

Premarital Sexual Compliance among Urban Indonesian Women: A Descriptive Study

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Inez Kristanti, Elizabeth Kristi Poerwandari

Department of Clinical Psychology, Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Indonesia

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Abstract

Premarital sexual compliance is a common phenomenon found among women, and this tendency is influenced by the socialization of gender roles. This descriptive study examines the prevalence of and reasons for premarital sexual compliance by women in Jakarta. What surroundings are they in? What aspects of their relationships precede it? And, what are the emotional consequences of sexually compliant behavior? From 1,444 research participants obtained through accidental sampling, 391 participants have performed sexual compliance. The data for these 391 individuals was analyzed to explore and identify the intricacies of this behavior by urban women in Jakarta. Results show that gender roles and the sexual script seem to influence the occurrence of premarital sexual compliance behavior. One suggested intervention or prevention measure to eradicate this issue, among others, would be the development of a program designed to increase sexual assertiveness and to execute comprehensive sex education programs in schools.

Keywords

Descriptive study, premarital sex, sexual compliance, urban Indonesian women

How does one document data for women or gender-related issues in an urban study? In an ever-urbanized society, many issues are relevant because they all provide data for an analytical portion of gender-related issues. On the other hand, we must find common ground for all these issues to make them relevant and important. Regarding women and gender-related issues in an urban society, the topic most often discussed is gender differences in the utilization of public space. Considering that urban planning and its infrastructures impact women and men differently, the issue most commonly raised from a woman's perspective is whether women feel safe and comfortable in public urban areas (McDowell, 2001).

Even within this topic, gender-related topics tend to be confined to the context of physical-material space. We must then ask further: Is it relevant to discuss public or private physical space within the context of intimate relationships? Romantic and sexual relationships between men and women who are not legally

bound by marriage are often regarded as private and personal, where third parties find it difficult to involve themselves.

The current study focuses on sexuality issues in the urban Indonesian society from the women's point of view; we are especially interested in learning more about women who are involved in premarital sexual relationships with a romantic partner. More specifically, this study examines the many dilemmas and conflicts that challenge women as they weigh their freedom against societal boundaries, and as they balance their desire to convince themselves they deserve love with the need to protect themselves.

Ever since the sexual revolution took place in the United States from 1960 to the 1970s, premarital sex has been one of the most

Corresponding Author:

Elizabeth Kristi Poerwandari.

Department of Clinical Psychology, Faculty of Psychology,
Universitas Indonesia, Campus Depok, Jawa Barat 16424,
Indonesia.

Email: elizabeth.kristi@ui.ac.id

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6648-607X>

discussed topics on sexuality in American scientific literature ("Premarital Sexual," 1991; Twenge, Sherman, & Wells, 2015; Wright, 2015). The most common subtopic raised is about society's norms and values regarding premarital sex. One review found that people in the United States today are more likely to accept the idea of premarital sex, compared to those who experienced the sexual revolution in the 1970s and 1980s (Twenge et al., 2015). Generation Y or the Millennial Generation, born between 1982-1999, are said to have created the "hook-up culture", which describes the open practice of sexual activity without commitment; they even came up with a term to describe the trend: "friends with benefits" (Bogle, 2007; Stepp, 2007).

Notwithstanding the increased acceptance toward premarital sex and the common presumption that people have sex just for fun, the prevalence of premarital sex with an element of force is quite high, at around 30-40% (French & Neville, 2016; Hickman, Jaycox, & Aronoff, 2004; Young & Furman, 2008). Although both men and women should be able to consent to sexual activity only when they want to participate, studies show that more women agree to have sex because they feel like they have to, and that this occurs much more often for women than for men (Impett & Peplau, 2002; Katz & Tirone, 2009; O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998; Viscione, 2015). Even without their partner pressuring or threatening them, women often feel that they must agree to sex to satisfy their partners' needs. This is described as sexual compliance (French & Neville, 2016; O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998). This term was first introduced by O'Sullivan and Allgeier (1998), who defined sexual compliance as "consensual participation in unwanted sexual activity", referring to situations in which a person freely consents to having sex without really wanting to; that is, they feign sexual desire or interest" even without overt pressure to do so (p. 234).

