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The Effectiveness of Gender Based Class Segregation in Preventing Dating Behavior in Junior High Schools

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Abstract
Dating behavior among junior high school students has the potential to impact student focus and character development. As a preventative measure, Islamic educational institutions implement a gender segregation policy by separating classes between boys and girls. This study aims to describe student dating behavior and explore the effectiveness of gender segregation in preventing such behavior at "Semut Hitam" Junior High School. This study used a descriptive qualitative approach using observation, interviews, and documentation techniques. Informants were selected purposively, including guidance and counseling teachers, student affairs officials, and the school environment. Data analysis was conducted using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model. The results indicate that the student segregation policy successfully reduced the frequency of dating behavior. Class separation proved quite effective in limiting direct cross-gender interaction during learning and school activities, supported by teacher supervision, discipline, and the instillation of Islamic values. The effectiveness of this policy is also reflected in some alumni who continue to maintain boundaries with the opposite sex after graduation. Furthermore, peer solidarity was found, with students tending not to disclose hidden dating behavior and leaving the monitoring process to the school's mechanisms.
Keywords: *class segregation, dating behavior, junior high school students, effectiveness*

Abstrak
Perilaku berpacaran di kalangan remaja SMP berpotensi memengaruhi fokus belajar dan pembentukan karakter siswa. Sebagai upaya preventif, lembaga pendidikan Islam menerapkan kebijakan segregasi gender melalui pemisahan kelas antara siswa laki-laki dan perempuan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui gambaran perilaku berpacaran siswa serta mengeksplorasi efektivitas segregasi gender dalam mencegah perilaku tersebut di SMP "Semut Hitam". Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Informan dipilih secara purposive, meliputi guru bimbingan dan konseling, pihak kesiswaan, serta lingkungan sekolah. Analisis data dilakukan dengan model Miles, Huberman, dan Saldana. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kebijakan pemisahan siswa berhasil menekan frekuensi perilaku berpacaran. Pemisahan kelas terbukti cukup efektif dalam membatasi interaksi langsung lintas gender selama kegiatan pembelajaran dan aktivitas sekolah, dengan dukungan pengawasan guru, tata tertib, dan penanaman nilai-nilai keislaman. Efektivitas kebijakan ini juga tercermin pada sebagian alumni yang tetap menjaga batas pergaulan dengan lawan jenis setelah lulus. Selain itu, ditemukan adanya solidaritas teman sebaya, di mana siswa cenderung tidak mengungkapkan perilaku berpacaran yang terjadi secara tersembunyi dan menyerahkan proses pengawasan kepada mekanisme yang dimiliki sekolah.
Kata kunci: *Segregasi kelas, perilaku berpacaran, siswa SMP, efektivitas*

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Introduction

In everyday life, dating among teenagers, especially junior high school students, has become an increasingly common phenomenon. It is not uncommon for students who are still in the early stages of adolescence to start dating, either openly or secretly (Bobyanti, 2023). This phenomenon has emerged alongside the development of access to information, the influence of social media, and the lack of proper supervision and guidance regarding social interaction in Islam and social norms. In the context of education, this phenomenon is a concern because it can affect students' focus on learning, classroom dynamics, and character building. Dating itself can be defined as an emotional relationship between two individuals based on feelings of affection and closeness, which in some cases can lead to deep emotional involvement or even interpersonal conflict (Sipahutar & Pulungan, 2023). The impact of dating among junior high school students is not limited to academic aspects, but also affects students' social and emotional development. In addition, dating at a young age is often influenced by expectations formed by social media and popular trends that can create unrealistic relationship standards. In an educational setting, this phenomenon also poses a unique challenge for teachers and school officials in maintaining a conducive learning environment. Personal interactions between students in the classroom can cause direct or indirect disruptions to learning (Damanik, 2024).

