

EMPOWERING STUDENTS AS AGENTS OF CHANGE IN PREVENTING AND ADDRESSING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE THROUGH LEGAL EDUCATION IN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstrak: Kekerasan berbasis gender di lingkungan perguruan tinggi merupakan isu krusial yang terus berkembang di Indonesia. Kekerasan berbasis gender merupakan pelanggaran hak asasi manusia yang berdampak luas pada kesehatan fisik, psikologis, dan sosial korban, sehingga memerlukan perhatian yang serius. Program pengabdian ini memiliki tujuan untuk melakukan langkah strategis terhadap upaya pencegahan dan penanganan kekerasan berbasis gender di UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung melalui pendekatan pendidikan hukum sehingga mahasiswa memiliki kesadaran hukum tentang kekerasan berbasis gender dan terhindar dari kekerasan. Pelaksanaan pengabdian menggunakan metode Participatory Action Research (PAR). Mitra pengabdian terdiri dari 30 mahasiswa UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung yang memiliki kepedulian sosial terhadap persoalan kekerasan berbasis gender. Program pengabdian berupa sosialisasi dan capacity building pencegahan dan penanganan kekerasan seksual. Hasil program menunjukkan bahwa kegiatan pengabdian telah meningkatkan kesadaran hukum mahasiswa. Hasil rerata dari 30 peserta program meningkat hingga 84,43 dibanding sebelumnya 64,13. Terbentuknya tim penggerak anti kekerasan seksual sejumlah 26 mahasiswa dari berbagai program studi merupakan langkah strategis untuk mencegah dan menangani kekerasan seksual di UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, sehingga dapat meminimalisir terjadinya kasus kekerasan seksual di perguruan tinggi.

Kata Kunci: kekerasan berbasis gender, pemberdayaan mahasiswa, pendidikan hukum

Abstract: Gender-based violence in higher education institutions is a crucial issue that continues to grow in Indonesia. Gender-based violence is a violation of human rights that has a widespread impact on the physical, psychological, and social health of victims, thus requiring serious attention. This community service program aims to take strategic steps toward preventing and addressing gender-based violence at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung through a legal education approach, so that students develop legal awareness about gender-based violence and avoid becoming victims of such violence. This community service program employed the Participatory Action Research (PAR), which involved 30 UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung students who demonstrated social concern for issues related to gender-based violence. The program involved awareness-raising and capacity-building activities focused on the prevention and handling of sexual violence. The program results show a notable improvement in students' legal awareness, as reflected by an increase in the average score of the 30 participants from 64.13 to 84.43. The establishment of an anti-sexual violence task force comprising 26 students from various academic programs is a strategic step to prevent and address sexual violence at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, thereby minimizing the occurrence of sexual violence cases on campus.

Keywords: gender-based violence, student empowerment, legal education

Introduction

In the contemporary context, gender-based violence has become a prevalent global issue. Gender-based violence is defined as actions that inflict harm upon an individual based on their gender. From a feminist standpoint, gender-based violence is synonymous with violence against women (Suzor et al., 2018). A comprehensive review of extant research data reveals that the

majority of gender-based violence occurs against women. Women as victims of gender-based violence occur in the personal, public, and state policy spheres (Komnas Perempuan, 2022b). This situation is partly due to the fact that women are often portrayed as inferior beings, in a subordinate position, powerless, and always dependent on the existence of men (husbands). These portrayals impact women's behavior, compelling them to be obedient and willing to accept whatever their husbands' attitudes and behavior are. Conversely, men are regarded as superior beings, endowed with the capacity to rule and surpass women (Humbert & Strid, 2024).

The data collated by Komnas Perempuan, drawn from CATAHU 2022, BADILAG data, and Service Organisation reports, indicates a consistent upward trend in gender-based violence cases against women. Notably, the year 2021 recorded the highest number of gender-based violence cases in the last decade, with a total of 338,496 cases reported. This figure marks a substantial increase of around 50% compared to the 226,062 cases recorded in 2020 (Komnas Perempuan, 2022a). The data reveals a significant escalation in gender-based violence cases against women, despite the limited capacity for prevention and management (Komnas Perempuan, 2022b).

