

FILM LITERACY AND SEXUAL DESIRES OF FEMALE UNIVERSITY STUDENT AT PESANTREN IN MADURA, INDONESIA

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Abstract

Film literacy for female university students living in *pesantren* (*santriwati*) is a rare issue to discuss since this issue is not considered the primary subject for students living in *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school). However, it becomes crucial, as the film is a potential media transferring visual ideas about gender and sexuality, which might relate to an individual's behavior. Moreover, *santriwati* are likely to have unique characteristics. They are living and learning religiosity in *pesantren*, and at the same time, they are studying sciences in college or university. Normally, living in *pesantren* is tied to strict religious norms and traditions. On the other hand, as university students, dealing with a more flexible and open culture is inevitable. They need to read references, watch films, and enjoy novels or other literary works as part of campus life and self-entertainment. This paper examines how film literacy culture among *santriwati* relates to their sexual desire expression. As many as fifteen *santriwati* from different *pesantren* in Madura were taken as the respondents. The results of this study indicate that the literacy culture of film among *santriwati* affects their expression of sexual desires, although they could hardly express them due to religious norms and values they learned in *pesantren*.

Keywords: Sexual Desires; Feminist Studies; Film Literacy; *Pesantren*; *Santriwati*.

Abstrak

Literasi film untuk mahasiswa yang tinggal di *pesantren* (*santriwati*) merupakan isu yang jarang dibahas karena isu ini tidak dianggap sebagai mata pelajaran utama bagi para santri yang tinggal di *pesantren*. Namun, menjadi krusial, karena film merupakan media potensial untuk mentransfer ide-ide visual tentang gender dan seksualitas, yang mungkin terkait dengan perilaku individu. Apalagi, *santriwati* cenderung memiliki karakteristik yang unik. Mereka hidup dan belajar agama di *pesantren*, dan pada saat yang sama, mereka belajar ilmu di perguruan tinggi atau universitas. Biasanya, tinggal di *pesantren* terikat dengan norma dan tradisi agama yang ketat. Di sisi lain, sebagai mahasiswa, berurusan dengan budaya yang lebih fleksibel dan terbuka tidak bisa dihindari. Mereka perlu membaca referensi, menonton film, dan menikmati novel atau karya sastra lainnya sebagai bagian dari kehidupan kampus dan hiburan diri. Tulisan ini mengkaji bagaimana budaya literasi film di kalangan *santriwati* terkait dengan ekspresi hasrat seksual mereka. Sebanyak lima belas *santriwati* dari berbagai *pesantren* di Madura diambil sebagai responden. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa budaya literasi film di kalangan *santriwati* mempengaruhi ekspresi hasrat seksual mereka, meskipun mereka sulit mengungkapkannya karena norma dan nilai agama yang mereka pelajari di *pesantren*.

Kata Kunci: Hasrat Seksual; Studi Feminis; Literasi Film; *Pesantren*; *Santriwati*.

INTRODUCTION

Film literacy among female students of pesantren, called *santriwati*, is one of the main characteristics represented by university students in Madura. Although Madura has not entirely different from other parts of Indonesia with regard to socio-religious characteristics, Madura has stronger religious tradition and value due to the long-term process of Islamisation on this island.¹ Referring to the term in pesantren tradition, *santri* is used primarily to refer to the majority of Madurese Muslims, proponents of more orthodox Islam with the global influences of Sunni Islam, the largest denomination school of the religion. They are studying in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) to learn and practice Islam, and at the same time, they are studying in college or university to learn non-religious sciences.

As university students and *santri*, film literacy culture are recently immersed in the rising of the internet in today's digital age. An online learning process has surged most the education platform to engage technology as the primary tool to continue the learning process. As the Covid-19 pandemic has been escalating across regions since mid of 2020, university students living in pesantren have been attending lecturing classes virtually. They need reading references as well as entertainment in their lecturing activity. Thus, film literacy culture among *santri* is increasing in the current situation. In his speech, Zaini Ahmad, leader of the Indonesian Pesantren Association, stated that pesantren are expected to embrace technology information in learning activities. Moreover, digital literacy is also a primary agenda pesantren have to consider. However, it is highly encouraged for pesantren to make a vivid rule upon the internet use for *santri*.² This

is to guard *santri* against anydisadvantageous digital impact.

