



SPIRITUAL SUPPORT AND PARENTAL COMMUNICATION ON PERCEPTIONS OF HIV PREVENTION IN ADOLESCENTS

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ABSTRACT

Adolescents are a group vulnerable to HIV transmission due to limited knowledge and strong social influences. Adolescents' perceptions of HIV prevention are greatly influenced by internal and external factors, including spiritual support and communication with parents. Spiritual support can strengthen moral values and self-responsibility, while parental communication plays a role in providing accurate information and guidance. This study aims to spiritual support and parental communication on adolescents' perception of HIV prevention. This study used a cross-sectional design with a total sampling of 31 adolescent respondent. Data collection was conducted using a Likerts scale questionnaire to assess spiritual support, parental communication, and perceptions of HIV prevention. Data analysis was performed using multiple linear regression tests with a significance level of <0.05 . The analysis results showed that spiritual support had no significant effect on perceptions of HIV prevention ($p = 0.969$), not did parental communication ($p = 0.469$). Simultaneous testing showed that both variables together did not significantly influence perceptions of HIV prevention. Spiritual support and parental communication did not significantly influence adolescents' perceptions of HIV prevention. HIV prevention efforts need to consider a spiritual approach and strengthen family communication to shape healthy perceptions and behaviors in adolescents.

Keywords: adolescents; HIV prevention; parental communication; spiritual support

How to cite (in APA style)

Thome, A. L., Siauta, V. A., & Makualaina, F. N. (2026). Spiritual Support and Parental Communication on Perceptions of HIV Prevention in Adolescents. *Indonesian Journal of Global Health Research*, 8(3), 803–808. <https://doi.org/10.37287/ijghr.v8i3.799>.

INTRODUCTION

Health problems resulting from HIV/AIDS transmission remain common in Indonesia, particularly in Papua Province. Papua Province currently reports the highest cumulative number of HIV/AIDS cases (Dinas Kesehatan, 2023). Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is a virus that infects human white blood cells, causing a weakened immune system that leads to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), which is a collection of various symptoms resulting from the weakened immune system (Kristiani et al, 2025). Globally, HIV/AIDS remains a serious public health problem, with an estimated 1.7 million adolescents (aged 10 to 19) living with HIV. Despite advances in treatment and prevention efforts, adolescents continue to be impacted by HIV, experiencing unique biological and psychosocial challenges (Kayiranga et al, 2025).

The age range for adolescents is between 10 and 19 years old (Trang et al, 2021; Firdaus et al, 2023). The adolescence period, between the ages of 10 and 14, is considered crucial because it is the first stage in establishing fundamental knowledge about future sexual and gender practices. Early adolescents, with their intense curiosity, develop a desire to learn about sexuality. Although the majority have not yet had sexual intercourse, some have reportedly engaged in foreplay, such as intense touching, kissing, and even other non-coital acts (Chimwaza-Manda et al, 2024; Aisyah et al, 2020). A local studi in Jayapura demonstrated a link between adolescents' knowledge and attitudes and HIV prevention practices, suggesting that improving perceptions of prevention among this group has the potential to reduce the risk of transmission (Simanungkalit et al, 2025). The lack of experience in teenagers allows them to tolerate behaviors associated with negative effects (Yode

et al, 2024). Understanding of high-risk sexual attitudes and behaviors and inadequate information intake will influence major misunderstandings about the concept of HIV-AIDS (Sumakul et al, 2023). Controversy over sex education arising from cultural differences can pose certain challenges. To address this, cultural and social adjustments are needed, along with the importance of scientific explanation (Ratnawati et al, 2024).

A lot of misinformation is spread across various inconsistent sources. Exposure to this misinformation makes adolescents vulnerable to serious sexual health problems such as unwanted pregnancy, STI infections, and HIV (Chimwaza-Manda et al, 2024; Simanungkalit et al, 2025; Wang et al, 2023). The importance of proper guidance and parenting by parent for teenagers today. A lack of attention and parental involvement can put teenagers at risk of deviant behavior (Elvina et al, 2022). Within the family, parental communication about sexuality and the prevention of sexually transmitted infections plays a crucial role in shaping adolescents' knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of HIV prevention efforts. Research conducted in the Sentani region of Jayapura Regency found a strong positive relationship between parental communication and students' knowledge about HIV, suggesting that parents can be an effective source of information and social control if communication is open and appropriate. However, cultural barriers and taboos still often hinder indepth discussions on this topic in many Papuan families (Kok Mesa, 2024).