Gender role socialization and why many women are sexually compliant

Impett and Peplau (2003) argued that conventional gender role socialization cultivates compliant behavior, including women's compliance within sexual contexts. In society, 'ideal femininity' for women is still closely associated with beauty, nurturing behavior, and

self sacrifice. This socialized definition tends to influence women to develop their identities around fulfilling the needs of others, maintaining close relationships, and acting as a general caretaker whose main goal is to supply emotional support (Hyde & Else-Quest, 2013; Impett & Peplau, 2003; Walker, 1997). Many of the reasons women give to justify their sexual compliance are consistent with feelings of obligation. Several studies show that women perform sexual activities because they feel obligated to fulfill their partner's sexual needs; they do not want to hurt their partner's feelings or make them feel rejected; they want to avoid conflict; they want their partner to stay attracted to them; they want to feel accepted by their partner; and they want to improve intimacy in the relationship, among other things (Gavey in French & Neville, 2016; Impett & Peplau, 2002; Lewin, 1985; O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998). It is common for women to develop the fear of losing their partner if they "fail" to fulfill their "duties".

Sexual compliance and its consequences

Sexual compliance is not a phenomenon to be taken lightly. Women involved in sexual compliance activities are likely to incur an array of negative emotional and physical consequences. Maass (2006) stated that sexual compliance arising from romantic feelings in the early stages of a relationship might make a woman feel like she has successfully accommodated her beloved partner's needs. However, as the relationship progresses, the same woman may feel hurt because they feel like they have an unequal role in the relationship. It is not uncommon for hurt feelings to be physical as well as emotional: sexual intercourse or anal sex performed without vaginal lubrication in cases where there is a lack of sexual desire hinder a smooth penile penetration process (Cahill, 2001), which in turn may irritate the vagina or anus (Segarra-Echebarria, Fernandez-Perez, Gracia-Moncho, & Delarze-Carillo, 2015). Furthermore, compliant sex also increases a woman's risk of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS and cervical cancer. This is because women who are complying with sexual activities are also often reluctant to ask for protection or contraception (Katz & Tirone, 2009; Liu, 2006; Thiangtham, Bennett, & Nuntaboot, 2010).

Sexual compliance and Indonesian values

The impact of sexual compliance makes this phenomenon worth reviewing. Different from American studies completed in the past two decades that highlight sexual compliance in women, Indonesia has no study that systematically reviews this phenomenon. The topic of sexuality, especially premarital sex, is still taboo in Indonesia. From the religious as well as cultural point of view, premarital sex is considered socially deviant, unhealthy, immoral, illegal, and dangerous (Bennett, 2005; Bennett, 2007; Holzner & Oetomo, 2004). In Islam, the major religion in Indonesia, premarital sex is called *zina*, an offense punishable by the *sharia*, the Muslim justice system (Bennett, 2005). Even though this rule applies to men and women, the social construction counts heavily on the protection of women's chastity and virginity. Women who lose their virginity before marriage are usually demeaned by stigma and terminology such as "broken," "damaged," "cheap," and "easy."

The authors predict that the taboo nature of the issue increases the complexity of the early sexual compliance problem in Indonesia. Women who perform sexual compliance may experience internal conflict: on one hand, they feel obliged to please their partner, but on the other hand, they know what they are doing is wrong and is a sin according to their religion. Moreover, knowing that they are labeled with negative stigma, unmarried women who are no longer virgins are more likely to try to ensure that their partner never leaves them, and one way to do so is by agreeing to anything their partner desires, including within the sexual realm. The authors suspect that the issue of virginity and the fear that no men would want to marry women who are no longer virgins causes women to stay in relationships that involve sexual compliance.

To our knowledge, there is no published review on sexual compliance that covers the complex relationship between premarital sex, religion, and culture in Indonesia, along with its potential repercussions. Therefore, we seek to capture a portrait of sexual compliance in unmarried Indonesian women, especially in the Greater Jakarta area. Even though there is not yet a systematic review that compares sexual behavior in urban and rural Indonesia, Holzner

and Oetomo (2004) have found that the urban society's openness to sexuality has increased, which will make this study's findings an interesting discussion topic with young urban Indonesians. This descriptive research aims to discover the reasons for the prevalence of premarital sexual compliance in women in the Greater Jakarta (Jabodetabek area), reasons why they show premarital sexual compliance, factors in the relationship that precede sexual compliance, and emotional consequences of sexually compliant behaviors.