The choice of literature sources in the form of watching movies among *santriwati* certainly becomes an interesting discussion because literary choices will subtly internalize into the mindset, ideas, and behavior of its readers or audiences. Some forms of behavior and cultural adoption through the characters displayed in literary sources from both films and novels can be seen through social media trends. For example, during the Dillan teen romance movie boom, almost all millennial generations could recognize and mention the characters in it. In addition, when the booming novels and films such as *Negeri 5 Menara*, *Laskar Pelangi*, *I Love Kyaiku*, *Ayat Ayat Cinta*, they glorified the sense of love and suddenly became a compulsory consumption for the young generation, including *santriwati*.

The themes raised by the majority of popular literature contain stories of romance, love, and the dynamics of the lives of young people in school or on campus. These themes are indeed appealing and interesting because they are very close to the lives of young people who generally have a passionate desire for love and passion for the opposite sex, as well as the amount of desire to be known, recognized, and accepted by the surrounding environment. The desire to be recognized as a particular identity is naturally felt by all individuals, including *santriwati*. In this phase, they have begun to have an interest in the opposite sex, affective desires (accept and give love), and awareness to show their self identity. At the same time, they are also experiencing a process of searching for identity, so the issue of awareness of personal identity and group identity is also very instrumental in the process of forming their self-identity and

¹Yanwar Pribadi, "Religious Networks in Madura: Pesantren, Nahdlatul Ulama and Kiai as the Core of Santri Culture," *Al-Jami'ah* 51, no. 1 (2014): 1–32, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2013.511.1-32>.

²N. Nashrullah, "Home: Khazanah," *Www.Republika.Co.Id*, July 15, 2019, <https://republika.co.id/berita/dunia-islam/islam-nusantara/19/07/15/puoh56320-santri-boleh-saja-akses-internet-tetapi-ini-syaratnya>.

awareness of sexual needs. *Santrivati* are most likely to enter the stage of an intersection between the search for identity, identity expression, and sexual desires performances. They tend to restrain their sexual desires to satisfy their identity label as *santri*.

Santrivati are a very unique group. They are a group that is both potential and vulnerable. This group of young women lives and processes simultaneously in a boarding school environment with various of strong rules, traditions, and religious norms. At the same time, they are also in the midst of campus life, which tends to be more fluid, flexible, and dynamic. As female students, they have great potential to hold fast to maintaining a strong religious tradition, but they are also vulnerable to issues of sexual behavior, which are important issues in their life phases. The behavior of sexuality and expression of identity cannot be neglected because these two things are the basic needs of individuals that must be met or channeled. Fromm argued that every theory of love and sexuality has to begin from a theory of humans as it is about the matter of human existence.³

Women and sexuality are among the main issues within feminism and society. The notion of women's sexuality is mostly determined by the mainstream discourse prevailing within the society, which mostly believes in a patriarchal system. A good sex and a good woman would be measured from a male point of view, and it is represented by the common society. Sexual relations, in many cases, are detected and viewed as "normal" when it is male-female, heterosexual, married, man on top, and sexual

reproductive was fine⁴. Although the notion of normal sexuality is still perpetuated in most societies, sex is no longer seen as men's pleasure and power.⁵ stated that sex is now more apt to be regarded as pleasurable rather than solely procreative. It is seen more as an expression of intimacy between partners rather than a selfish or exploitative act on the men's part. Women are perceived less as sexual objects than as sexual subjects. Women's point of view in sexual relation is commonly less considered in real life and literary works. The domination of men's role might be the main repercussion of how sexual relation mostly takes women as the subordination of men. Women are historically and structurally devoted their life and even sexual interest to their partner. Consequently, this devotion has led to any sexual behavior which often benefits men's pleasure and interest.⁶

This study aims to explain how film literacy culture among Madurese female students relates to the expression of their sexual expression. In addition, this research is also intended to identify forms of the sexual expression of Madurese *santrivati*. Historically, sexuality has tended to recapitulate existing stories of modernity; that is, the apparently increasing secularization of the world. Our ideas of sexuality appear to follow the same pattern as religion declines. Until the 19th century, sexuality was dominated by religious terms of understanding, but these were gradually replaced by legal, medical, and psychological models of normality and pathology.⁷ By knowing the forms, patterns, and images of literary culture among female students, it is hoped that they can draw a

³Erich Fromm, *The Art of Loving* (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2014).

⁴Deirdre McCann, International Labour, and Office Geneva, *Conditions of Work and Employment Series No. 2 Conditions of Work and Employment Programme Sexual Harassment at Work: National and International Responses* (Geneva: International Labour Organization, 2005).

