

Exploring the Socio-cultural and Socio-sexual Context of Javanese Youth Sexual Behaviour and Interactions and their implications for health promotion programmes

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1. Introduction

Sexuality has become an increasingly important subject for Indonesian public health research. A research interest in patterns of sexual behaviour has been stimulated by the growing public health concern at the global spread of HIV/AIDS. Although Indonesia initially experienced a later onset of the global AIDS epidemic than other countries in South East Asia (Ford *et al.*, 1997), it is increasingly recognized that the country currently facing a rapidly increasing number of HIV/AIDS. Although by comparison with total population, such proportion of HIV/AIDS cases is relatively low, this proportion has been increasing rapidly from year to year. The government of Indonesia has faced great difficulty in attempting to develop programmes and policies to deal with the reality of sexual and reproductive health problems, particularly those for young people (Utomo, 2002).

It is increasingly recognized that Indonesian young people are facing rapid social change because of globalization, industrialization and the transformation of cultural values and norms (Achmad and Xenos, 2001). The current fairly successful transition to democracy and its relaxation of strict censorship has allowed the flourishing of sexually-related fiction and non-fiction literature, which are more easily accessible to young people than ever before.

In Indonesia, the number of adolescents and young people is growing rapidly. Between 1970 and 2000, the 15-24 year-old age group increased from 21 to 43 million or from 18 to 21 percent of Indonesia's total population (Achmad *et al.*, 1999). Analysis of youth transitions throughout Asia indicates that Indonesian's youth population may be peaking just as the 21st Century begins. This is partly due to an onset of decline in fertility since 1970. The composition of the present youth population reflects a past history of relatively high fertility rate (Xenos *et al.*, 1999). The rapid growth of the youth population has created pressures to expand education, health and employment programmes aimed at this age group. Government policy makers and others are also concerned because adolescents and young people are particularly prone to various types of risky behaviour. Youth surveys and other measures indicate rising levels of smoking, drinking, drug use, and unprotected sex. Evidence of high-risk sexual behaviour is particularly worrying, given the rising prevalence of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (Achmad *et al.*, 1999).

In recent times, the general cultural expression of sexuality across Indonesia has been shaped by the two contested terrains of the liberal and more conservative tendencies of Islam (Ford and Siregar, 1998). Some recent studies on sexual behaviour from right

across Indonesia (with the exception of Papua) show that levels of premarital sexual intercourse are within a corridor of 7% to 27% for males and 2% to 6% for females. Although by international comparison such levels of young people's premarital sexual experience are relatively low, for many Indonesians this proportion has become a source of concern, linked to a sense that the country is undermining its dramatic social transformation.

Numerous studies have contributed to the understanding of young people's sexual behaviour, but the results have often obtained limited information, so there remains the need for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. As a result, certain important questions have gone largely unanswered, such as what is the nature of young people's sexual behaviour and relationships, and what social and cultural variables may affect the nature of youth sexual behaviour?

In order to better understand the nature of young people and how they give meaning to their sexuality and sexual inter-personal relationships in their own words, it would be very useful to conduct sexuality research using a symbolic interactionist approach in Indonesian subculture (youth culture).

The aim of the study is to explore the socio-cultural and socio-sexual dimensions that might help explain the nature and extent of sexual behaviour and sexual interactions of Javanese youth. It is hoped that this understanding may contribute towards informing policies and strategies to protect and enhance the sexual and reproductive health of young people in Indonesia and specifically in Central Java

2. Research objectives:

1. To explore the nature of young student sexual behaviour in Central Java, Indonesia.
2. To explore in greater depth the nature of interpersonal relationships of university students, and its implications for sexual and reproductive health in Central Java.
3. To identify the socio-cultural and socio-sexual factors that may influence the sexual behaviour and interpersonal relationships of university students in Central Java.

3. Method and data collection

The study employed structured mix quantitative and qualitative methodologies. A schedule-structured survey of young (18-24 years) students was employed to derive data on prevalences and patterns of sexual behaviour. 500 undergraduates (265 males and 235 females) were recruited from 8 universities in three big cities in Central Java (Semarang, Purwokerto and Surakarta) using a quota sampling technique. Focus group discussions (FGDs) among young students (both men and women groups) were undertaken which were structured by sex and age. Whilst 12 case studies were undertaken among five unmarried sexually experienced heterosexual couples and 2 single homosexual males. The nature of the chronological sequence of the data collections in this study was to commence with a survey and followed by FGDs in order to derive an awareness of the ways in which young people express their attitudes, values, feelings and perceptions about sexuality within group interactions; and finally case studies were used to holistically explore the development of inter-personal relationships within young people's sexual relationships.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

The sample of this study comprises participants who were all aged between eighteen to twenty four years old and a rather homogeneous group in terms of ethnic group (84% of males and 92% of females of them is Javanese and religion affiliation.

