portrait the level of vulnerability of social media usage among adolescents and the level of parental understanding of online safety in the use of social media. This study used a quantitative approach to find out the challenges faced by parents and adolescents regarding media literacy. The result shows that parental control strategies are urgently needed so that adolescents are not negatively affected by social media. Furthermore, there is a need to organize activities or workshops to improve digital literacy skills for both parents and adolescents in Banten Province.

Keywords : digital; safety; self-disclosure.

A.   Introduction

Nowadays online social networks (OSNs) have become a new trend of the community, especially children and adolescents. Online social networks can be in the form of Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, Line, Snapchat, Path, and Blog (Suwandi, 2017).

A digital report mentioned that the total number of active social media users in Indonesia in 2021 are 170 million. There is an increase of around 6.3% from 2020 with the number of additional users of 10 million. So, the number of social media users in Indonesia was equivalent to 61.8% of the total population in January 2021. Whereas the average daily time they spend using social media are 3 hour and 14 minutes (Hootsuite, 2021).

Online social networks are spaces on the internet where users can create a profile and connect that profile to others to create a personal network. Social network users post content to their profiles and use tools embedded within social networking websites to contact other users. Young adults and teenagers are among the most avid users of such websites (Lenhart, A., & Madden, 2007).

With the growing concern over social media's impact and influence on today's youth, parents are the one who has the most concern. Although according to the main findings from the Center's survey of the U.S, there is no clear consensus among teens about the effect of social media on the young people today. Minorities of teens describe that effect as mostly positive (31%) or mostly negative (24%), but the largest share (45%) says that effect has been neither positive nor negative (PewResearch, 2018).

However, Data from a study conducted by KPAI in 2011-2014 reported 932 characteristics of pornography and cyber-crime that put children as the main target. Furthermore, ECPAT INDONESIA study data in 2010-2015 reported 35 children experiencing sexual exploitation in cyberspace. Study data from Yayasan Indonesia Sejiwa also reported that 2 out of 10 Indonesian children who access social media experience cyber harassment (Triastuti, E., Adrianto, D., Nurul, A., & Universitas Indonesia, 2017).

These cases might be the cause of teen carelessness of not knowing the consequences of their actions in OSNs sites. A Komenkominfo study with UNICEF in 2014 reported that children and adolescents lied about their age to get access to certain internet sites. The study also reports that children and adolescents communicate with strangers when in cyberspace (Triastuti, E., Adrianto, D., Nurul, A., & Universitas Indonesia, 2017).

BKKBN as one of the institutions that prevent adolescent problems should begin to intervene through PIK-Remaja and Youth Families Development (BKR) activities. Adolescent family development is a group or an organisation of activities consisting of families with teenagers aged 10-24 years conducted to improve the knowledge, attitudes and behavior of adolescent parents in the context of developing adolescent growth and development, strengthening participation, fostering, and independence in joining the program Family Planning for Fertile Age Couples (PUS) group members (BKKBN, 2014)

Families, especially parents, must first understand the development of technology today because social media is now widely used by adolescents. Characteristics of adolescents who are in the stage of searching for self-identity become vulnerable that could cause a problem if they are not well guided by their parents. The high access to information technology among adolescents should be balanced with the ability of parents to use it. The important role of parents in responding to the impact of social media on early child personality development is parent as a figure, supervisor and controller in the use of social media wisely and responsibly.

Efforts to develop an understanding of the impact of social media on adolescents need parental assistance and guidance. Unfortunately, the level of parental supervision in the use of social media is not done optimally. Parents should increase their prevention so that the negative effects of social media are less visible to adolescents.

According to a digital literacy survey that was held by Kominfo, the central part of Indonesia such as Bali, Kalimantan and Sulawesi, has a relatively better digital literacy status compared to the western and eastern regions. Furthermore, the survey also stated that Banten is an area with a lower score when compared to Eastern regions such as Maluku and Papua regarding information and data literacy (Kominfo, 2020).

This is an unexpected condition considering that Banten Province is one of the closest areas to the national capital and has better access and development opportunities than other regions.

Therefore, this research was conducted in Banten Province in order to understand the level of vulnerability of social media usage among adolescents and the level of parental understanding of online safety in the use of social media.

B.   Research Method

This study was a mini survey that employed quantitative approaches in order to describe the issues on online digital safety issues faced by parents and adolescents. Quantitative data were obtained from parents (N = 130) and adolescents (N=375) through surveys and interviews. The locus of this research was done in 8 districts /cities in Banten province.