⁵Young-hee Shim, "Feminism and the Discourse of Sexuality in Korea: Continuities and Changes," *Human*

Studies 24, no. 1/2 (2001): 133–48, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20011307>.

⁶Elizabeth A. Suter and Paige W. Toller, "Gender Role and Feminism Revisited: A Follow-Up Study," *Sex Roles* 55, no. 1–2 (December 6, 2006): 135–46, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-006-9065-4>.

⁷H. Cocks, "Religion and Spirituality," in *Palgrave Advances in the Modern History of Sexuality*, ed. H. Cocks and M. Houlbrook (London: Palgrave, 2006), 157–79.

highlight of connection with their expression of sexual desires.

This study is a descriptive qualitative study that deals with words, interpretation, and phenomena explanation. An ethnography research strategy was implemented to dig deeper into data and comprehend the social and cultural background and experience of the research subject. This strategy allows the researcher to explore and examine the cultures and societies that are a fundamental part of the human experience.⁸ As many as 15 respondents are involved from 3 regencies across Madura; Bangkalan, Pamekasan, and Sumenep. The respondents were chosen deliberately to meet the research focus. They are female university students who, at the same time, live in *pesantren* as *santrivati*. All the respondents answered the prepared, structured question from the questionnaire that related to the issue of film literacy and its relation with their sexual expression. The data from the respondents are then interpreted and analyzed using the theory of gender and sexuality.

FILM LITERACY CULTURE OF SANTRIWATI

This study attempts to reveal the expression of sexual desires by *santrivati* concerning the film literacy they are familiar with. Being asked with the structured questions, *santrivati* in three *pesantren* in Madura sparked different answers yet similar ideas in giving an opinion about the particular genre of film. Basically, they were asked about their personal opinion about the romantic film and its scenes. Afterward, the questions were led to their behavior and attitude toward expression self-sexual desires, as shown in the table below:

Table 1. Film Literacy Culture of *Santrivati* in Madura

No	Type of Questions	Respondents Answers*	Interpretation
1.	What sorts of film do you like most?	Love/romance Friendship comedy	Love/romance film and novel genres are the most popular among respondents. Most of them answered that romantic film or novel is the theme they like most.
2.	What theme of film or novel do you mostly remember?	Love/romance Struggle	In line with the previous question, romantic/love films or novels are the respondents most remember as they are attached and instilled into their minds and feeling.
3.	Do you like romance film?	Yes	All respondents agreed that romance film is interesting and they enjoy watching it.
4.	Have you ever watched romantic film?	Yes	None of the respondents have never watched a romantic film. All of them have once watched a romance.
5.	Do you like romantic/intimate scene?	Yes	All of them also agree that romantic scene in the film is the thing they like when watching a film.
6.	Do you like handsome or beautiful characters?	Yes	None of the respondents answers NO. They certainly like to watch handsome/beaut

⁸J. M. Murchisson, *Ethnography Essentials: Designing, Conducting, and Presenting Your Research* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass A Wiley Imprint, 2010).

			iful character in the film.
7.	Have you ever adored certain character in film?	Yes	It can be inferred that they have one character or two that they really adored.
8.	What kind of romantic scene do you like most?	Holding hands Hugging Kissing Stating emotional feeling	The respondents' answer to this question is various. Yet, the most answers found from the respondents are holding hands, hugging, kissing, and stating emotional feelings to the partner the least. The two top answers indicate that they seem timidly and doubtfully answering this, as having physical contact with the opposite sex before marriage is extremely prohibited.
9.	Mention a scene in romantic film do you most remember?	Kissing Hugging	However, what they can remember most and leave a trace in their mind is kissing and hugging. These two answers seem dominant. It is such an emotional tendency that, as female <i>santri</i> , they also need and want to experience the same.
10.	Are you afraid of being sinful when watching sexual/intimate scene in film?	Yes	None of the respondents answer No. All of them surely agree that they are afraid of being sinful since watching the intimate or sexual scenes is

			taboo and not allowed.
11.	Do romantic scenes make you want to try to do the same?	NO	None of the respondents answer yes. It is because their norms and values dictate them not to do so until they get married.

*Most answers from respondents are presented from the first line in sequent order.