The religiosity of the respondents was identified by asking the average of respondent's time for praying, participating in mosque or church activities and running religious related organization activities. The majority of students (53.8%) were categorized in moderate religiosity, particularly female students were likely to be more religious than males. Only 5.5% females were indicated very not religious compare with 11.7% male students.

Most of the sample had parent's educational level at senior high school. Father's educational level of the respondents is likely higher than mother's. Generally, for Indonesian standards this level of education of the respondent's parent is a relatively highly educated one. It shows that the sample may be generally described as middle class.

4.2. The basic parameter of sexual health risk

The pattern of level of sexual experience of the sample is relatively low in comparison to other sexual cultures such as Thailand, Brazil, and North America or other Western Countries (Ford, 1992; Ford & Kittisuksathit, 1994; Ford, *et al.*, 2003), with only 22 % of males and 6 % of females reporting have ever been engaging in premarital sexual intercourse.

Tabel 1

Percent distribution of actual sexual experiences by sex

Sexual experience	Male	Female
Premarital sexual intercourse	22	6
Marital sexual intercourse	1	1
Never	77	93

Moreover, reinforcing the picture of an overall low pattern of sexual risk, the majority (60% of males and 80% of females) of such sexual intercourse took place within a committed or serious relationship. The reported cases of casual sexual contact, for instance with a sex worker was very low (7% of males). Furthermore, the majority of respondents

(66 % of males and 80% of females) reported engaging in intercourse with only one partner in the past twelve months, with the length of relationship before intercourse took place being over one year (26% of males and 47% of females). In terms of sexual orientation practically the whole sample (99%) identified themselves as heterosexual.

Given that such behaviours such as sexual intercourse before marriage, especially casual sex and homosexuality are seriously against to Javanese socio-cultural norms, the low level of premarital sex, casual sex, and homosexual orientation may be expected to involved some under-reporting. But, there is confidence in the broad validity of the findings based upon the following findings. The behavioural findings of individuals consistently linked with attitudinal findings, for example reported non premarital sex linked with a belief in ‘no sex before marriage’ whilst sexual experience, linked with an ambivalent or more positive attitude regarding sex before marriage.

In terms of level of precautions taken within sexual experience, however, the findings show a picture of greater risk. The pattern of just 28 % of males and 7% of females reported condom use at last intercourse, with the remainder using no other effective contraceptive method such as withdrawal (40% of males and 67% of females) or nothing at all (28% of males and 20% of females) were the most common.

Table 2

Percent distribution of type of contraception use at last intercourse

Type of contraception use	Male	Female
Condom	28	7
Withdrawal	40	67
Nothing	28	20
Calendar	5	0
Other	0	6

(n=73) Chi-square 0.000 is highly statistically significant at P<0.05

It is important to note here that contraceptive services are not provided for the unmarried in Indonesia. A range of factors including fear of being seen to make use of contraceptive services (as evidence of ‘sinful’ behaviour), lack of perceived risk, lack of communication between partners combine to make it highly unlikely that any effective contraceptive or prophylactic precautions are taken by young people. There is clearly a lack of congruence between the social climate of (some) young people’s premarital activity and the provision contraceptive and educational services in Indonesia including Central Java. The obstacles to the provision of these protective programs relate to a strong concern of authorities not wanting to be seen to advocate services which may be viewed as condoning premarital sexual activity which is considered to be sinful and against religious teaching.

4.3. Sexual attitudes and gender attitudes

In assessing sexual behaviour, it is also useful to examine attitudes which may be viewed as both influences upon, and rationalisation of, sexual activity. The responses to the series of items investigating attitudes to young people’s premarital sexual intercourse, contraception and condom use, pornography, other sexual practices (oral sex and masturbation), and homosexuality within relationships will be elaborated below.

As noted above the findings revealed that the majority of both male and female respondents considered premarital sexual intercourse for both males and females to be unacceptable to them personally. Only 9 % of males and 3 % of females accept premarital sexual intercourse for them.

Table 3
Percent distribution of attitudes to premarital sexual intercourse by sex

Attitudes to premarital sex	Percent	Percent
Agree	9	3
Neutral	51	35
Disagree	40	62

(n=500 samples) chi-square 0.00 is highly statistically significant at P<0.05

The majority of studies of sexual norms that have been done in Asian countries show that there is a marked ‘double standard’ which accepts sex before marriage for young men but not for young women. These findings show that only very slightly higher percentages, accept premarital sex for males than females. Both males and females hold the same pattern of attitudes to premarital sex; however a higher proportion of the male sample has a neutral perspective on it. Although some social sanctions apply to both sexes, but there are more some social stigmatisation and criticism which primarily reserved for women than for men, which reflecting ‘double standard’ found in most Asian countries (Ford & Kittisuksathit, 1994).