Among the general public, dating is still viewed as a means of exploring and getting to know the opposite sex with the aim of adjusting to each other before moving on to marriage. However, problems arise when the dating process, which should be part of adult life, is instead undertaken by school-age children who are still in the midst of emotional and cognitive development that is not yet mature. What is even more concerning is how today's teenagers are navigating these relationships without adequate understanding of responsibility and moral boundaries (Oktari et al., 2023). Adolescence, especially for junior high school students, is a transitional phase from childhood to adulthood that is often marked by various emotional and social challenges. At this stage, teenagers begin to feel attracted to the opposite sex as part of the puberty process. However, they are not yet fully capable of making wise decisions and tend to act based on momentary emotional impulses (Rugayah et al., 2023).

Currently, interaction between male and female students is becoming more open and is considered normal in the school environment (Umam, 2021). At the junior high school level, it is not uncommon to find students who are in romantic relationships,

which can ultimately affect their concentration in their studies. Some cases of dating among junior high school students have a negative impact, especially if they are not accompanied by a good understanding of moral boundaries and responsibilities (Haryati, 2020). Teachers and parents' concerns about dating among students are increasing, mainly because the trend of dating is no longer limited to adults but has spread to much younger age groups. This phenomenon shows that children who should still be focused on learning and self-development are instead becoming involved in relationships that are inappropriate for them. Junior high school students, and even elementary school students, who are still in the stage of emotional and psychological growth, are vulnerable to the negative influences of dating relationships (Sipahutar & Pulungan, 2023). Research shows that digital content such as social media, short videos, and other entertainment platforms play a major role in shaping children's perceptions of romantic relationships, encouraging them to imitate the dating behaviors portrayed in these media. This situation is exacerbated by weak environmental controls, both at home and at school, which allow free interaction between male and female students without clear boundaries. As a result, the attention that should be focused on education and character building is shifted by an interest in the opposite sex (Surya et al., 2025).

In 2020, research conducted by (Winarti & Alamsyah, 2020) showed that most adolescents begin dating between the ages of 11 and 13, specifically when they are in junior high school. Dating during adolescence is not merely a form of emotional interaction, but is also often accompanied by a high intensity of relationship. The study noted that the more often adolescents engage in dating activities, the greater their tendency to exhibit behavior that leads to physical contact or even sexual behavior. These activities include holding hands, hugging, and many other negative behaviors that junior high school students engage in. This situation is cause for concern because it involves students who are still in the stage of mental and emotional development, are still young, and are not yet able to fully understand the moral boundaries of the relationships they are in.

Adolescents of elementary to junior high school age show a tendency to form romantic relationships with peers in their immediate environment, and in some cases even with older individuals, which can potentially lead to psychological and social risks. The intensity of interaction has increased with the ease of communication via mobile phones and social media, which are largely unsupervised (Jayanti et al., 2024). Data from the National Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN) shows that although the

rate of early marriage has declined, the age at which young people start dating tends to be younger, namely between 15 and 19 years old, thus requiring serious attention from families and educational institutions (Haryati, 2020). n the context of preventing dating behavior in schools, understanding the psychological and social backgrounds of students is an important aspect. Then, a religious approach and strengthening moral values in schools are among the strategies that can help protect students from this deviant behavior from an early age (Layyinawati et al., 2024).

Research by Suci Rahmadani and Nurul Latifatul Inayati (Rahmadani & Inayati, 2023) states that the implementation of gender-segregated classes can foster good character. Class separation makes students more focused and confident, and creates a more conducive classroom atmosphere. It also makes it easier for teachers to manage their lessons. However, this study also reveals the negative impact of class separation, namely the tendency for students to socialize more freely outside of school, thus requiring stronger religious guidance. Another study entitled "Gender-Based Classroom Management and Its Relationship with Student Achievement" by Zainal Abidin and Asep Romatullah (Abidin & Rahmatullah, 2023) shows that students not only achieve good academic grades but also demonstrate good character in their interactions within the school environment. Both studies have made important contributions to the field of classroom management and character building, which have been implemented in several educational institutions. However, the effectiveness of these policies in preventing dating among adolescents has not been studied in depth. Most previous studies have focused more on the impact of class segregation or separation on students' academic achievement and social development without specifically exploring how class segregation can serve as a deterrent to interactions that could potentially lead to dating relationships.