Based on the data taken from the respondents' answers, it can clearly be seen that almost all female *santri* enjoy a particular genre of film. Most of the film genres female *santri* watched and enjoyed is drama and romantic film, either Indonesian, Indian, or English movie. This sort of genre might interest them since it is considered close to their real life. They are university students aged between 19-23 who are supposed to be concerned with romantic love, friendship, and school or campus life. The romance, drama, and comedy genres are among the favorites often to watch. Friendship is another theme of films they usually like to watch. The biggest reason, according to most respondents, is that they think that kind of film genre can become an inspiration for their life. According to some respondents, that film also motivate them.

Obviously, the theme of the romantic film can teach them how to be strong-hearted characters, how to win their lover's heart and how to struggle with their love when it comes to a pressing situation. Rudimentary psychological understanding of sexual arousal, desire, pleasure, and inhibition in women can be found in art and prose, from ancient religious stories (e.g., "Song of Songs"), plays (e.g., Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew"), to myriad love poems written throughout the ages, mostly by men about women, but also written by women (e.g.,

the “nine earthly muses”.⁹ The characters’ characterization, plot, and moral values in the film have highly been one of the repercussions on how they reflect their real life. A very impressive film even glues to an individual’s memory and inspires one’s life. Thus, the film is a perfect medium for not only entertainment but also an escape as well as a sort of lesson for its viewers.

In the context of this study, female *santri* in Madura, who are also university students are already familiar with film culture. None of the respondents has ever watched a film. They can even mention popular films and famous characters being heralded by social media and television. It means that watching film is already one of their preferences in their spare time. They have already performed film literacy culture even though they are living in *pesantren* in which the rules and regulations are usually tighter and less compromising to the students. Detail of the respondents’ answers are presented in the table below:

Table 2. Expression of Sexual Desires of *Santrivati*

No	Type of Questions	Respondents Answers*	Interpretation
1.	Do you have partner/boyfriend?	Yes No	There are two answers to this question. Some of the respondents have a boyfriend and some other do not.
2.	Have you ever had sexual desires with your opposite sex?	Yes	All respondents agreed that they have sexual desires with the opposite sex. Yet, it is normal and human. Moreover, they are at a

			teenage level when the hormones of sexuality are growing and increasing.
3.	Are you nervous or trembling when being (physically) close to your loved ones?	Yes	Being nervous when they are with their loved ones is all respondents’ answers. However, this kind of feeling is most likely experienced by humans.
4.	What types of man do you attract with?	Handsome Kind Romantic	The first most answer is a handsome man. It is very typical for women their age that physical looks will be the first thing they get attracted to.
5.	Have your boyfriend or you ever held your hand?	No Yes	There are two kinds of the answer here. Most respondents answered no, however, few respondents said yes.
6.	Do you have any desire to be able to get intimacy with your boyfriend?	Yes No	This question also leads to two different answers. However, the answer no is still dominated. Only a few of the respondent wants to get intimate

⁹James G Pfaus et al., “Female Sexual Behavior,” in *Knobil and Neill’s Physiology of Reproduction* (Elsevier, 2015),

2287–2370,
397175-3.00050-8.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-397175-3.00050-8>

			contact with their boyfriend.
7.	Have you ever had physical intimacy with your boyfriend?	No Yes	Almost all respondents answered No, and only one respondent confessed she had ever had physical intimacy with her boyfriend.
8.	Which of physical intimacy do you want to try the most?	Hugging Holding hands Kissing	Hugging is the major answer related to the intimacy the respondents want to try most if it is allowed. Then, holding hands and kissing come afterward.
9.	How do you express your sexual desires to your boyfriend/opposite sex?	Keeping it secretly Telling to the person	The dominant answer are keeping the feeling and desires secret. They would never express it to their boyfriend. Only one respondent said that she would tell her boyfriend about her desires.
10.	How do you control and deal with your sexual desires to your boyfriend or opposite sex?	Altering with other activities Making myself busy	Almost all respondents agree that they prefer other activities to alleviate their desire. They would prefer

	to make themselves busy just to alter their sexual desires into more productive activities.
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*Most answers from respondents structured from the first line in sequent order

Becoming a *santriwati* is special due to some particular reasons. First of all, they are female university students who are likely to have the same passion and desire as the common peer group. However, their values and religious norms might restrain them from common behavior and attitudes. For example, they probably want to express their identity and existence by showing who they are from how they dress, and the way they speak and act. Through their daily appearance, they can easily be identified as a particular person. Second, having interacted with the public widely in campus life will certainly enable them to access any references and entertainment from both offline and online media.