Therefore, this study is important to measure the influence of spiritual support on adolescents' perceptions of HIV prevention, the influence of parental communication in shaping these perceptions, and how these two factors influence each other. The results of this study are expected to provide empirical evidence for adolescent health promotion program designers and policymakers in Jayapura to make HIV prevention interventions more effective and targeted, contextual, and grounded in local family and spiritual values in Jayapura.

METHOD

This study uses an analytical quantitative design with a cross-sectional approach to analyze the influence of the independent variables of "spiritual support and parental communication" on the dependent variable of "perception of HIV prevention in adolescents" at one measurement time. The data collection for the research was conducted at SMK YPKP Sentani in August 2025. The criteria for adolescents included in this study were aged 15 and 16 years, living with their parents, willing to be respondents by signing a consent form to participate, and able to follow the research process from beginning to end. The number of respondents was 31 people through total sampling in 1 class.

The research variables measured were spiritual support and parental communications as independent variables, and adolescents' perceptions of HIV prevention as the dependent variable. The instrument used consisted of 2 structured questionnaires, namely a questionnaire on 'parental spiritual support on perceptions of HIV/AIDS prevention' and a questionnaire on 'parental communication on perceptions of HIV/AIDS prevention'. Both questionnaires have been tested for validity (using Pearson Product Moment) and reliability at SMA Kristen Koinoniam with valid scores above the r-table value of >0.361 and reliability (using Cronbach's Alpha) of 0.81. Data analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression.

RESULT

Table 1.
Description of Research Variables (n= 31)

Variables	Mean $\pm$ Std. Deviation	Category
Spiritual Support	27.29 $\pm$ 12.97	Low Spiritual Support
Parental Communication	34.67 $\pm$ 16.55	Good Communication
Perception of HIV Prevention	32.96 $\pm$ 20.43	Less Perception

Table 1, the average score of respondents' spiritual support is 27.29 with a standard deviation of 12.97. This category falls under low spiritual support, indicating that, in general, respondents still lack or do not feel sufficient spiritual support in their daily lives. The quite large standard deviation indicates a variation in the level of spiritual support among respondents. Meanwhile, the average parental communication score was 34.67 with a standard deviation of 16.55, and falls into the category of good communication. This indicates that most respondents have relatively open and positive interactions and communication with their parent. However, the fairly high variation in scores indicates differences in the quality of communication among respondents. The average perception of HIV prevention is 32.96 with a standard deviation of 20.43, which is categorized as low perception. This finding indicates that respondents' understanding or attitude toward HIV prevention efforts is still non optimal. The large standar deviation indicates a considerable variation in perception among respondents.

Although the residual normality test showed non-normal results ($p < 0,05$), multiple linear regression analysis was still used because the sample size is greater than 30, thus meeting the principles of the Central Limit Theorem. Before being analyzed using multiple linear regression tests, the heteroscedasticity assumption was conducted, which did not show heteroscedasticity in this study.

Table 2.
Multiple Linear Regression Test Results

Variables	Sig. With Perception of HIV Prevention (y)
Spiritual Support (x_1)	0.969
Parental Communication (x_2)	0.490

Based on the results of multiple linear regression analysis, it was found that the spiritual support variable (x_1) showed a significance value of $p > 0.05$ (0.969), which means there is no influence of spiritual support on adolescents' perceptions of HIV prevention (y). Meanwhile, the parental communication variable (x_2) also showed a significance value of $p > 0.05$ (0.490), which means there is no influence of parental communication on adolescents' perceptions of HIV prevention (y). Thus, neither spiritual support nor parental communication affect adolescents' perceptions of HIV prevention.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that spiritual support does not significantly influence adolescents' perceptions of HIV prevention, with a p-value of 0.969, which is >0.05 . This is evidenced by the low level of spiritual support, which does not guarantee an impact on adolescents' perceptions. Spiritual support reflects an individual's involvement in faith, worship, and moral values that guide healthy behaviors. In adolescents, spiritual support can serve as a protective mechanism against risky behaviors such as unprotected sex or injection drug use.