Islamic education is based on the Qur'an and Sunnah. In Islamic teachings, interactions between men and women are strictly regulated to avoid things that could lead to slander or temptation. Islam allows communication and social relationships between the two, but they must remain within the limits set by Sharia law (Rahma et al., 2025). Dating activities that are not in accordance with Islamic principles are considered risky as they may lead to deviant behavior such as ikhtilath, which is the free mixing of the opposite sexes that can arouse sexual desire. Therefore, Islam emphasizes the importance of maintaining distance and manners in interactions. This is confirmed in QS. An-Nur verse 30, which commands believers to guard their gaze.

قُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا۟ مِنْ أَبْصَـٰرِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا۟ فُرُوجَهُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ

Meaning: Say to the believers: "Let them restrain their gaze and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what they do." By separating the learning spaces between males and females, it is hoped that a morally safe environment will be created that supports the achievement of educational goals. This step is also reinforced by the words of the Prophet in a hadith that warns of the dangers of unsupervised meetings between the opposite sexes

وَلَا يَخْلُوَنَّ رَجُلٌ بِامْرَأَةٍ فَإِنَّ ثَالِثَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ

"Let no man be alone with a woman (without her mahram) because indeed the third one is Satan." (HR. Ahmad). By creating a secure learning environment, students can focus more on pursuing knowledge and shaping their character in accordance with Islamic values (Aqilla & Kamil, 2022).

Scientifically, class segregation between men and women was exemplified by Al-Qabisi, one of the important figures in classical Islamic educational thought. Al-Qabisi emphasized that a co-educational system was not in line with the objectives of Islamic education, which emphasized moral development. He strongly rejected the mixing of men and women in the same classroom because free interaction during adolescence, especially during puberty, could give rise to natural urges towards the opposite sex that could disrupt the peace of learning and damage the morals of children (Hufron, 2021). Although it is not in line with the spirit of today's children who prioritize equality between men and women, Al-Qabisi still believes that his stance is in accordance with the principles of Islamic teachings. According to him, even though it seems outdated, this approach is actually relevant in maintaining the stability of adolescents' minds (Dhanil & Irawan, 2024). Therefore, class segregation is considered an important step to maintain a more focused and morally safe learning environment. Mixing in the learning process is feared to open opportunities for deviant behavior, especially among adolescents who are experiencing emotional development and attraction to the opposite sex (Hayatina, 2023).

SMP "Semut Hitam" is a private school located in East Java Province. The school was established in 2008 and currently has a total of 235 students. Since its inception, the school has implemented a policy of segregating male and female students into separate classes. This policy is not only interpreted as a technical arrangement of learning spaces, but also as part of the school's strategy in fostering discipline, maintaining social ethics, and creating a conducive learning atmosphere that is free from unnecessary distractions.

Class segregation at SMP "Semut Hitam" is carried out by placing male and female students on different floors in the same building. Male students are on the upper floor, while female students are on the lower floor. This arrangement is an effort by the school to support concentration in learning and maintain appropriate social norms. However, social dynamics among teenagers remain a challenge, making it interesting to further examine the effectiveness of this policy in preventing undesirable behaviors such as dating in the school environment (Hamro & Halimah, 2024).

Scientific studies on gender segregation in schools have mostly focused on its relationship with academic achievement and moral development in general. Meanwhile, analysis of gender segregation policies as a preventive strategy at the junior high school level is still relatively limited. The implementation of gender segregation in schools has not been empirically studied to assess the extent to which gender-based learning spaces can limit the intensity of interactions that could potentially lead to dating behavior. Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in the analysis of the effectiveness of gender segregation using qualitative indicators in the form of the quantity of cases found, the quality of student interaction patterns, and the level of involvement in maintaining social boundaries in the school environment.