Methods

Procedure. Data were collected online through a survey portal managed by Universitas Indonesia: survey.ui.ac.id. Samples were chosen using the accidental sampling method, by sharing the survey link in social media and forums that discuss women's issues. The target participants were unmarried women who live in Jabodetabek, who have been in a romantic relationship and are heterosexual. Data were collected during the time range of February 8th - March 29th, 2017.

There were 1,444 women who matched the necessary criteria and participated in the entire survey. Data from these participants were processed to obtain the prevalence of sexual compliance of women in Jabodetabek. Three hundred and ninety-one participants reported that they performed sexual activities they did not want to do or that they did so because they felt like they had to. However, these participants were never forced into performing the sexual activities through deliberate intoxication, physical violence, or a partner's threats. This is important because this study wants to examine specifically how women think and decide about complying with a partner sexually. These data will be analyzed further to identify the reasons why these women participated in sexual compliance behavior, factors in relationships that preceded it, and emotional consequences caused by it.

Measures. Most data on this survey were obtained through a single item survey with several answer options. This format was chosen to avoid open-ended questions that allow responses out of context; the survey needed to include a way to clarify participants' understanding of the questions. The answer choices were selected based on a literature

review and discussion between the first and second author. Moreover, free text space was provided after each question so that participants could elaborate on their answers if they needed to.

Demographic section

This section requested the participant's basic demographic information, including age, gender, domicile, education, religion, occupation, ethnicity, marital status, and sexual orientation.

Dating experiences

This section asked for the participant's dating status: had the participant previously dated or been in a romantic relationship, were they currently in a romantic relationship, and if so, what was the duration of the current relationship.

Sexual compliance experiences

Participants were asked to check off items on a list of sexual activities that they have done with their partner. The list included: 1) holding hands; 2) hugging; 3) kissing of the forehead or cheeks; 4) kissing of the lips; 4) necking (kissing of the neck area); 5) groping of the chest area (breasts); 6) groping of the genitals; 7) petting (rubbing one's genitals against the partner's genitals); 8) oral sex (the participant to the partner); 9) oral sex (the partner to the participant); 10) anal sex; 11) sexual intercourse. This list of sexual activities was developed based on Carroll's findings (2010) and adjusted based on a discussion between the authors.

The participant was then asked whether each sexual activity they participated in was done based on their own will or if they felt an obligation to do something they did not want to do. This was followed by a question asking which specific chosen sexual activities they had participated in even when they did not want to. Then, the survey asked whether the sexually compliant behavior(s) or activity were being performed in the current or previous relationship.

Reasons for consenting to unwanted sexual activity

Reasons for complying sexually were identified using 14 statements of reasons that the women may have experienced as influencing them to behave other than they wished to behave. Participants were asked to rate the accuracy of

each statement within their situation: "very not true to my situation" = 1; "not true to my situation" = 2; "true to my situation" = 3; or "very true to my situation" = 4. All 14 statements were developed based on a literature review on sexual compliance (Humphreys & Kennett, 2011; Impett & Peplau 2002; Meston & Buss, 2007; O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998; Shotland & Hunter 1995). Two examples of the statements used are: "I am afraid of losing my boyfriend if I do not perform the sexual activity," and "Doing sexual activities is a norm/habit in our relationship."

The authors did not try to identify a relationship among the 14 statements or treat them all as one; rather, they were considered individual items that each explained different things. Due to the use of this method, no psychometric test was conducted to test the consistency of the items.

Partner's behavior(s) that influence sexual compliance

Sexual compliance behavior is defined as voluntarily complying with a partner's sexual requests without receiving any pressure or threat from the partner. However, the reality is that certain behaviors may be performed or participated in by the partner that influence a woman's decision to comply with sexual behavior. Our literature review shows that mild or subtle pressure sometimes exists for performing sexual activities, making room for the women to comply (Livingston, Buddie, Testa, & VanZile-Tamsen, 2004; Shackelford & Goetz, 2004). Based on the literature, the authors have come up with 15 types of partner behavior that may influence women to comply with sexual behavior and asked the participants to check off the items that they had experienced.

Emotional consequences of complying with unwanted sex

The emotional consequences of sexual compliance were determined by the answers to the question "What feelings or emotions emerge after you perform a sexual activity? (You may choose more than 1)". The answer options were developed based on the variety of emotions that Guggino and Ponzetti (1997) found may arise from first-time sexual experiences and adjusted based on discussion between the authors.