A further related factor which may be gainfully considered here is that although a family would be extremely disappointed by a daughter’s engagement in premarital sexual intercourse and this is predominantly a Muslim population, the disappointment does not extend to the extreme punishments incurred by such women in some other Muslim cultures.

In terms of attitudes to condom use, there is a broad similarity among the young males and young females with both not feeling the need to use them within committed relationships. The findings shows a quarter of males (24%) and more than a quarter of females (27%) do not agree to use a condom with a steady partner. The main reasons for this revolve around the lack of perceived risk, reduction of pleasure, but probably most importantly that condom is only acceptable for married couples and only for use with sex workers, so that it provides a poor image for the unmarried.

There are varied attitudes pertaining to other sexual practices (oral sex and masturbation), pornography and homosexuality between males and females. In comparing attitudes towards these variables, the pattern of disparity between males and females is reversed. Not surprisingly, males tend to be more accepting than females regarding other sexual practices (oral sex and masturbation), pornography, and homosexuality. In fact, most respondents generally have a neutral or ‘not sure’ perspective on these sexual matters. These findings reinforce the view of Javanese youth culture undergoing social change and feeling uncertainty and ambivalence about their sexual attitudes and values.

The pattern of overall sexual attitudes reported that the young males have more liberal sexual attitudes than were females (40%/20%) whereas young females have more traditional and restrictive sexual values (37%/24%). In fact, again there is a substantial percentage of both males and females responded ‘uncertainty’ or ‘unsure’ regarding sexual values (Table 4). It could be noted that a higher percentage of both males and females express liberal sexual attitudes than reported actual premarital sexual intercourse, possibly indicating the potential for higher levels of such behaviour. The range of attitudes and reported behaviours reflects different pattern of sexual behaviour of Javanese youth. It shows that there is a tendency running from a traditional restrictive to a possibly a modern-romantic sexuality.

Table 4

Percent distribution of overall sexual attitudes by sex			
Sexual attitudes	Male	Female	Significant
Strongly Restrictive	4	10	
Restrictive	20	27	
Both Restrictive and Liberal			
Liberal	37	43	
Liberal	28	18	
Strongly Liberal	12	2	0.000

(n=500) Chi-square is 0.000 is highly statistically significant (p<0.05)

Gender attitudes have been recognized as important variables in the study of romantic relationship. This study identifies gender attitudes which consist of gender roles, gender sexuality and overall gender attitudes. The study revealed that the majority of young females tend to be more egalitarian than men in these three kinds of gender attitudes. It is shown by the overall gender attitudes which indicated that 40% of males and only 14 % of females who hold conservative/ traditional gender attitudes. Likewise, most young males were more endorsed traditional gender attitudes in sexuality than were females. Furthermore a much lower percentage of the young men than women adhere to egalitarian gender attitudes with regard to sexuality (2% of males and 11 % of females). These findings probably indicate a measure of the double standard among youth Javanese.

4.4. Socio-sexual behaviours of unmarried Javanese students

The sets of variables were entered into a cluster analysis in order to examine whether there are identifiable, coherent types of socio-sexual behaviours across the study Figure 1.

List of variables used for cluster analysis

List of variables	
Age	Attitudes to other sexual practices
General lifestyles	Attitudes to pornography
Religiosity	Attitudes to homosexuality
Leisure activity/ Level of social activity	Overall sexual attitudes
Attitudes to premarital sexual intercourse	Attitudes to gender roles
Attitudes to contraception	Attitudes to gender sexuality
Attitudes to condom use	Overall Gender attitudes

The purpose of cluster analysis is to construct groups of the sample in such a way that the respondents in a cluster have 'great' similarity between each other but show 'little' similarity with respondents outside that cluster (Bijnen, 1973; Lawson and Todd, 2002).

A three-cluster stage of analytical bifurcation was selected separately for males and females, as it yielded a series of highly distinct clusters, with each cluster containing sufficient number of cases for further cross-tabulation analysis.

4.5. Description of sexual behaviours cluster characteristics

The cluster framework provided separates the sexes between male and female. Figure 2 and Figure 3 show three female clusters which consists of cluster one which is labelled *kurang gaul*/traditional, cluster two 'intermediate' and cluster three *gaul*/modern.

Each cluster represents a distinctive complex of sexual behaviour dimensions. Furthermore, gender dimensions are shown in Figure 3. Figure 4 and 5 show the three male clusters. Each of the male clusters is labelled similar to female clusters. Figure 2.