The questionnaire was distributed via google form and assisted by an officer to explain the structure of the questionnaire. An exploratory approach was applied in two phases. First, qualitative interview data were collected and analyzed to explore with the intent of using this information to develop a quantitative survey to validate and extend the qualitative findings with a larger sample. The questions in the surveys are around the usages and online safety of ONSs sites on adolescence while the interview is about issues and recommendations regarding media literacy.
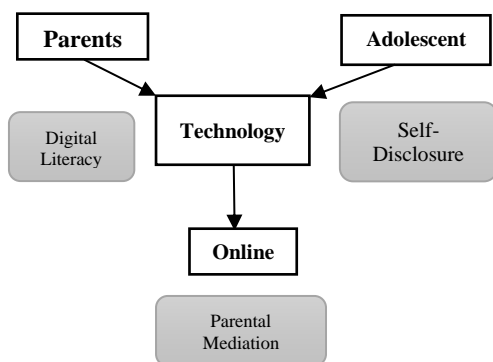

Figure 1. Researcher Framework

The framework explains that adolescents have a tendency to use technology (mobile phone/laptops) to access ONSs sites. Moreover, they tend to expose themselves through this media. There are some social media usage behaviors that should be observed, such as selfie, cyber bullying, online shopping, user-personalization, and shared-culture. They also seemed to be less aware of hiding their personal information in OSNs sites. This behavior has a potential danger because they are exposed to some exploitations by someone that could do harm to them.

The phenomenon of the proliferation of various social media applications in the community has an impact on the number of teenagers who are looking for fame and popularity, namely by posting various activities so that they can be openly seen and recognized by others. This will then have an impact on the personality development of a teenager (Alzahrani, S., & Bach, 2014).

C.   Result and Discussion

Respondents of this study were adolescents from the age of 12 to 19 years old.
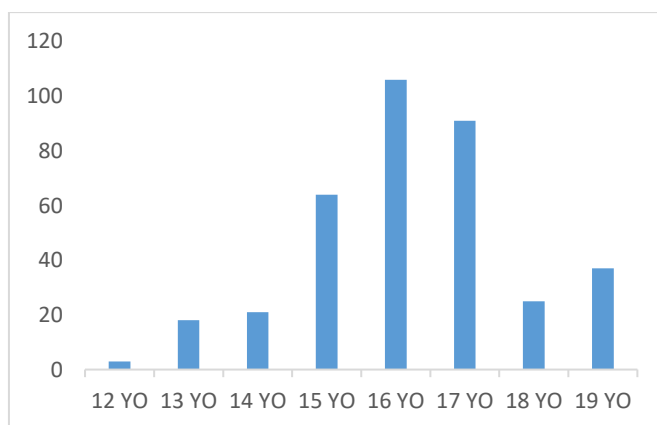

Figure 2. Age of Respondent

The charts shows that most respondent were the age of sixteen (29%), seventeen (24,9%) and fifteen (17,5%) and most of the respondent were female (67,9%)

The research shows that social media is an important aspect in their lives (88,8%). Their gender was female (68,8%) and male (31,3%). The first session was around their online activities. Their online social networks preference was Instagram (94,1%), WhatsApp (91,9%), Facebook (70,4%), and Messenger (74,3%).
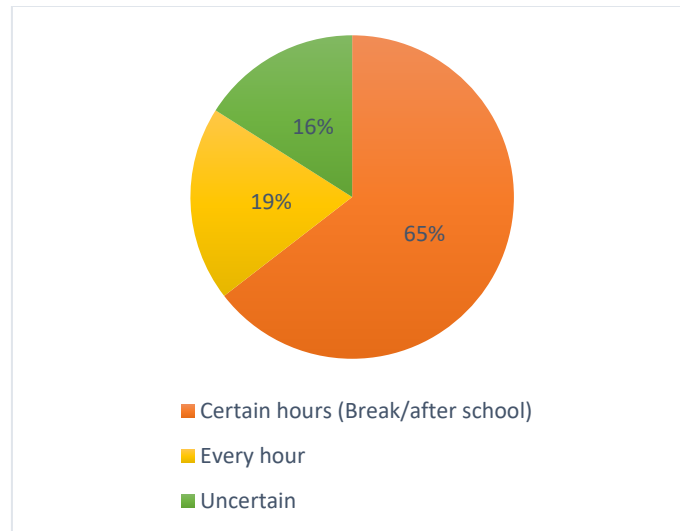