This research is important given the significant challenges faced by junior high school students today, especially in relation to dating behavior. In the context of psychosocial development, this behavior can affect students' concentration in learning and mental health. Therefore, the class segregation strategy needs to be evaluated to determine its effectiveness in preventing dating behavior. With diverse social and cultural characteristics, class segregation has the potential to be a solution that can help create a more conducive learning environment. This study aims to determine the dating behavior of students at "Semut Hitam" Junior High School and explore the extent to which gender-based class segregation can be effective in preventing dating behavior at "Semut Hitam" Junior High School. The results of this study are expected to provide valuable insights for school administrators. To support this objective, dating behavior was analyzed through three main indicators, namely in terms of quantity, quality, and the level of student involvement in terms of how long the relationship has lasted (Nisak et al., 2020).

Research Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the effectiveness of class segregation in preventing dating behavior at "Semut Hitam" Junior High School. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the meaning behind social behavior in depth and contextually. Creswell in his research (Safarudin et al., 2023) explains that qualitative research is a research approach that emphasizes understanding the subject's experience through their narratives, views, and interactions in a specific social context. The sources used as references in data analysis include various literature such as books, scientific journals, and articles related to the topic studied in this research (Alfikri et al., 2022). The subjects were selected purposively, deliberately considering that the informants had direct involvement and adequate understanding of the research focus. Data collection was carried out using three main techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted in the school environment to directly observe the behavior between male and female students. In addition to the students, teachers, and the school concerned, the researchers also marked the place suspected to be the gathering place of the "Black Ant" students. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with guidance counselors, student affairs staff, and school principals to explore cases of dating and students' perceptions of the effectiveness of class segregation. Documentation was carried out by reviewing school archives such as student disciplinary violation data and guidance counseling activity reports (Ardiansyah & Jailani, 2023).

In this study, the effectiveness of gender segregation was identified through three main qualitative indicators. First, the quantitative aspect, which was reviewed based on the decrease in the frequency of cases found or the intensity of reports of dating behavior in the school environment. Second, the qualitative aspect, which was identified through the transformation of student interaction patterns from romantic-personal relationships to limited social interactions in line with school norms. Third, the level of involvement, which is the extent to which students are consistent and compliant in maintaining the physical boundaries set by the school.

The data analysis technique in this study refers to the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model, which consists of three main stages. First, data condensation, which is the process of simplifying and sorting the data obtained in the field to make it more focused and relevant to the research objectives. Second, data presentation, in which the condensed data is compiled in the form of descriptive narratives to make it easier for

researchers to draw conclusions. Third, drawing conclusions and verification, which is the process of formulating the meaning and findings from the data that has been thoroughly analyzed and ensuring its validity through repeated and in-depth retesting (Fiantika et al., 2022).

The validity of the data in this study was tested using triangulation techniques, which included source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing data obtained from various parties, namely guidance counselors, student affairs staff, and school principals, to obtain an objective perspective on student behavior. Meanwhile, technique triangulation was carried out by verifying the interview results through direct observation in the field (such as stairways and canteens) and reinforced by studying student violation archives (Safarudin et al., 2023).

Results and Discussion

Student dating behavior at "Semut Hitam" Junior High School

Based on the results of interviews with guidance counselors, dating behavior at "Semut Hitam" Junior High School is relatively low in quantity and is not openly displayed in the school environment. The cases identified in the past year are relatively few and generally occur secretly. Relationships are more likely to occur outside the school environment, while inside the school, students tend to keep their distance and obey the rules. The number of students identified as having such special relationships is relatively small compared to the total number of students. Guidance counselors and student affairs staff reported that student behavior is monitored regularly, both inside and outside the classroom, especially at times when gender interaction is likely to occur, such as between classes, during breaks, and before religious activities begin.