**Female student socio-sexual behaviour clusters
(Key dimensions with some indicative percentages)**

Label	<i>Kurang Gaul</i> Traditional	Intermediate	<i>Gaul</i> Modern
% of sample	32%	45%	23%
Age (18-20 years) younger (21-24 years) older	53% older 47% younger	61% younger 39% older	73% older 27% younger
<u>Lifestyle dimensions</u>			
Level of social activity	Low level (99%)	Low level (91%)	Low level (86%)
Traditional/ modern tastes (cultural taste)	Traditional (87%)	Traditional (79%)	Modern (46%)
Religiosity	Religious (36%) Moderate (60%)	Less religious (71%)	Less religious (67%)
<u>Sexual dimensions</u>			
Attitudes to premarital sexual intercourse	No sex before marriage (87%)	No sex before marriage (54%) mixed (46%)	Ambivalent (48%) Sex before marriage permissible (10%)
Attitudes to other sexual practices (oral sex)	Negative (73%)	Predominantly neutral (64%)	Predominantly neutral (79%) positive (15%)
Attitudes to pornography	Negative (67%)	Neutral (58%) and negative (40%)	Neutral (58%) and negative (27%)
Attitudes to homosexuality	Negative (76%)	Negative/neutral (38%/59%)	Less negative (23%)
Overall sexual philosophy (Traditional-restrictive (TR)/Relationship-Romantic (RR)	TR (80%)	Two thirds mixed (64%), TR (23%)	RR (62%) Mixed (35%)
Attitude to Contraception	Neutral (59%)	Neutral (65%) Positive (25%)	Neutral (46%) Positive (44%)

Figure 3.

**Female student socio-sexual behaviour clusters by gender dimensions
(Some indicative percentages)**

Label	<i>Kurang Gaul</i> Traditional	Intermediate	<i>Gaul</i> Modern
<u>Gender roles</u>	Mixed (53%) Egalitarian (37%)	Mixed (63%) Conservative (26%)	Egalitarian (79%)
<u>Gender- sexuality</u> (double standard for female sexuality)	Egalitarian modern (72%) Mixed (25%)	Mixed (50%) Conservative (33%)	Egalitarian Modern (66%) Mixed (25%)
<u>Overall gender attitudes</u>	Egalitarian (64%) Mixed (33%)	Mixed (64%) Conservative (28%)	Egalitarian (86%)

NB: All Chi-Square cross-tabulations are highly statistically significant

Figure 4.

**Male student socio-sexual behaviour clusters
(Key dimensions with some indicative percentages)**

Label	<i>Kurang Gaul</i> Traditional	Intermediate	<i>Gaul</i> Modern
% of sample	29%	36%	35%
Age (18-20 years) younger (21-24 years) older	55% older 45% younger	74 % older 26% younger	70% older 30% younger
<u>Lifestyle dimensions</u>			
Level of social activity	Low level (88%)	Low level (67%)	High level (59%)
Traditional/ modern tastes (Cultural taste)	Traditional (89%)	Traditional (58%) Modern (42%)	Traditional (63%) Modern (27%)
Religiosity (approximately more than half of all male clusters are “not religious”)	Less religious (40%) Religious (36%)	Less religious (54%) and Moderate (26%)	Less religious (86%) Moderate (10%)
<u>Sexual dimensions</u>			
Attitudes to premarital sexual intercourse	No sex before marriage (77%)	Neutral (57%) No sex before marriage (40%)	Neutral (66%) Sex before marriage permissible (22%)
Attitudes to other sexual practices (oral sex)	Negative (57%) Neutral (36%)	Neutral (73%) positive (15%)	Neutral (58%) Positive (39%)
Attitudes to pornography	Neutral (49%) Negative (36%)	Neutral (77%) and equal proportion negative/positive (12%)	Neutral (67%) Positive (32%)
Attitudes to homosexuality (Negative to tolerant)	Negative (80%) Neutral (20%)	Neutral (47%) Negative (42%)	Neutral (50%) Negative (32%) Tolerant (19%)
Overall sexual philosophy (Traditional-restrictive (TR) /Relationship-Romantic (RR)	TR (65%) Mixed (31%)	Mixed (57%) RR (33%)	RR (75%) Mixed (22%)
Attitudes to contraception (approximately half of all clusters have a neutral attitude)	Neutral (56%) Negative (39%)	Neutral (59%) Positive (36%)	Positive (53%) Neutral (44%)

Figure 5

**Male student socio-sexual behaviour clusters by gender dimensions
(Some indicative percentages)**

Label	<i>Kurang Gaul</i> Traditional	Intermediate	<i>Gaul</i> Modern
<u>Gender roles</u>			
(about two fifth of all clusters were mixed)	Conservative (52%) Mixed (32%)	Mixed (53%) Egalitarian (36%)	Conservative (54%) Mixed (34%)
<u>Gender- sexuality</u>			
(double standard for female sexuality)	Mixed (44%) Conservative (34%)	Mixed (53%) Conservative (26%)	Conservative (67%) Mixed (32%)
<u>Overall gender attitudes</u>			
	Conservative (45%) Mixed (40%)	Mixed (57%) Egalitarian (30%)	Conservative (63%) Mixed (31%)