In the context of HIV prevention, spiritual values play a role in shaping adolescents' awareness of responsibility for their bodies and social relationships. This research disagrees with the findings of Putri Wahyuni et al (2022), who found that adolescents with high levels of spirituality had better perceptions of HIV/AIDS risks and demonstrated more positive preventive behaviors. Similarly, Mokhtari et al (2020) found that aspects of spirituality were associated with positive attitudes toward reproductive health and reduced risky behaviors.

Spiritual support is an important element in supporting the psychosocial well-being of people living with HIV, as it can serve as a source of inner strength in coping with the stigma and challenges of life associated with HIV. Previous studies have shown that religiosity and spirituality can be significant coping resources for people living with HIV, helping them cope with psychological stress and impacting overall quality of life (Astiti et al., 2025). It turns out that different religious

affiliations are closely related to factors that act as facilitators or barriers to health, especially in the context of sexual health (Wuthrich-Grossenbacher et al, 2023). Therefore, it can be concluded that spiritual support is an important factor in shaping adolescents' perceptions of HIV prevention, as it helps them assess risks and internalize moral values in making health-related decisions. However, in this study, differences in spiritual teachings or beliefs likely influenced how parents supported adolescents, so no significant impact was observed.

Regarding parental communication, the study results showed that parental communication also did not significantly influenced adolescents' perceptions of HIV prevention ($p = 0.490$). Parental communication is a primary channel for conveying values, information, and guidance regarding sexuality and reproductive health. According to the WHO (2021), open family communication on sensitive topics such as HIV and sexuality is an effective protective factor in preventing risky sexual behavior in adolescents. Communication between parents and children/adolescents is also a protective factor against risky behaviors and is highly relevant in the context of HIV/AIDS prevention. International research shows that communication between parents and adolescents about sexual health/HIV issues is associated with increased knowledge, self-efficacy in seeking reproductive health information, and safer prevention behaviors (Darebo et al, 2025). Without a deep understanding of how to build a good life in an adolescent environment, interventions may be ineffective and can lead to overall health problems (Kayiranga et al, 2025).

One of the causes of HIV/AIDS transmission among adolescents is their lack of knowledge about the disease. However, information is crucial for understanding knowledge and shaping attitudes and behavior. This means that attitudes and behavior toward an object are highly dependent on the information adolescents have (Suciana et al, 2022). Adolescents also prefer to seek all forms and sources of information, such as gathering with peers, accessing information about sexuality or adult websites on the internet, experimenting with masturbation, and even trying to kiss or have sex with their partners (Rahman et al, 2022). When parents communicate honestly and supportively, adolescents tend to feel more comfortable asking questions and discussing sexual health issues without fear or shame. This strengthens their perception of the importance of HIV prevention measures, such as condom use, health checks, and avoiding risky behaviors. This research supports the findings of a study by Sari & Wahyuni (2021), which reported that parental communication is positively associated with adolescents' knowledge and perceptions of HIV/AIDS. In this study, adolescents who frequently discussed HIV with their parents had a higher level of understanding of HIV transmission and prevention compared to adolescents who rarely communicated.

Two-way communication in parenting styles is involved in family communication. For example, when implementing new family rules, parents not only ask their children to comply but also explain the reasons for those rules. Parents also provide sufficient space for children to express their opinions; in other words, parents can effectively position themselves as listeners (Nurfurqoni & Hastuti, 2022). During this period, they experience rapid growth, resulting in a strong curiosity about various things without first digesting the information they receive. One negative issue facing adolescents is adolescent sexual behavior (Wahyuni et al, 2023). It is crucial to pay attention to adolescents' perceptions of sex in relation to HIV or sexually transmitted infections, based on communication with parents and partners (Quinn et al, 2022).

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that spiritual support and parental communication do not influence adolescents' perceptions of HIV prevention. Therefore, HIV prevention efforts among adolescents need to be implemented through a holistic approach that encompasses spiritual, family, and educational aspects.

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