Today's digital media entertainment is saturated with visual and performative platforms in both fiction and nonfiction. And the film is one fiction artwork mostly accessed by its users and viewers. *Santriwati*, as one of the potential groups who enjoy such media, might get the impact or influence upon the watching film. This explains that a film can connect Sanriwati with the outside world; the film also gives them different insights about spirituality, for divine activities do not always define it. Spirituality for womanists is centered on the relationship between the self and the world. One is interconnected to a larger web of people, places, the land, inanimate objects, and other beings.¹⁰ Film, for instance, is a medium for *santriwati* to escape from daily life routines and connect them

¹⁰M. Perez and C. Saavedra, "Womanist and Chicana Feminist Methodologies," in *Transdisciplinary Feminist Research: Innovation in Theory, Method, and Practice*,

ed. A. C. Taylor and C. Hughes (New York: Routledge, 2020), 127.

with an outside world, which might be entirely different from their life.

This study examines how the culture of film literacy relates to how *santrivati* expresses their sexual desires. The data argued that all *santrivati* do possess sexual desires they keep inside their feeling. The sexual desires range from just holding hands with the opposite sex until kissing and hugging. This fact affirms that sexual desires are about mental or psychological force that possibly happening to anyone regardless of their gender, religion, education, or personal background. Sexual desire then is always contentious subject. It is a religion-a society's belief system that looks differently regarded female genitalia and sexual desires.¹¹

Not surprisingly, most respondents agree that they are often amazed by and adore particular characters in the film. When answering the question of what sort of characters they really like, all respondents agreed to like handsome or beautiful characters in the film. In addition, the respondents choose a kind-hearted special character with good characterization; and positive characteristics, as the protagonists should. They are compelled by how the main characters (good and usually handsome or beautiful) live their life in whatsoever condition. It is always reflected in real life the common people face in their daily lives.

HANDLING SEXUAL DESIRE TO THE OPPOSITE SEX

Sexuality is probably a term that is mostly misunderstood as it is often associated with genital matters. Sexualities might be more complex when it correlates with society, where the concept of sexuality still remains taboo to disclose. In addition, sexuality in the context of

psychoanalysis is described through a development model where the infant progresses through different stages; the oral, the anal, the genital, and the phallic. At puberty, sexuality makes its exorbitant demands on the subject, thereby leading to the revival of modes of behavior that constitute childhood's libidinal matrix.¹²

Sexual desires, according to Freud, are the impact and continuation of sexual needs in the childhood stage, when the sexual desires are fulfilled through the relationship between the child and their mother. Entering the stage of puberty, one will commonly have a sexual attraction to the opposite sex. According to the data, most respondents said yes that they surely have a sexual attraction to the opposite sex when asked whether they are sexually attracted to the opposite sex. They have such feelings when they meet the man they adore. They also explicitly stated that their hearts tremble when meeting their loved ones. This kind of feeling is natural since they are in the teenage stage, which is commonly full of the active hormone of sexuality.¹³ stated that popular conception makes definite assumptions concerning the nature and qualities of this sexual impulse. It is supposed to be absent during childhood and to commence about the time of and in connection with the maturing process of puberty; it is supposed that it manifests itself in irresistible attractions exerted by one sex upon the other and that its aim is sexual union or at least such actions as would lead to union.

Islam rules all aspects of an individual's life, including sexuality. Sexuality among *santrivati* is somewhat taboo and should not be expressed or exhibited. Thus, *pesantren*, as the Islamic institution, implement particular rules to confine *santri* from any sexual behavior flouting religious

¹¹C. Blackledge, *The Story of V: A Natural History of Female Sexuality* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2004).

¹²Andrew and Sedgwick Peter Edgar, *Key Concepts in Cultural Theory*, ed. Andrew Edgar and Peter Sedgwick

(London: Routledge, 2005), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203981849>.

¹³Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (Connecticut: Martino Fine Books, 2011).

values.¹⁴ However, to have a sexual attraction to the opposite sex is indeed human. All human beings must desire to experience certain, including sexual pleasure. During puberty, a girl's entire biological reason is to become sexually desirable. Sexuality began to be conceptualized as an expression of pleasure and individual identity in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As pleasure was accepted as a natural part of human behavior, it became an important marker of individual identity.¹⁵ Sexual activities are not designated for the sake of physical pleasure as such rather transcending it for being affectionate one another and perform self-sacrifice for both pleasures.¹⁶

Having positive activities is the most common way female *santri* take to restrain and control their sexual desire, just to hinder bad and sinful sexual expression. According to the respondents' belief, it is a sinful and unforgivable act to express the desire for the opposite sex before marriage. They feel ashamed and embarrassed if they express their feeling of love or desire to the ones they attract with. The environment of *pesantren* likely seems to be exclusive in terms of upholding religious tradition. Many *pesantren* think that any ideology, thought, product, and culture from the west are against religious tradition. Hence, this environment influences their female *santri* not to blatantly adopt the western culture.