NB: All Chi-Square cross-tabulations are highly statistically significant p<0.05

Across the overall clustering the single most important discriminating scale was the series of items pertaining to level of social activity (which may pertain to socio-sexual interaction) including going to parties, nightclubs, dating, watching pornographic materials, staying away overnight and alcohol consumption. This dimension relates in Indonesian culture to the concept of *gaul* which corresponds to a sense of young people who pursue a more open, socially active lifestyle, as against the opposite who lead more closed, restricted, introverted lifestyles who are tamed *kurang gaul*. Thus this key dimension serves to discriminate for both females and males between cluster three who are here labelled *gaul* and one *kurang gaul*, with cluster two an intermediate behaviour cluster, showing tendencies of both clusters. The female *kurang gaul* cluster, although showing a low level of social activity, is fundamentally distinguished in that cluster one is highly traditional in terms of lifestyle tastes (in clothing, the media, food, etc) and more religious, but who are highly egalitarian in gender attitudes. Cluster two (predominantly younger age) contains nearly two-thirds who have slightly traditional tastes and low level of religiosity, but highly conservative in gender attitudes. Whereas, cluster three which is labelled as *gaul* cluster (predominantly older age) contains two-thirds who have more modern tastes and highly egalitarian gender attitudes. For the male clusters, all clusters contain a majority with traditional lifestyle tastes, whilst cluster two (predominantly older age) is less conservative in gender attitudes compared to other clusters. Most importantly for this analysis, the level of social activity corresponds strongly to the different cluster's overall sexual philosophy and sexual predispositions.

In terms of sexual philosophy, for both female and male, the more *kurang gaul* clusters hold traditional-restrictive ('no sex before marriage') values, with cluster one expressing almost 'erotophobic' tendencies in its negative attitudes to sexual practices, pornography and homosexuality. The *gaul* and to a lesser extent the 'intermediate' cluster express what may be described as more 'relationship-romantic' sexual philosophies, with the female 'intermediate' being more ambivalent, thus, accepting the possibility of intercourse before marriage. As discussed above, this dimension has long been recognized as the single most diagnostic variable of overall sexual philosophy. It is very important to emphasize that these are most definitely not 'casual-liberal' sexual attitudes, which are more common in the 'West' and among male youth in some other cultures. Even the *gaul* clusters are only generally predisposed to intercourse before marriage, within a deeply committed, long-term (indeed perceived as permanent) loving relationship.

Along with the key importance of level of social activity, the clusters are also distinguished by a decreasing sense of religiosity and increasing level of 'modern' lifestyle tastes with movement from *kurang gaul* to *gaul*.

5. Discussion of socio-sexual behaviour of Javanese students

Sexual behaviour or lifestyle is about expression of identity; it deals with the choices young people make and also expresses a collective identity for the group members and differentiates the group from some wider audience. As noted above, the concept of *gaul* has a strong currency in the Indonesian sense of the characterization of different types of youth. Indeed some modern 'indie' (as in 'independent') pop music in Indonesia is labelled *anak gaul*. The *gaul* behaviour connotes more than just extroversion, having many friends in an active social life, to allude to openness to diverse, global social trends and currents. By contrast a *kurang-gaul* behaviour refers to not much in an active social life such as focusing around a small group of friends and not tending to go out to socialize, preferring to stay in to study or perhaps watch television or read and so on.

It is perhaps useful to explore this diversity of Javanese student clusters in relation to thinking upon the reflexivity in creating or appropriating behaviour, self identity and positionality in relation to global trends, and the special complexity of the nature of toleration and sanction in Javanese culture.

From the outset it is important to acknowledge that this pattern of lifestyles is set within a Javanese way of life or culture. Given that the sample self-identifies ethnically as 90% Javanese, and is 85% Muslim, all respondents share a vast wealth of cultural resources and sensibilities, related to social (including sexual) norms, courtship expectations and rituals, and a distinctive language (Koentjaraningrat, 1989; Mulder, 1998).¹ These norms and expectations provide the basis within which different lifestyles may develop and become expressed as forms of local knowledge, set within a specific setting of place.

The behaviour patterns identified in the clusters may appear to share certain characteristics with the notion of subculture. For instance, the *gaul* clusters may share a sense of identity and direction, and their practices (enactment) and values may well have implications (social response) for social inclusion and exclusion in friendship groups, and are expressed in certain styles of clothing and deportment. However the clusters fall short of a subculture designation in that the groupings are much more informal, and lack the clear focus of subcultures.

As Giddens (1991) has noted, modernity is post-traditional order in which the question “how shall I live has to be answered by day to day decisions about how to behave, what to wear and what to eat” (p. 14). To Giddens, under modernity the self becomes a ‘reflexive project’. The expression and enactment of lifestyles becomes a sphere of creative appropriation. Thus the clusters of Javanese student lifestyles reflect personal choices based upon values and experience, which inform a desired sense of identity. As the findings on traditional and modern cultural tastes highlight, the range of clusters are clearly expressed in a diverse but fairly coherent set of preferences according to food, mass media (e.g. films) and above all, for young women, in dress.