Results

One of the goals for the current study is to measure the prevalence of sexual compliance by women in Jabodetabek. From 1,444 samples of the study, 30.75% reported that they had participated in one or more unwanted sexual activities and they did so because they felt pressured to. Eighty-eight percent or 391 people from this group reported that they had never received any pressure in the form of physical violence, verbal threats, or due to deliberate intoxication of their partner.

Demographic characteristics and sexual compliance experience

There is a significant correlation between age and sexual compliance. The participants' age range was from 15-47 years old ($M = 24.04$, $SD = 3.47$), and the percentage of participants aged 25 and below who have shown sexual compliance was significantly greater than that of the participants aged 25 and above ($X^2 = 7.049$, $p = 0.008$), although the strength of the relationship is still considered weak ($V = 0.070$). The percentage of sexual compliance for participants with at least 12 years of education is also significantly lower than that of those with less than 12 years of education ($X^2 = 8.127$, $p = 0.004$), although the strength of the relationship is still considered weak ($V = 0.075$). This result indicates that an older age and higher education can be protective factors for women in choosing not to consent to unwanted sex. Meanwhile, there was no significant relationship between religion and sexual compliance ($X^2 = 3.478$, $p = 0.324$). The prevalence of sexual compliance within each religion of participants was equal. Demographic characteristics of participants and the prevalence of sexual compliance among them are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of participants who have and have never shown sexual compliance

	Compliance (%) <i>N</i> = 391	Non-Compliance (%) <i>N</i> = 1444	χ^2	<i>p</i>	<i>V</i>
Age					
< 25 years	262 (29.5)	625 (70.5)	7.049	0.008*	0.070
≥ 25 years	129 (23.4)	428 (76.8)			
Education					
< 12 years	104 (33.4)	207 (66.6)	8.127	0.004*	0.075
≥ 12 years	287 (25.3)	846 (74.7)			
Religion					
Moslem	229 (27.0)	618 (73.0)	3.478	0.324	0.049
Christian/Catholic	130 (27.5)	342 (72.5)			
Others	29 (29.30)	70 (70.7)			
Unknown	3 (11.5)	23 (88.5)			

* Significant to the alpha level = 0.01

Table 2. Sexual activities and the prevalence of unwanted sexual activities

Sexual activities	Number of experiences (%) N = 1444	Number of experienced but unwanted sexual activities (%)* N = varied across sexual activities
Holding hands	1351 (93.6)	19 (1.4)
Hugging	1321 (91.5)	21 (1.6)
Kissing on the forehead or cheeks	1271 (88.0)	21 (1.7)
Kissing on the lips	1205 (83.4)	74 (6.1)
Necking	1003 (69.5)	60 (6.0)
Breast fondling	993 (68.8)	124 (12.5)
Groping of the genitals	901 (62.4)	128 (14.2)
Petting	724 (50.1)	89 (12.3)
Giving oral sex	707 (49.0)	149 (21.1)
Receiving oral sex	615 (42.6)	86 (14.0)
Anal sex	93 (6.4)	18 (19.4)
Sexual intercourse	534 (37.0)	97 (18.2)

*Those printed in bold are the participants' five most unwanted sexual activities

(Unwanted) sexual activities

Almost half (49.0% and 42.6%) of the participants reported that they had given or received oral sex; a third of them (37.0%) have had sexual intercourse, while 6.4% of them have had anal sex. The top five most unwanted sexual activities that participants did were giving oral sex (21.1%), anal sex (19.4%), sexual intercourse (18.2%), groping of the genitals (14.2%) and receiving oral sex (14.0%). Results also show that participants were more uncomfortable with giving oral sex than with receiving it. Table 2 shows the complete details for the types of sexual activities which the participants have done and the prevalence of these unwanted sexual activities.