Dating is still practiced by some students at Semut Hitam Junior High School, although it is not done openly on school grounds. These relationships generally take place outside of school hours and outside of school grounds, such as on holidays. Some students are known to go out with their partners without wearing school uniforms, walking together in public places, or spending time at certain locations that are not related to school activities. The activities are simple, such as walking together, sitting together, or watching movies at public entertainment venues, but they indicate a special relationship between the students concerned. These romantic relationships are conducted discreetly and do not involve physical interaction within the school environment. Students tend to maintain their composure when at school by avoiding

direct contact, not sitting close to each other, and not showing verbal or nonverbal intimacy in front of teachers. This pattern is evident in students' daily lives, where emotional closeness is expressed more outside of school and is not clearly apparent during the learning process. In line with the findings (Rahmadani & Inayati, 2023), they mention that physical separation is indeed effective in schools, but it can make students feel more relaxed and free to socialize when they are in the community. This shows that physical supervision must be supported by moral education so that

On the other hand, peer solidarity tends to discourage reporting romantic relationships, indicating the strong influence of peer groups in adolescent social dynamics. This solidarity forms an agreement to keep secrets and not report peers' romantic behavior to teachers or school officials. Students who know that their friends are in a special relationship tend to choose not to interfere and not to disclose this information, even though they realize that this behavior is against school rules. This silence is considered part of maintaining trust and harmonious friendships. This agreement is evident in situations where a student goes out alone with their boyfriend or girlfriend or is known to have a special relationship outside of school. Their closest friends choose not to ask further questions and do not give open warnings. In some cases, peers even try to cover up information when questioned by teachers or school officials, pretending not to know about their friend's activities. This agreement is not formally stated, but is understood as a form of solidarity among peers. This is in line with the findings (Umam, 2021) regarding peer conformity, where adolescents tend to follow group norms, including covering up violations in order to gain social recognition and avoid the risk of exclusion from their circle of friends.

In the previous period, the school had handled cases of student relationships that were known to have exceeded the school's social rules. In one case, the two students involved were fellow students at “Semut Hitam” Junior High School and were from the same grade. The relationship was not only emotional but also involved physical acts such as kissing outside the school environment. Information about the case was obtained through internal reports and investigations by the school. In addition to this case, the school also noted that there were several other students who were indicated to be in romantic relationships with various characteristics. The forms of punishment given varied, ranging from light summons and guidance, the issuance of a first warning letter (SP 1), to a second warning letter (SP 2).

Romantic relationships have been identified not only among students of the same grade, but also between students and their juniors, as well as relationships with parties outside the school, such as high school students and individuals who do not attend Semut Hitam Junior High School. In cases of romantic relationships involving parties outside Semut Hitam Junior High School, the school has established a policy that sanctions are only imposed on students who are enrolled at the school. Outside parties are not subject to sanctions because they are outside the authority and responsibility of the school. For "Semut Hitam" junior high school students who are involved, the school first gives warnings and guidance. Warning letters are not given directly, but through stages of guidance in accordance with the applicable mechanisms.

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Every SP issued by the school must be conveyed to the parents and accompanied by a signature as a form of agreement and awareness of the violation committed by the student. After the pre-SP stage, if the student still shows no change in behavior, the school will issue a first level warning letter (SP 1) as a form of official warning and further guidance. After the issuance of SP 1, students are not immediately subject to heavier sanctions. The school first conducts a further guidance process through continuous behavior monitoring, assistance from guidance counselors and student affairs staff, and intensive communication with parents. Evaluations are carried out within a certain period of time to observe changes in the student's attitude and behavior. If during this process the student shows positive changes, the sanctions will not be increased. However, if after undergoing the follow-up guidance process after SP 1, the

student repeats the same violation, only then will the school consider increasing the sanction to the next level, namely the second warning letter (SP 2).