The traditional and more modern university student behaviour clusters express their respective senses of identity in terms of dress. This is most evident among young women, not so much in terms of revealing fashions (women’s dress is almost universally modest in Central Java, jeans and shirt), but in the increasing trend of a minority of young women to dress the *jilbab* (Muslim headdress). The emphatic ‘making of a statement’ in wearing the *jilbab* is further indicated in that once worn, a young woman would be heavily criticized if she later decides not to wear it. The wearing of *jilbab* is not a trivial decision. The cluster analysis indicates that traditional dress is strongly related to not only, obviously, conservative religiosity (*alim*), but also and more strongly, a traditional-restrictive sexual philosophy.

In Indonesia, reflecting the much lower general level of affluence, ecological notions of frugality and sustainability in lifestyles are not widespread. Nevertheless the foregoing discussion of the differentiation of student lifestyles in terms of identity, religiosity as expressed in dress, does reflect broad variations in the ways in which different groups of young students (at least in the polar clusters-the most traditional and most *gaul*) relate to the globalization context. *Alim* (conservative Muslim) students are expressing a sense of self in solidarity with the wider Muslim world and possibly an antipathy to consumerism and the wider liberal trends which are associated with the West. By contrast, *gaul* signifies not only a social openness on a personal level, but an interest in a whole range of globalizing cultural tendencies and influences. Here it must be stressed strongly

that such globalizing cultural trends are not limited to those emanating from the West, but reflect an interest in fashion, music and other cultural resources from various culture regions. Indeed research on recent developments in youth performance culture in Central Java highlights the increasing and vibrant trends towards culturally hybrid forms (such as *dangdut* music). The two polar cluster lifestyle expressions express not only different sense of self-identity and global orientations, but also different idealization of the kind of Indonesia which they would like to see develop.

With respect to lifestyle analysis “it is important not to make a principled distinction between the performance of lifestyles and the interpretive ability that informs those choices “(Chaney, 1996: p. 47). As the clusters indicate, university student patterns of levels of social activity, dress, and leisure behaviours, cohere with religiosity, traditional and modern values, and sense of self-identity. With respect to sexuality, all of the clusters are informed by a Javanese sensibility which views sexual interaction in terms of relationship development towards marriage and life’s future. As noted above, the quantitative (survey) findings found practically no evidence of a casual-recreational approach to sex. As was repeatedly mentioned in both the female and male FGDs :

Among young friends,it must be negative, having sexual intercourse before getting married is negative and we will get bad image. But if it is unknown by others it’s no matter. (Arif, male student, 20 years old)

Basically, here in Javanese culture, particularly young women should always keep their good image. (Yanti, female student, 20 years old)

The crucial factor shaping sexual conduct and deportment was a concern with what the students referred to in the more modern term of *jaim* (*jaga imej*). Although *jaim* draws upon the English word image, the terms translate more accurately from Indonesian idiom as prestige or social worth. To Javanese students, to behave in ways which seem vulgar and to treat sexual intercourse as casual rather than something of absolute significance in relationship development towards marriage is to show a lack of sensibility. Such a lack of sensibility and correct behaviour corresponds very much to what would be described in terms of Bordieu’s *Distinction* (1991) to a loss of cultural capital, with important implications for relationship development.

It is useful to consider the diversity of Javanese student sexual lifestyles in terms of a broader overview of socio-cultural developments in Indonesia a massive sprawling archipelago of enormous ethnic diversity, which has been independent for 59 years. The Republic of Indonesia is often viewed as an unfolding project. The ideology of *Pancasila*, which seeks to foster national integration, explicitly expresses the goal of toleration of diversity. Furthermore, although the bulk (85%) of the Indonesian population is Muslim, as noted above, it is a much more tolerant, even liberal, form of Islam, than is found in many other parts of the world. Indeed Muslim Javanese culture is conscious of and takes pride in, the diverse Hindu-Buddhist (pre-Islamic) heritage which is considered to have shaped facets of its cultural expression.

The ways in which young Javanese students manipulate their body or self by certain style of clothing, manners or acts, and what they mean by those behaviours or acts they use, and why they value those acts and how much importance they attach to their choices are an expression or reflection of sensibilities (Chaney, 1996). Within such a context of acknowledged diversity within an unfolding national project, Javanese students appropriate and express personal behavioural choices, whilst sharing a basis of Javanese sensibilities, regarding sexuality, interaction and bodily deportment. The tendency for the expression of

a measure of plurality in behaviour has been amplified and facilitated by the tumultuous changes towards greater social openness and debate, concomitant to the fall of the authoritarian 'New Order' in 1997, and the thankfully largely peaceful, transition towards both democracy and decentralization. Giddens (1991) explicitly articulates the rise of lifestyle diversity in terms of the openness of social life. One effect of the removal of the strong control and censorship of the new order has been the more open expression of both conservative Islamic and more open, liberal tendencies in a contestation of sexuality. At times 'Islam extreme' vigilante groups have sought to take the law into their own hands in seeking to destroy sexual expressions considered an affront to Islam, as in, for instance, the burning down of the brothels and karaoke bars in the Puncak Pass of West Java. Central Java has not generally witnessed such extremes expressions of anti-liberal sentiments. Furthermore, since the shock of the Bali bombing in 2001 'Islam extreme' groups have been considerably reined in by the security forces. In Semarang (in Central Java), for example, there are no longer collections for *jihad* at traffic lights in the city.