Reasons for consenting to unwanted sexual activities

The most common reasons given for consenting to unwanted sexual activities, in descending order, were as follows: to avoid tension/conflict ($M = 2.75$, $\sigma = 0.88$); wanting to be accepted by the partner ($M = 2.74$, $\sigma = 0.89$); not wanting to hurt the partner's feelings ($M = 2.71$, $\sigma = 0.85$); not wanting to make the partner feel rejected ($M = 2.67$, $\sigma = 0.85$); to prevent the partner from losing interest in them ($M = 2.57$, $\sigma = 0.90$); and wanting to increase intimacy ($M = 2.52$, $\sigma = 0.92$). Table 3 shows the complete details for the

Table 3. Reasons for consenting to unwanted sexual activities

	Mean*	SD
Guilty feeling	2.34	0.85
Wanting to be accepted by the partner	2.74	0.89
Fear that she will lose her partner	2.08	0.91
Not wanting to hurt the partner's feelings	2.71	0.85
To avoid tension/conflict	2.75	0.88
The feeling that she "must" satisfy the partner's needs	2.32	0.90
Wanting to be more liked/loved by the partner	2.28	0.86
To prevent the partner from losing interest in them	2.57	0.90
Not wanting to make the partner feel rejected	2.67	0.85
Feeling that she has agreed to do the sexual activity with the current partner	2.30	1.00
Feeling that she has agreed to do the sexual activity with a former partner	1.69	0.84
Wanting to increase intimacy	2.52	0.92
Sexual activity has become the norm or a habit	2.30	0.93
Fear that the quality of the relationship will decline	2.06	0.86

Note. N = 683. *Those printed in bold are reasons with $M > 2.5$ on a scale of 1-4

reasons why participants consented to unwanted sexual activities.

Partner behavior(s) that influence sexual compliance

Table 4 shows several behaviors performed or done by the partner to initiate or persuade participants to comply with a certain sexual

activity. The most reported behaviors, in decreasing order, are as follows: saying that they love or care for the participant (60.1%); begging (38.4%); admiring the participant's beauty or body (36.6%); negotiating (34.0%); and questioning why the participant does not want to perform sexual activities (30.7%). sexual activities.

Table 4. Partner behavior(s) that influence sexual compliance

	Number of cases (%) [*] N = 391
Admiring the participant's beauty or body	143 (36.6)
Saying that they love or care for the participant	235 (60.1)
Comparing participant with a former partner	25 (6.4)
Asking why the participant does not want to do sexual activities	120 (30.7)
Promising that he will be responsible	81 (20.7)
Begging	150 (38.4)
Sulking	94 (24.0)
Asking to be felt sorry for	56 (14.3)
Feeling sorry for himself	23 (5.9)
Doubting the participant's sexual attraction to the partner by questioning	30 (7.7)
Crying	6 (1.5)
Negotiating	133 (34.0)
Questioning the participant's feelings for him	61 (15.6)
Promising a gift	8 (2.0)

^{*}Those printed in bold are the partner behaviors that were reported by more than 30% of the participants

Emotional consequences of complying with unwanted sex

Table 5 shows the variety of emotions that women felt after performing unwanted sexual activities. We can see that the participants' descriptions of how they feel after performing unwanted sexual activities also varies, from positive emotions: loved (58.1%), happy (46%), romantic (45.8%), and satisfied (46%); as well as negative emotions: guilty (58.1%), scared (42.2%), regret (41.4%), ashamed (39.4%), and confused (38.1%). Looking at the variety of reported emotions, the authors divided them into three categories: positive emotions, negative emotions, and conflicting emotions (see Table 6). The positive emotions category was assigned to participants who reported exclusively positive emotions (satisfied, happy, joyful, romantic, or loved). The negative emotions category was

assigned to participants who reported exclusively negative emotions (sad, exploited, tense, scared, guilty, nervous, ashamed, confused, angry, regret, apprehensive, or disgusted). The conflicting emotions category was assigned to participants who reported both positive and negative emotions.

Results show that a majority of the participants (64.34%) reported having conflicting feelings regarding their experience with unwanted sexual activities. On the one hand, they had positive feelings (loved, happy, etc.), but they also felt negative emotions (guilt, regret, etc.).

Table 5. Emotion(s) experienced after consenting to unwanted sexual activities

	Number of cases (%)* N = 391
Satisfied	165 (42.2)
Happy	180 (46)
Joyful	71 (18.2)
Romantic	179 (45.8)
Loved	227 (58.1)
Sad	102 (26.1)
Exploited	95 (24.3)
Tense	54 (13.8)
Scared	165 (42.2)
Guilty	227 (58.1)
Nervous	55 (14.1)
Ashamed	154 (39.4)
Confused	149 (38.1)
Angry	52 (13.3)
Regret	162 (41.4)
Apprehensive	107 (27.4)
Disgusted	64 (16.4)

*Those printed in bold are the emotions reported by more than 30% of the participants

Table 6. Categorization of emotion(s) experienced after doing unwanted sexual activities

	Number of cases (%)* N = 387*
Positive	59 (15.25)
Negative	79 (20.41)
Conflicting	249 (64.34)

* Four participants did not report their feelings specifically; they stated that the sexual activities they had done did not trigger any emotions or that they were unsure of how to label the emotions they felt

Discussion

Conclusions and discussion of findings

The current study discussed an urban society as Paddison (2001) reviewed it, as an experienced context. What is examined are social actions that are revealed through stories or narrations about one's experiences. What is described are issues of sexuality, especially of premarital sex as an

unpleasant experience, although many young women are finding it difficult to say no assertively.