It is not allowed for a Muslim to have a romantic or love relationship before legally deciding on a married couple. However, it is not only about religious reasons, the social and cultural setting where they live also suggests that having sexual desires is inappropriate to be done

by the female. Society believes and expects women to keep their virginity for their future husbands. Losing virginity means losing self-dignity. Henceforth, avoiding a relationship with those males as the opposite sex is strictly regulated in *pesantren*. They are not even allowed to be in the same spot without any veil to separate them physically. In addition, having eye contact with the opposite sex with desires and lust should be avoid. It is not a good deed that female *santri* have to avoided. Mulvey emphasizes the traditional feminist approach to the gaze, stating that "in a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female", women fulfill an "exhibitionist role" in their relationships with men whereby they are "simultaneously looked at and displayed" (pp. 39-40).¹⁷ By contrast, the society's program of ethics and legality, can often seem to be based on rigid and unforgiving binary oppositions. Desire: right or wrong.¹⁸

To make themselves busy with activities is mostly answered by the respondents when being questioned on how to deal with their sexual desires. They try as hard as possible to avoid sexual intimacy with their partner. They restrain their sexual desires since they are afraid of being sinful. It is flouting the religious norms to have physical or sexual contact before getting married. However, not all respondents agree that desires always lead them to the opposite sex attraction. Those who fundamentally see sex before marriage as heavily sinful think that sex should not exist. They will abolish all of the sense and desires of sex before they get married. It is supported by social belief which suggests

¹⁴Agus Abdul Rahman, "Perkembangan Seksual Santri Pada Pesantren Singel-Sex," *Psymphatic: Jurnal Ilmiah Psikologi* 1, no. 1 (February 26, 2018): 47–56, <https://doi.org/10.15575/psy.v1i1.2118>.

¹⁵Jacquelyn W. White, Barrie Bondurant, and Cheryl Brown Travis, "Social Constructions of Sexuality: Unpacking Hidden Meanings," in *Sexuality, Society, and Feminism*. (Washington: American Psychological Association, 1999), 11–33, <https://doi.org/10.1037/10345-001>.

¹⁶Elya Munfarida, Siti Chamamah Soeratno, and Siti Syamsiyatun, "Truth and Love in Sexual Ethics of Islam," *KALAM* 11, no. 1 (June 30, 2017): 1–30, <https://doi.org/10.24042/klm.v11i1.1070>.

¹⁷M. Zolfagharkhani and H. Ramezani, "'Gaze' and 'Visuality' in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*," *Kata* 14, no. 1 (2012): 1–5, <https://doi.org/10.9744/kata14.1.1-6>.

¹⁸Andrew and Royle Nicholas Bennet, *Literature, Criticism and Theory* (London: Pearson, 2004).

women keep their virginity. The notion that sex has no right to exist for itself—that, sex is good or bad only in terms of social relations.¹⁹ Some of the respondents, on the other hand, said that they do not have any desires for the opposite sex; they just feel plain and have no sexual attraction to the opposite sex.

Women, including female *santri*, are more potentially disadvantaged by traditional gender stereotypes. The most common stereotypes that society might appeal to are that men should be active and women should be passive, that men are leaders and women are followers. “In their meta analytic review of gender differences in sexuality, Oliver and Hyde found that men had greater acceptance of casual premarital sex than women and generally more permissive attitudes toward sex than women.²⁰ Men reported greater acceptance of extramarital sex than women and lower levels of anxiety, fear, and guilt than women. Men also reported greater sexual experience than women on a number of variables, including incidence of intercourse, age of first intercourse, number of sexual partners, incidence of masturbation, and frequency of intercourse.²¹ Women, to some extent, are object, and men as the subject. This notion is somewhat judgmental. Women, as a consequence, would possibly experience a double burden. The differences between men and women are primarily a matter of recognizing certain kinds of gender stereotypes.²²

Regarding the sexual intimacy being questioned by the respondents, most of the respondents said they would restrain and hold their sexual desire and not express it to the opposite sex due to two particular reasons. First,

it is because they are women who are not supposed to be active and express any feelings to the men. They should be passive and wait for the men. “It is a common cultural assumption that men have a stronger sexual drive than women. In fact, numerous sources support the conclusion that men have more permissive attitudes about sex and engage in more sexual behaviors than women,”²³ Second, it is because their identity as *santri* disables them from expressing their sexual desire. It is sinful to have sexual intimacy before marriage.