The contestation of sexuality continues, for instance, in criticism of supposedly erotic dance/music forms such as that of some *dangdut* performers. In general, however, such 'Islam Extreme' criticisms are now trivialized and ridiculed. However, as emphasized above, student sexual lifestyles are important expressions of the importance people attach to their own and other behaviour in a negotiation of a social order (Chaney, 1996). In Central Java, at least (in an archipelago which contains several flashpoints of serious ethnic conflict), there is a more benign contestation of sexuality, as expressed on a day to day basis in socio-sexual behaviour. Javanese culture has a value *nerimo* of tolerating others, even if their behaviour is not necessarily culturally acceptable, as long as it does not harm others. Furthermore, with modernization this interlinks with the term *cuek*, which has more of a connotation of 'not caring' about what others do, corresponding perhaps to a sense of growing individuality in an urbanizing society. As was described in both male and female FGDs:

If I found my friend doing ML (making love), I wouldn't care; it is not my business, they are already mature enough, so they have to responsible with their own behaviour. (Inung, male, age 20)

It is no matter, we don't care, it becomes their own business and usually we just 'cuek'. (Vanny, female, age 20)

I don't care with the friend who has done sexual intercourse during courting. Even though I myself personally disagree with that. (Ike, female, age 19)

The following comment was made by one of the participant of in-depth interview:

We always do ML in my rented house because we have more freedom there, nobody watches us, and my housemates do not care because they do it too. It's not a problem as long as we do it with a permanent girlfriend. (Koko, male, age 23)

With respect to the central concept of place, this might be best understood as an attempt to show how the social complexion of a place has influenced the forms of socio-cultural and socio-sexual restructuring. The cities in Central Java and Javanese university student sexuality are inter-related; perhaps both shape and are shaped by the dynamic of Javanese student social life. "The cities and Javanese student sexuality, both reflect the ways in which their social life is organised, the ways in which it is represented, perceived

and understood, and the ways in which various groups cope with and react to these conditions” (Bell and Valentine, 1995: p. 10). For example, a traditional-restrictive sexual philosophy is still often promoted as the majority view of sexual culture within contemporary Javanese society. On the other hand, the density and cultural complexity of the cities in Central Java, like cities elsewhere, give some evidence of sexual diversity and freedom in which other sexual lifestyles seen strikingly, in some advertising images, could be created. These are often viewed as at odds with actual dress and comportment in Central Java. However, there is a possibility that the relational-romantic sexual subculture has the space and potentially to flourish in this region.

In the case of Central Java, the cities could also be thought of as bodies or surfaces, sharing common features which perhaps affect the sense of self of some young persons, such as *ayam kampus* and *ciblek*. University students (as part of the city’s inhabitants) develop their cities and make them in their own image through certain deportments and values in sexuality; so they also use these cities and city-images to develop themselves as individuals and as sub-groups or small communities. For most young Javanese, society’s traditional-restrictive sexual relationships are assumed to be more ‘acceptable’; those who do not conform often feel uneasy in spaces structured through these norms.

A young male participant in an in-depth interview described his feelings:

I often forbid my girlfriend to come to my boarding house because it makes me feel uneasy towards my housemates, even though they never care about my dating, which usually continues until late at night. They are quite ignorant and seem to be tolerant of my behaviour. But I feel uneasy, because most of them do not do the same things as me. (Yoyo, male, age 20)

Those outside traditional forms of sexual relationship are likely to find the heightened dramaturgy of lifestyle practices suitable or comfortable in a number of ways. A young female participant in the FGD stated:

It is possible, if they have been stimulated and the situation support such as the boarding house is quiet, and nobody is in there, they may ML. (Andri, female, age 21)

For Javanese students, the various sexual codings or symbols connected with cities are indicated by a number of places, including the campus environment (primarily boarding houses) where young students engage in seeking social and sexual relationships. The boarding house environment offers students the potential for developing various modes of sexual relationship including romantic sexual relationships, but this study has highlighted anxieties among university students who do not hold traditional restrictive sexual views about their sexual behaviour.