Figure 3. Social Media Access

The chart above shows that they still have access to social media every day in a certain hour (65,6%) and some even claimed that they have accessed it every hour (19,8%). This meant that there were still teenagers that could use social media at a high level. Another protection rule that their parents gave was around privacy settings. The data also showed that most adolescents are open about their private information, although most of their friendliest were peers and family but there were around 17,1% strangers that were in their friendliest. Since there were around 28,8% of them even admitted as unsure about their friendliness.
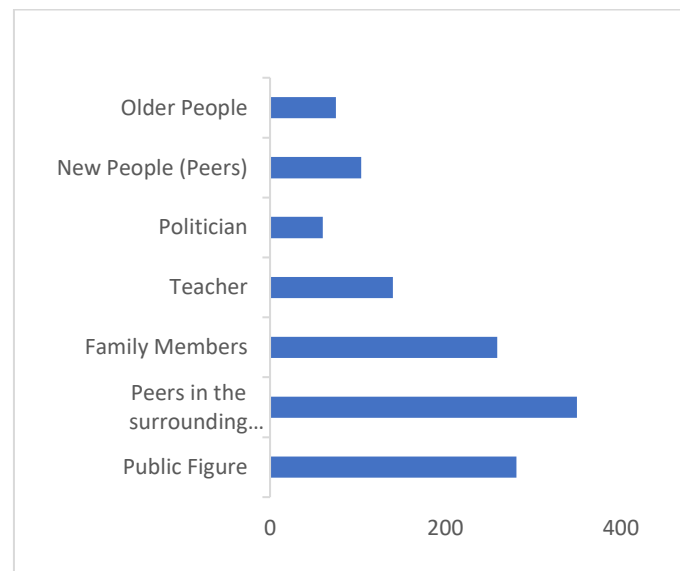
Figure 4. Type people they follow

Regarding persons that they followed on OSNs, there were peers (94,6%), public figure (75,9%), family (70%), educators (37,8%), new peers (28,1%) and some even follow people that were much older (20,3%).
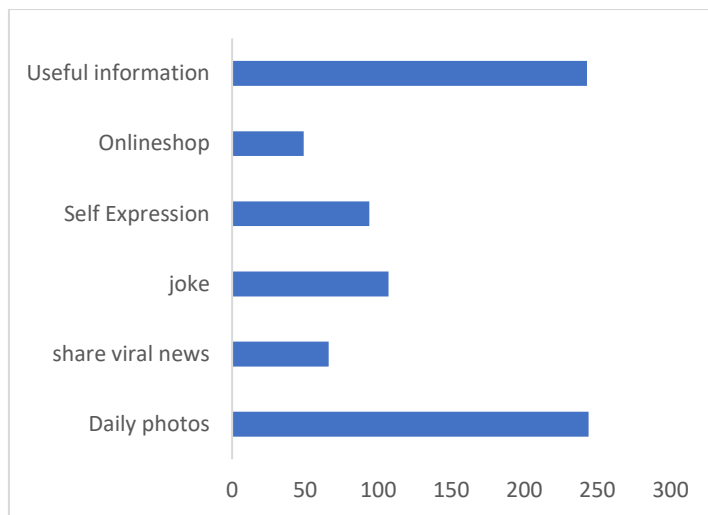
Figure 5. Shared Material

Based on the chart, the things that they posted were daily photos (67%), important or useful information (66,8%), jokes (29,4%), self-expression (25.8%) and re-sharing viral news (18,1%).

Adolescent Privacy Setting on OSNs sites

Privacy policy is the ability of individuals to close or protect their private lives and affairs from the public, or to control the flow of information about themselves. The kinds of information that you may be sharing on a social network includes: Your profile. Most social networks allow users to create detailed online profiles and connect with other users in some way. This may involve users sharing information with other users, such as one's gender, age, familial information, interests, educational background and employment.

Most social networks also allow users to post status updates in order to communicate with other users quickly. There may be privacy settings to restrict access to status updates, but in general, these networks are frequently designed to broadcast information quickly and publicly.

Furthermore, many social networks are designed to broadcast your real-time location, either as public information or as an update viewable to authorized contacts. This might allow users to "check in" to a local event or business, or share one's location with contacts within their network.