Most students at Semut Hitam Junior High School are aware of the ban on dating. However, understanding the rules does not always translate into the courage to refuse or end a relationship when faced with feelings or attraction towards the opposite sex. Some students choose to continue their relationships secretly and keep them private. Information about these relationships is not disclosed to guidance counselors or homeroom teachers. This attitude is influenced by concerns about the consequences of sanctions and the desire to maintain harmonious friendships. In these circumstances, students tend to let teachers know about such behavior through other means without any direct disclosure from the students concerned.

Apart from the Warning Letter mechanism, the school has other forms of sanctions used to deal with minor and common violations. One form of sanction that is applied is the use of special vests and headscarves known as "spectacular headscarves." These attributes are worn by students for a full day, from morning until school dismissal time. The headscarves used are brightly colored so that they are easily recognizable by the school community. If students remove the sanction attributes before the specified time, the sanction will be reimposed the following day. The implementation of these sanctions is supervised by the guidance counselor, the student affairs department, and the teacher on duty, and the procedures are clearly communicated to students so that they understand the types of violations and the consequences they will face.

The Effectiveness of Gender Segregation in Classes at "Semut Hitam" Junior High School

The implementation of gender segregation between male and female students at Semut Hitam Junior High School has had an effect in limiting student interaction that could potentially lead to relationships that are not in accordance with school rules. This policy is implemented through several technical arrangements in the school environment that aim to control the intensity of interaction between male and female students during learning activities.

One form of gender segregation at Semut Hitam Junior High School is the separation of learning spaces for male and female students. Male students occupy classrooms on the third floor, while female students are on the second floor with separate stairways for going up and down. This separation applies not only to classrooms, but

also to the arrangement of worship facilities and several daily activities for students in the school environment.

In the prayer room area, the school's seriousness in maintaining boundaries between the sexes is evident in the use of wooden dividers that separate the worship areas for male and female students. In addition, the facilities for performing wudu (ablution) are also separated based on gender. Even the footwear in front of the prayer room is neatly arranged, with separate areas for male and female students' shoes. This arrangement shows that the school not only applies segregation in major aspects, but also in small things that indirectly train students to be aware of the boundaries of space and interaction between genders.

The consistency of this segregation policy has even been implemented before academic activities in the classroom begin. Before 6:45 a.m., the official school start time, male and female students are directed to wait in different areas according to their gender. Male students occupy the west side of the school grounds, while female students are on the east side. This arrangement is carried out strictly every day as part of the preparation before students participate in a series of religious activities, such as congregational dhuha prayers, Quran recitation, and the recitation of Asmaul Husna. After all these activities are completed, the students then enter their respective classrooms to begin the learning process.

The layout of Black Ant Junior High School shows that class segregation is not only applied to learning spaces, but also to various areas of student activity within the school environment. Although the staircases for male and female students have been separated, in practice, some female students are still found around the staircases used by male students, especially during breaks or when waiting for class changes. These activities are generally limited to sitting with peers or chatting without direct interaction with male students. This condition shows that even though space segregation has been implemented, students still tend to approach the activity spaces of the opposite sex in the form of physical presence without direct interaction. In such situations, teachers and supervisors routinely issue warnings so that the established rules are obeyed.

A similar form of interaction is also seen in the balcony area, which serves as a connecting corridor between classrooms. The open position of the balcony allows students on the upper floor to observe activities in the area below. On several occasions, female students were seen standing along the balcony railing while watching the activities of male students in the courtyard. The interactions that arise in such situations

are generally nonverbal, such as glancing at each other or watching from a distance, and do not develop into direct communication. This shows that the segregation system is able to limit direct interaction between students, even though social attraction in the form of observation or visual interaction can still occur.

In addition, there is also an area in the hallway leading to the cafeteria that is considered a potential meeting point for both genders. This hallway is an alternative route that connects the paths of male and female students, so the school prohibits students from being in that area. The relatively closed position of the hallway makes it difficult to always monitor the area optimally. On several occasions, students have used this area to have brief meetings or simply to observe each other's activities.

In general, these findings show that class segregation is able to limit direct interaction between male and female students in the school environment. However, certain spaces still allow for indirect interaction, such as visual observation or proximity without communication.