In Javanese university students, the authentic concerns of the *gaul* group may be a matter of reading a Western magazine, watching pornographic films, listening to *dangdut* or Western music, or exploring modes of sexual relationship that resist the traditional-restrictive cultural philosophy. On the other hand, the less *gaul* group may be concerned to wear only a certain style of clothing (*jilbab*) or defy romantic-sexual relationships.

To understand why university students choose and value certain manners and acts within their sexual relationships, and the importance they attach to their choices, we have to explore in more depth the nature of their sexual inter-personal relationships. But at this point we have to believe that they are more generally always locating their sexual

behaviours in networks of relationships and perceptions of relevant cultural discourses (Chaney, 1996). As a defining characteristic of communal identity, sensibilities are ambiguous entities which are clearly important as interpretive resources and are always treated as a consequence or display of prior social conditions (Chaney, 1996).

6. Conclusion

This study concludes with two major areas of research findings. The first findings concern the level of occurrence and the pattern of sexual experience among Javanese university students, and the second is about the socio-cultural and socio-sexual factors influenced by these patterns. The first part concludes that the occurrence and the pattern of actual sexual experience is influenced by independent variables such as religiosity, general lifestyles, level of social activity, sexual attitudes and gender attitudes.

This study revealed the occurrence of premarital sexual intercourse was relatively low in comparison to other sexual cultures. Only 22% of males and 6% of females have ever engaged in premarital sex. As indicated by the plethora of sexual behaviour surveys in Indonesia, levels of premarital sexual intercourse are found to be within a corridor of 7% to 27% males and 2% to 6% for females. It means that Javanese student sexual behaviour may show a fairly benign pattern of risk with regard to the threats of HIV/AIDS and other STIs. Also, the pattern of sexual experience is characterised by the level of social activity, level of religiosity, general lifestyle taste and socio-sexual philosophy.

The most important factor influencing the occurrence of premarital sexual intercourse was that of socio-sexual philosophy for both males and females. Religiosity and the level of social activity factors also provided positive associations in the occurrence of premarital sex among the male sample. The general lifestyle factor provided positive associations to the occurrence of premarital sex among young females.

The second part of the key findings consists of the pattern of socio-sexual lifestyles of Javanese university students using cluster analysis. This study revealed that Javanese university student culture has distinctive sexual lifestyles. Each distinct university student sexual lifestyle features a different socio-sexual philosophy, level of social activity, religiosity, general lifestyle tastes, and gender attitudes that some students may choose to adopt or reject. Thus, the diversity of sexual behaviour of Javanese student reflects personal choices based upon values, knowledge and experience which inform a desired sense of self identity. The traditional-restrictive sexual philosophy is still endorsed as the majority of student sexual culture in contemporary Javanese society. The minority relational-romantic sexual behaviour has also emerged, with perhaps the potential to flourish in this region. The expression of the pluralisation of Javanese university student sexual lifestyle practices has been amplified and facilitated by the tumultuous changes towards greater social openness and debate, and the removal of strong control and censorship of both conservative Islamic and more open, liberal tendencies in a contest of sexuality.

The production of the variety of Javanese university student sexual behaviour has been shaped in mutually constitutive relationships among the characteristic themes of lifestyles, such as the notion of surfaces or an iconography, the development of selves, sensibilities and places. The study described the ways in which university students manipulate the surface, express their sense of identity and delineate the sensibility of their sexual lifestyle. For instance, sexual lifestyles are associated with wearing certain styles of clothing, choosing particular characteristics of a potential partner, practising certain types of sexual relationship, and affiliating with certain types of social and sexual philosophy.

The expression of Javanese university student sexual lifestyles or their self identity links to globalising cultural trends, including not only those emanating from the West but

also reflecting an interest in cultural resources from other culture regions. To understand the dynamic of student sexual lifestyles, the nature of certain facets of Javanese culture, need to be appreciated. The social phenomenon of Javanese student sexual behaviour is an integral feature of the development of modernity in Central Java and Indonesia in general. These three different clusters of university student sexual lifestyles are particular representations of Javanese youth identity

The active reciprocity between university students and the cities in Central Java as the places they inhabit (particularly the elements with which the cities are fashioned and shaped) is an important aspect which, through institutionalisation, shapes particular forms of sexual life. This highlights the connections between particular forms of sexual relations (*gaul* group interests) and the process of urbanisation.

These findings on Javanese university student sexual lifestyles provide directions to explore in more depth this fairly benign, and relatively low, level of sexual health risk with implications for policy development. This study suggests that there are key priorities that could protect young people's sexual and reproductive health in Central Java. The first priority is to maintain and promote the traditional restrictive sexual lifestyle (which is practised by the majority) in order to protect young people's sexual and reproductive health and prevent the threats of HIV/AIDS and other STIs. The second priority is to promote and improve safer sex behaviour for the minority who follow romantic-modern sexual lifestyles, in order to prevent unwanted pregnancy and HIV/AIDS and other STIs.

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