Moreover, many social networks encourage users to share content, such as music, photographs, videos and links to other webpages (Clearinghouse, 2010).
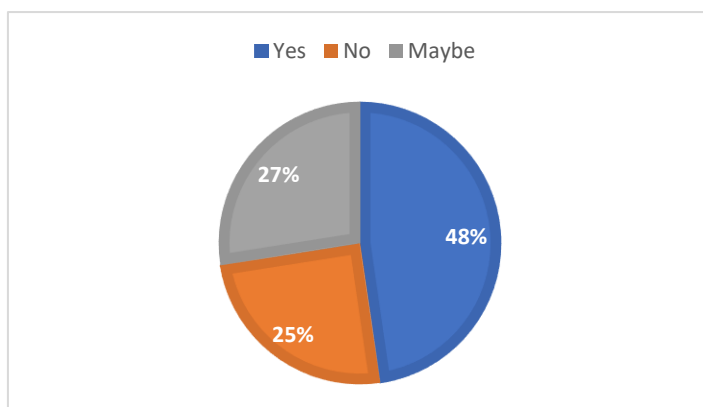
Figure 6. Display data on social media

48% of respondents said that they showed their actual data on OSN, 27% said probably and only 25% that did not post their actual data. Self-disclosure is rewarding and provides significant benefits for individuals, but it also involves risks, especially in social media settings (Max, X; Hancock, J. T; Naaman, 2016). This means that they have the tendency to be open on OSNs sites.

Correa. et. all (2010) observed that people are still more open on such platforms where there is a sense of anonymity. Aharony (2016) even said that it is a freedom of self-expression which may not be the case in face-to-face conversations.

Self-disclosure also has implications for the success of social networking sites. Since relationship maintenance is a primary motivation for many people in using social networking sites and because self-disclosure both reflects and enhances social relationships, people are likely to be more satisfied with sites that encourage self-disclosure (Special, W. P., Kristen, T., 2012).

Parental Rule on ONSs sites

From the data it was found that they have given a verbal rule on social media but most of the rules were around the amount of time to spend on OSNs. Researchers have found that parents are less likely to apply the restrictive mediation policies in the long run as they are generally believed to affect only the immediate behaviors of adolescents, provided that they abide by their parents' rules (Shin, W., Huh, J., & Faber, 2012).
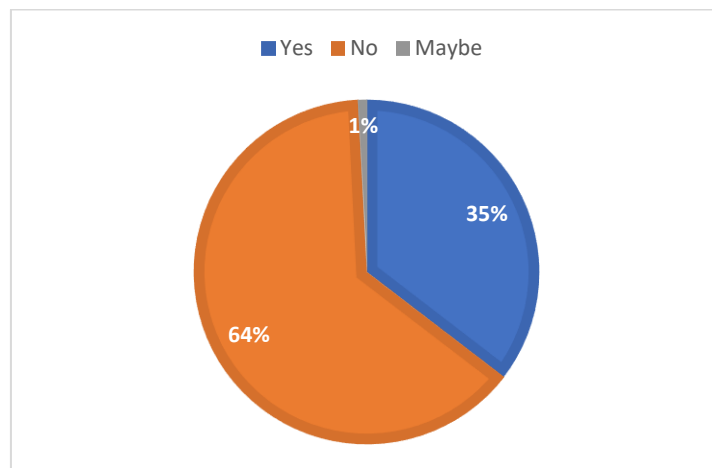
Figure 7. Parent rules on social media

Although based on the chart there were around 57% said that their parents have given a restriction rule on social media usages. In a parent survey, around 87,2% give a spoken role around the use of social media. Restriction mediation usually in the form of rules and regulation that parents initiate regarding their usage on OSN sites. Parents can create rules about the posting that they are allowed, how much they can go online and when they can be online. Parents could also vary in how strict they are in enforcing the rules.
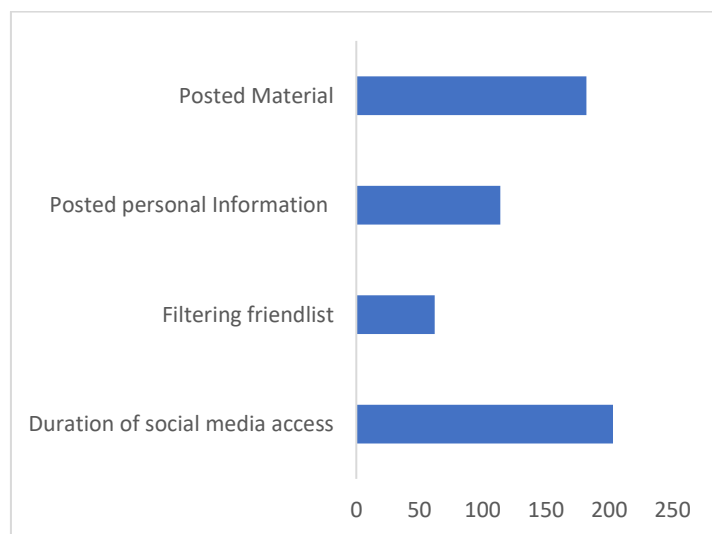
Figure 8. Type of rule