The current study successfully illustrates the premarital sexual compliance phenomenon seen in women in Jabodetabek; it examines the prevalence, reasons, and factors in relationships that precede the occurrence of sexual compliance, as well as the emotional consequences incited by sexual compliance. This section will discuss the findings of the study, its strengths and limitations, and the implications of this study on future research.

The current study shows very different results as compared to an earlier survey conducted by Utomo, McDonald, Hull, and Reimondos (2012) of 3,006 people ages 20-34 in Jakarta, Bekasi, and Tangerang. In that study, only 5% of unmarried women reported having had sexual intercourse, whereas in this study, we found that 37% of unmarried women reported that they had had sexual intercourse. Our study found much higher figures for experiences with oral sex, where 49.0% and 42.6% of the participants respectively reported having given and received oral sex with their partner. The difference in findings may be the result of the different sampling techniques used. Utomo and his colleagues' (2012) study used clustered sampling, whereas the current study used accidental sampling; therefore, the participants obtained may not necessarily represent all layers of the Jabodetabek community. Moreover, the majority of the participants in the current study have undergraduate degrees. From Utomo and his colleagues' (2012) research, we know that the higher the level of education, the higher the chance of the individual having had their first sexual experience before marriage. This may indicate that the higher an individual's level of education, the more open they are toward premarital sexual activities. What needs to be reviewed in the next study is whether openness toward premarital sexual activities is accompanied by the knowledge and action of using protection or contraceptives to prevent sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy.

To be discussed, is the reasons why women consent to unwanted sexual activity. Based on the reason most commonly reported by participants, we can see that the reason women most often consent matches their gender role in

society. The socialization of gender roles for women continue to highlight the 'ideal femininity' and associate women with nurturing behavior and self-sacrifice (Hyde & Else-Quest, 2013; Impett & Peplau, 2003; Walker, 1997). Eventually, this pushes women into performing unwanted sexual activities to avoid hurting their partner's feelings, avoid conflicts, or increase intimacy. As women who also feel a duty to nurture others, they perceive fulfilling their partner's sexual requests as one way for their partner to accept them.

The interactional aspects of a relationship are also important factors to be considered in the discussion of sexual compliance. Findings show that the most commonly reported partner behaviors match the male sexual script. The male sexual script is defined as implicit rules about who, when, what, where, and how men believe women perform sexual activities (Laws & Schwartz, in Sollie & Leslie, 1994). This includes rules on how to assert authority, communicate topics of sexual activity, and sexual negotiations (Baber & Allen, in Sollie & Leslie, 1994). When women reject men's sexual advances, men are expected to continue the effort to persuade, ignoring rejections, until the women give up and give in to the sexual invitation. In general, women are considered to be "playing hard to get" and are expected to agree to sex if only the men continue to persuade (Maass, 2006). For the current study's participants, these persuasions appear in the forms of declarations of love, begging, admiring beauty or body, negotiating, and asking why the participant does not want to comply. This information provides a clearer view of the process that occurs in sexual compliance; there are specific behaviors that men use to persuade their partners to consent to one or more sexual activities without being forceful or resorting to physical violence.

Another important finding is the women's emotions after participating in unwanted sexual activities. The majority of participants showed conflicting emotions; they often reported feeling romantic and loved but also feelings of guilt, fear, and regret. This finding confirms the complexity of the issue of sexual compliance in Indonesia and illustrates the conflict that is unique to Indonesian women. They are conflicted between needing to please their partner by consenting to their sexual requests so

they can feel romantic, accepted, and loved, and knowing that they should not perform premarital sexual activities because they do not align with their beliefs, which consequently triggers guilt, fear, and regret.