The sexual intimacy that the respondents most want to try is holding hands and hugging. None of them want to try kissing or sexual intercourse. It surely relates to their answer in the previous section; when being asked what sort of romantic scene they like most, their answer is hugging, holding hands, and few of the respondents answered kissing. Bernstein (1990) in Elice²⁴ argued that “the girl’s body, her experiences with it and conflicts about it are as central to her development as the boy’s body is to his” (p. 152). However, it is still subject to invite polemic for *santrivati* as they commonly believe that sexual activity can only be manifested when they are married. Islam, as their fundamental base of behavior, perceive sexuality positively as a *fitrah*, but it should only be fulfilled in the institution of marriage. Sex outside the marital bonds is considered *zina*.

Responding to the data shown above regarding sexual expression, it is worth noting to critically examine the sexual behavior development of *santrivati* that was potentially disrupted due to the rules in *pesantren*. Lerner and Spainer in Hurlock argued that a teen’s sexual

¹⁹Deirdre English, Amber Hollibaugh, and Gayle Rubin, “TalkingSex Sexuality and ACcnlvusationon Ftminism G < LeRub ARrHolE7augJuand DezrdrrEnglish,” no. 11 (2013): 40–52.

²⁰Mary Beth Oliver and Janet Shibley Hyde, “Gender Differences in Sexuality: A Meta-Analysis,” *Psychological Bulletin* 114, no. 1 (1993): 29–51, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.114.1.29>.

²¹Patricia J Morokoff, “A Cultural Context for Sexual Assertiveness in Women,,” in *Sexuality, Society, and*

Feminism. (Washington: American Psychological Association, 1999), 299–319, <https://doi.org/10.1037/10345-012>.

²²Bennet, *Literature, Criticism and Theory*.

²³Morokoff, “A Cultural Context for Sexual Assertiveness in Women.”

²⁴Dianne Elise, “Sex and Shame: The Inhibition of Female Desires,” *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 56, no. 1 (March 1, 2008): 73–98, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003065108315685>.

behavior development consists of several key stages; developing sexual interest in the opposite sex, having a gender identity, developing sex roles, learning how to understand sexual behavior, and getting to know skills, ability, and knowledge related to sexuality.²⁵ In fact, *santrivati* most likely skips the several stages of sexual behavior development, as they do not have adequate opportunity to experience them. The rules in *pesantren* control every single activity of their *santrivati*. Thus, they do not have such freedom of expression in terms of their sexual desires. It can be seen in how the communication and interaction of *santrivati* are limited and restrained. Rahman stated some principle rules in single-sex *pesantren* in regards to socializing activity are surpassed in several points; it obliquely *santrivati* to close their *aurah* and dress properly, it forbids *santrivati* to only be with a boy or a man without accompanied by their family or relatives, it also restrains *santrivati* to interact with opposite sex by having eye contact or physical contact, and it strongly forbids *santrivati* to have a boyfriend.²⁶ Thus, it can be inferred that *santrivati* potentially has various forms of sexual desires. Nevertheless, they could hardly be manifested or expressed due to the norms, values, and rules by *pesantren* they are living in.

CONCLUSION

Film literacy among *santrivati* in Madura has highly influenced the life of *santri* living in *pesantren* and studying at university at the same time. The influential factors, such as sexual desires and expression, are most likely restrained and unexplored. As *santri*, they have their own preference to keep their sexual desires and not to express it publicly. They believe is considered taboo to have such sexual desires and sinful to express sexual desires. The fact that all of the respondents agree that sexual desires can only be

expressed when they have already tied in legally institution-married. They are afraid of being sinful when they watch a film with a vulgar scene and disclose sexual intimacy even though they sometimes enjoy it. Moreover, the religious values and *pesantren* cultures have strongly controlled them to express their desire and willingness. They tend to firmly uphold the norms and cultures they learn from *pesantren*.

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