Adolescent also admitted that their parent has giving them regulation on social media usages, this regulation was around the duration to access (59.5%), posted material (53,6%), personal information to be posted (33,9%), and filtering friendliest (17,9%).

But there was a sort of problem on how they regulate and how it is implemented. Parents should monitor this rule whether it already applied or not.
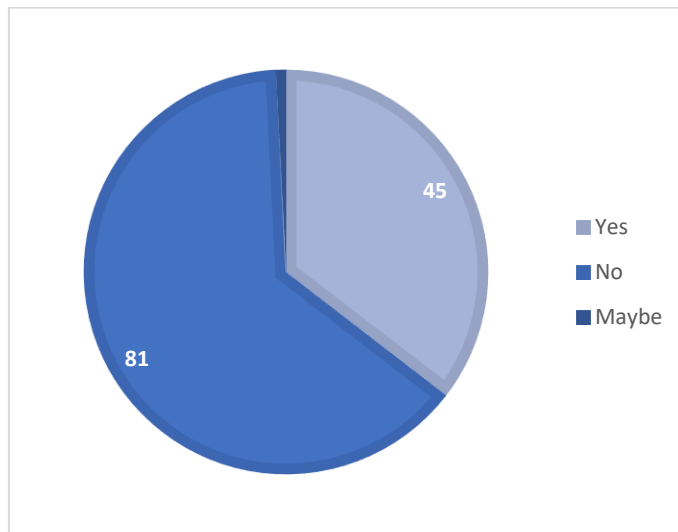
Figure 9. Knowledge related to children's social media presence

This could be seen by the result that showed more than half (63.8%) of the respondents do not know their teens password in OSNs. Furthermore, around 21.9% never even visited their teenager's account. And around 36,6% of respondents have not reviewed the privacy policy on the use of social networks which could lead to a potential danger for adolescents that have used OSNs sites.

Due to negative effects around OSNs sites, problems like inappropriate video or photos, negative words, rudeness online, and reposting appropriate content has been a constant thought in every parent's mind. But there is also a need for them to learn more around this technology.

Parent-Adolescent level of Intimacy

Regarding the closeness with their parents, almost all (89.2%) said that they are close with their mother and 73,3% with their father. Things that they discussed with their parents were relating to education (91,9%), friendship (73,1%), hobbies (52,6%) viral news (45,8%) and close friend (girl/boyfriend) 20,5%.

As you may already know that online self-disclosure could also lead to negative effects, most commonly when people share information to a wider audience than they had intended. Strangers have the potential to do harm to adolescents. Since most of their accounts have open information that could be easily accessed by anyone. There were possibilities that someone could use this information for negativity. There was also a tendency that they would easily talk to strangers, even if they are restricted from meeting them face-to- face.

Based on their comment, there were respondent that said they have experienced an appropriated action in OSNs, from pornographic image in their wall or private message, scamming, hacking, unappropriated posting, misunderstanding until terror and bullying. 18 respondents stated that they have been experience online scamming. They also mentioned that strangers write them a vulgar direct message or find a rude message on their wall.

So even though they admit that they are close with their mother but they felt reluctant to share this bad experience with their parents because they felt ashamed and worried, they will be blamed by them. There was also a respondent that said "My parents were too busy so I could not have talked to them" (Boy, 16 years old, high school student). It showed that the discussions they made with their parents were never around a sensitive topic such as those experiences that they have on the net.

The research also found that there are teenagers that have a fake account. This account was made for them to express themselves outside from people they already knew. It is also being used to stalk someone that they want to know. The existence of fake account might not know by their parent.

Strategy on the Usage of ONSs sites

Families have different norms for media use. Some families have strict rules about media, while other families pay little attention to what or how much media kids consume (Mendoza, 2009; Roberts, D., Foehr, U. G., & Rideout, 2005).

Shek (2005) has suggested using parental control strategies that include parental monitoring, knowledge, discipline, and psychological control. Dishion and McMahon (1998) also defined parental monitoring as a set of correlated parenting behaviors that involve paying attention and monitoring adolescents' media adaptations.