The policy of class segregation between male and female students at SMP "Semut Hitam" was implemented as part of the school's efforts to uphold Islamic values and shape students' character based on Islamic boarding school education, even though the school does not operate a boarding system. Based on interviews with school officials, this policy was directed by the foundation that established one of Surabaya's Islamic educational institutions as a model for the school's development. When the school was founded, there were no junior high schools in the area that implemented a full-day school system, so SMP "Semut Hitam" was intended to be an alternative Islamic education institution that provided intensive character building throughout the day. The process of absorbing the education system was carried out comprehensively through observation and documentation of educational practices at the reference school. The entire range of school activities, from the learning process in the morning until dismissal time, the implementation of worship such as congregational prayers, the management of daily discipline, to technical matters such as the arrangement of footwear, were recorded and studied as part of the formation of school culture. In addition to academic aspects, attention was also given to school management and student character building, including patterns of interaction between students and their peers and students' attitudes towards teachers.

Class segregation is implemented as part of an integrated Islamic education system to uphold Islamic law and prevent students from engaging in dating, which is

considered increasingly prevalent in the era of social media and has the potential to lead to adultery. Since the school's inception, class segregation has been a fundamental principle in education management. Through this policy, the school seeks to limit the intensity of cross-gender interaction while instilling in students an awareness of the need to maintain Islamic values in their social interactions.

The effectiveness of class segregation in preventing dating behavior at SMP "Semut Hitam" can be observed through the patterns of interaction between male and female students in various school activities. Class segregation is not only interpreted as physically separating learning spaces, but also as a systematic effort to limit the intensity of cross-gender encounters that have the potential to create emotional closeness among students. The effectiveness of this policy is reflected in how students carry out their daily activities with interaction patterns that tend to be controlled and in accordance with school rules. The implementation of class segregation in learning spaces shows a relatively high level of effectiveness in limiting direct interaction between male and female students. Students participate in the learning process in classrooms that are completely separated by gender, so there is no opportunity to sit close to each other, talk, or interact freely during class hours. This condition allows students to focus more on academic activities, while minimizing the potential for dating behavior in the classroom. This phenomenon confirms the findings (Salamullah et al., 2025) that gender segregation effectively improves concentration in learning because students are no longer distracted by the desire to attract the attention of the opposite sex, allowing them to focus fully on the teacher's instructions and lesson material.

The separate learning pattern shapes students' habits of maintaining distance and attitude while in the school environment. This condition also affects the learning process of students, where some students appear to be more focused and calm in following the lessons when classes are separated based on gender. The lack of cross-gender interaction during learning activities reduces the potential for distraction, so that students' attention is more focused on the lesson material and the teacher's instructions.

The effectiveness of gender-based segregation is also evident in student activities in the cafeteria. According to cafeteria staff, interactions between male and female students in the cafeteria are relatively rare. This is influenced by the cafeteria's location near the teachers' room, which means that student activities are under direct supervision. The presence of teachers in the vicinity creates social control that encourages students to behave appropriately and limit cross-gender interactions. This

situation shows that the effectiveness of gender segregation is not only influenced by rules separating spaces, but also by consistent support from a supervisory environment. These findings reinforce the view that the implementation of gender segregation supported by the school discipline system can help guide student behavior to remain in line with prevailing norms.

Teacher support for the principle of class segregation and the prohibition of dating is an important factor in maintaining the effectiveness of school policy. All teachers, including subject teachers, homeroom teachers, teachers on duty, and guidance and counseling teachers, are actively involved in reminding students of the boundaries of social interaction that apply at school. The reinforcement of rules is conveyed in various ways, such as mild reprimands when behavior that borders on violation is observed, brief advice during class, and direct instructions when students are in common areas of the school. On several occasions, subject teachers also included discussions on social ethics and self-preservation in the context of learning materials, so that the message conveyed was not separated from the teaching and learning process. The consistency of teachers in conveying and enforcing rules made students understand that class segregation was not merely an administrative policy, but a principle upheld by the entire school community. The reinforcement provided by teachers is not only oriented towards compliance with rules, but also directed at shaping students' discipline, responsibility, and self-awareness in their behavior.