Strengths and limitations

The current study has provided a snapshot of sexual compliance as a phenomenon in the premarital context of urban Indonesia. This snapshot adds new information to the archive of Indonesian psychological studies because there was previously no study which examined the topic of sexual compliance.

However, the current study was susceptible to a few limitations. First of all, the current study used a non-systematic non-probability sampling technique, which means that the participants obtained might not fairly represent all of Jabodetabek.

Secondly, the authors also did not collect comprehensive information to get a complete picture of the interactions that take place in a relationship preceding sexual compliance. The authors only asked about what partners did to the participant that influenced the participant's decision to consent to unwanted sexual activities. The authors did not ask about how the participants responded to their partner's sexual advances. Therefore, further studies should ask about behaviors performed by both the participants and their partners during said sexual initiation so that we can more comprehensively understand the interactions preceding sexual compliance.

Thirdly, the structure of one question in the survey was deemed confusing by a few participants, which may have led to the possibility of misinterpretation. To evaluate the emotions participants felt after complying with unwanted sexual activities, the authors asked: "What emotions come up after you finish a sexual activity (you may choose more than 1)?" Even though previous questions referred to unwanted sexual experiences, in this question, the authors did not explicitly state that the participant should respond by referring only to unwanted sexual activities. It is possible that the participant experienced desired sexual experiences in addition to unwanted ones. Therefore their answers to this question may

have referred to both. In this situation, the authors were unable to ensure or clarify that the selected emotions referred only to their unwanted sexual experiences. Further studies are suggested to formulate every question specifically, context-wise, to prevent misinterpretation.

Fourthly, on the same question, the number of negative emotions from which participants could choose (12) was a lot higher than the number of positive emotion choices (5). Although the decision to use the current options involved a literature review and discussion between the authors, the marked difference between positive and negative emotions may become a potential bias, leading a participant to choose more negative than positive emotions. Further studies should provide an equal number of choices for both positive and negative emotions.

Implications

Looking at the high prevalence and complexity of the issue of sexual compliance in Indonesia, the authors propose an intervention or prevention program to address this problem. Results of several studies show that one of the protective factors for women around complying with sexual activity is if she can successfully act assertive in sexual situations (Carlson & Johnson, 1975; Greene & Navarro, 1998; Morokoff, 2000; Rickert, Sanghvi, & Wiemann, 2002; Schry & White, 2013; Testa & Dermen, 1999; Viscione, 2015). Sexual assertiveness also positively correlates with the use of condoms to protect oneself from pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (Morokoff et al., 2009; Noar, Morokoff, & Harlow, 2004). Based on this finding, the authors suggest that the intervention or prevention program focus on increasing the sexual assertiveness of unmarried women.

Other than a program to increase sexual assertiveness, the authors also see an ever-growing need to implement a comprehensive sex education program in schools. This is very important because, as we saw from our findings, more than a third of participants felt confused and scared after complying with sexual activities. Their conflicting emotions surely reflect that participants are not entirely sure of what they

want sexually, and this may be rooted in their lack of knowledge about sexuality.

Gender relations in urban spaces

As mentioned at the beginning, the current discussion of sexuality is heavily influenced by the construction of gender-related topics, which are difficult to confine to the context of physical-material space (Paddison, 2001). That is, urban communities have begun to allow more freedom to their inhabitants than before. People are more free to do anything, including having sexual relations, especially behind closed doors or in private. Of course, this freedom creates dilemmas, especially for women, who must keep in mind the challenges, vulnerabilities, and stigmas that are still associated with negative consequences.

In the discussion of public vs. private space, within the context of intimate relationships between men and women, it seems that it is not enough to remember that romantic relationships are more often seen as private and personal, where third parties do not need to be and find it hard to be involved. Peake (2009) said that "This analytical view of the city as a space of containment for women has been challenged by those who put forward a view of the city as a contradictory and shifting space that allows women opportunities" (p. 327). Therefore, perhaps new questions should be asked while integrating people's functional experiences with the city. For instance, to what extent do women feel safe and comfortable in their own home, and is feeling safe and comfortable the same for women who are away from their partner (e.g., living separately) and those who live together with their partner?

Furthermore, Peake (2009) stated that "Research has also shown how women have made numerous attempts to create their urban spaces" (p. 327). Women take steps to respond to the structures of patriarchal urban social space. So, another question for the next study should be: "How do women manage to feel safe and comfortable with their sexuality—in the physical and social, public and private space—wherever they are?"

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