Based on the research it was found that most of the parents used restriction mediation because they thought that it is a useful and familiar strategy. Limiting exposure seems like the easiest way to protect children. Parental Mediation theory states the need for parental supervision by setting certain rules on children in consuming media. Although children are considered active audiences, parental supervision in the form of rules in OSN sites still needs to be done. This can limit children and minimize the absorption of negative things that exist in the media.

For example, parents must be able to provide limits, assertiveness, without having to act arrogant both with themselves and children in using gadgets. Parents must be able to provide an explanation to the children of the advantages and disadvantages of using social media. Parents also need to be able to provide other alternatives to meet teenagers' needs for information.

Media control in the form of rules can be seen as a way for parents to communicate family morals to children because it involves judgments about media and family life (Mendoza, 2009).

Jenkins states that parents need to avoid getting trapped in anxiety about the changing landscape of children's media and participatory culture, but that "parents play important roles in helping them make meaningful choices in their use of media and helping them anticipate the consequences of the choices they make." (Jenkins, 2006).

Based on the findings, this restrictive mediation strategy seemed to be less effective since most adolescents are still to be less concerned about their privacy policy. So, there is a need to change strategy for the usages of social media. Talking with children seems a more effective way to guide children than exercising restrictions on viewing (Livingstone, S., & Helsper, 2008; Mendoza, 2009). Active mediation, the type of mediation most closely aligned with media literacy, is shown to be the most effective type of parental mediation (Livingstone, S., & Helsper, 2008; Mendoza, 2009; Nathanson, 1999).

Children who have parents with higher levels of involvement with their media feel more positive. Additionally, research within the fields of parental mediation or media literacy has not explored the effectiveness of parent media education programs, most of which advocate the active mediation strategy of "talk with your children about media." If active mediation is shown to have promising effects on children, it needs to be explored as a strategy to promote media literacy.

In order to enhance their capability on digital literacy, the parents also mentioned several material and skill that they need such as educational materials on social media and privacy settings (65%), technology education material and adolescent brain (59,2%), educational materials about online youth culture, cyber bullying, and sexting (41%) and script guide how to talk to adolescent about responsible use of technology (40%). Hence, it seems that so far, they have not received these materials and skills so that their digital literacy skills are still very low.

In order to respond to the adolescent problems mentioned above, BKKBN developed the "Generasi Berencana" (GenRe) Program. GenRe program is implemented through a direct approach to teenagers as well as parents who have teenagers. The approach to adolescents is carried out through the Youth Information and Counseling Center (PIK Adolescents) while the approach to parents who have adolescents is implemented through the development of the Adolescent Family Development Group (BKR).

Although this issue is not only the responsibility of BKKBN, but BKKBN can help improve digital literacy by inserting a new curriculum on their PIK-R and BKR program regarding online safety. BKKBN

have spread PIK-R in 4,850 sub-districts in Indonesia with the number of groups of not less than 8,151 groups. In 2019, there were around 983 PIK-Remaja dan 796 BKR groups that spread in 8 districts and city. Even in 2021, after the pandemic hit Indonesia, around 65,64 percent of the BKR group regularly participated in regular group meetings on a monthly basis (BKKBN, 2021). Therefore, this could be an asset to disseminate issues around digital safety that could impact other unnecessary issues in the reproductive health domain.

D.   Conclution

This study has come up with this understanding that quite possibly that it seemed there were missing pieces between what parents felt, their actions and the reality when it comes to online activities. Although they already gave a restriction rule, some teenagers seemed to have broken that rule which led to negative consequences. This condition was also the cause of lack of communication and surveillance with their teens.

The lack of monitoring might be the cause of their lack of information around technology and also feature in the OSN sites. So, this is aligned with research by Lynn Schofield Clark (2011) that said there is a need for participatory learning that involves parents and children interacting together with and through digital media.

Furthermore, there is a need to organize activities or workshops to improve digital literacy skills for both parents and adolescents in Banten Province. This could be done through collaboration between government institutions or other private sectors which could help parents develop a parental control strategy.

Parental control strategies are urgently needed so that adolescents are not negatively affected by social media. The attitude of adolescents in consuming social media also requires guidance and direction from parents. Because parents should control their teens in terms of using social media through parental mediation. Active mediation by giving positive or negative comments to adolescents will be more controlled and not easily influenced by the impact of social media. The goal is to be able to use social media wisely and responsibly.

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