The role of peers also influences the effectiveness of class segregation in preventing dating behavior. An unwritten agreement among students to keep secrets and not report their peers' dating relationships limits the scope of school supervision. This attitude of solidarity makes dating behavior difficult to detect directly, even though it is not openly displayed in the school environment. This condition shows that the effectiveness of class segregation goes hand in hand with the complex social dynamics of students, which are not entirely under the control of the school.

The implementation of class segregation at “Semut Hitam” Junior High School has had a lasting impact even after students graduate, particularly in terms of social patterns and attitudes toward the opposite sex. Based on interviews with curriculum teachers, some alumni still maintain habits formed during their education at the school, such as keeping their distance from the opposite sex, not walking close together, not making physical contact such as shaking hands, and avoiding romantic relationships even though they are in a secondary school environment that does not implement class

segregation. Curriculum teachers explained that these behavioral patterns emerged because during junior high school, students were accustomed to social rules that were in line with Islamic values. This habit then became ingrained as part of their personal attitudes, so that some alumni continued to apply social restrictions independently even though they were in a more liberal school environment. However, the alumni's responses were not entirely uniform. Some students, after graduating, actually show a change in behavior by starting to engage in dating relationships at the next level of education. This condition is influenced by differences in the school environment, peer socialization patterns, and reduced direct supervision, as they experienced when they were in junior high school. This shows that the impact of class segregation on student behavior is also influenced by the individual's readiness to interpret the values and rules that have been instilled during school.

The results of the study show that class segregation between male and female students at "Semut Hitam" Junior High School can be considered quite effective in preventing dating behavior in the school environment. This effectiveness is marked by the low frequency and rarity of open dating behavior in the school environment, where interactions between students of different genders tend to be limited and controlled during learning activities and other school activities. In addition, the effectiveness of class segregation is also reflected in the attitudes of some alumni after graduation, who still show a habit of maintaining boundaries with the opposite sex even though they are in a higher education environment that does not implement class segregation. However, the fact that there are still several cases of dating shows that class separation has not been able to completely eliminate this behavior. This condition is influenced by the characteristics of junior high school students who are in the phase of self-discovery, have a high sense of curiosity, and a tendency to seek new sensations and experiences.

In addition to adolescent development factors, family background and social environment also play a role in the emergence of dating behavior among some students. Therefore, class segregation serves as a preventive measure and a means of controlling dating behavior in the school environment, but its effectiveness still requires ongoing guidance, consistent supervision, and parental involvement in monitoring students' attitudes and behavior.

Conclusion

This study shows that the implementation of class segregation between male and female students at "Semut Hitam" Junior High School is quite effective as a preventive strategy in limiting dating behavior in the school environment. This effectiveness can be seen from the low frequency of cases of open dating and the limited direct interaction between students of different genders during learning activities and school activities. This policy is also supported by teacher supervision, the enforcement of school rules, and the instilling of Islamic values, which together create a more controlled learning environment. In addition, some alumni still maintain the habit of maintaining boundaries with the opposite sex after graduation. However, this study has limitations because it focuses on one school with a qualitative approach, so the findings are contextual and cannot be generalized broadly. In addition, dating behavior that is carried out secretly outside the school environment is also difficult for researchers to detect comprehensively.

Based on these findings, further research is recommended to examine the effectiveness of class segregation by involving more educational institutions so that a more comprehensive picture of the implementation of this policy can be obtained. Future research could also use quantitative or mixed methods to measure the impact of class segregation on student behavior in a more measurable way. In addition, further studies could explore the role of other factors such as family influence, social environment, and social media use on the emergence of dating behavior in adolescents, so that prevention efforts by schools can be designed in a more comprehensive and sustainable manner.

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