In Tulungagung Regency, there is an annual increase in cases of gender-based violence. By mid-2022, the Tulungagung Police had registered 51 cases of violence against women and children. The number has increased, with 56 cases in 2021 and 45 in 2020. A detailed analysis of the existing cases reveals that 70% of them are cases of sexual violence against women and children (Perdana, 2020). The reality of cases can be far greater than the data reported. Many cases go unreported due to various factors that act as obstacles for victims in reporting the incidents. Primarily, victims regard the violence they experience as a private matter within the household and are reluctant to disclose it to the public. Secondly, women who have been subjected to violence are often unaware of the processes by which they can formally document such incidents. Thirdly, gender power relations play a significant role in this issue.

The perpetrators and victims of gender-based violence are indiscriminate in terms of age, gender, religion, ethnicity, social status, economic status, and education level. The National Commission on Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan) observed that forms of gender-based violence experienced by women occurred in educational institutions from 2015 to 2021 and were dominated by sexual violence, which reached 87.91%, with the majority, 35%, occurring in universities (Komnas Perempuan, 2022a). The prevalence of sexual violence in higher education is substantiated by survey data from the Directorate General of Higher Education, Research and Technology (Ditjen Diktiristek) in 2020, which revealed that 77% of educators in higher education acknowledged the occurrence of sexual violence in the university environment. The most prevalent form of sexual violence experienced by victims is sexual harassment (Haryadi, 2021). To illustrate this point, consider the case of sexual violence that occurred at the University of Mataram in 2020 (Kompas, 2020). Poltekes Kemenkes Kupang (Abdulah, 2020). Subsequently, the case of violence at IAIN Kediri in 2021 (News, 2021) is also documented.

Students of UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung are also susceptible to victimisation as a result of gender-based violence in both the physical and digital domains. The perpetrators

of gender-based violence are male students and lecturers. It is evident that many victims, predominantly women, lack awareness regarding the appropriate courses of action to be taken when confronted with instances of gender-based violence. The absence of a designated sexual harassment help centre at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung has a detrimental impact on victims of gender-based violence, as it hinders access to assistance and protection.

Several forms of gender-based violence have been identified, including sexual violence, psychological violence, physical violence, economic neglect, and harmful practices (Konsorsium Locally Led Disaster Preparedness and Protection (LLDPP) Plan Indonesia, [2022](#)). The primary factors contributing to the prevalence of gender-based violence include a deficiency in legal comprehension and awareness, entrenched patriarchal norms, and the prevailing economic disadvantage (Sutiawati & Mappaselleng, [2020](#)). Consequently, enhancing public legal awareness through various initiatives is necessary. Educational institutions, religious organisations, and community organisations are instrumental in cultivating legal awareness among citizens.

The government has largely accomplished its responsibility in addressing and monitoring the issue of violence against women with the enactment of Law No. 12 of 2022 on the Crime of Sexual Violence, colloquially referred to as the UU TPKS. The UU TPKS is a crucial component in the efforts to address and prevent sexual violence in Indonesia, and it aims to provide justice and recovery for its victims. However, the law has not yet been fully implemented in handling cases of sexual violence. This delay in implementation is primarily due to the fact that law enforcement officials have not prioritised the paradigm of victim protection when handling cases of sexual violence (Zahrah, [2022](#)).

A considerable body of research has been dedicated to the implementation of service-based research on the elimination of gender-based violence by numerous researchers and gender observers. There are several studies that, in some aspects, have close ties with this service. For instance, Langingi, dkk. ([2020](#)), Pramudini, dkk. ([2021](#)), Anas and Haedariah ([2022](#)), Kharima and Zaky ([2023](#)), and Sugiyanto and Zahra's research ([2023](#)) found that following a series of discussions, training, religious education, and mentoring, the participants gained an understanding of gender-based violence and how to prevent it, in a way that creates a spiritual environment and promotes equitable treatment of students. Astuti's research ([2023](#)) identified a foothold in the initial stage of introducing gender-based violence. Concurrently, Daulay et.al ([2023](#)) have identified a perspective on gender equality and the internalization of social practices concerning gender relations within the school environment. The fundamental difference between these studies and the present research lies in the location, scope of service, and service community. Moreover, the community services that have been implemented in previous research are predominantly confined to prevention initiatives. Conversely, the strategy that the team will implement under scrutiny in this study encompasses the handling and prevention of gender-based violence against women.

In order to prevent violent behaviour in higher education, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has released Guidelines and Technical Guidelines for the Prevention and Management of Sexual Violence at Islamic Universities (PTKI). These guidelines are outlined in the Decree of the

Director General of Islamic Education (Dirjend Pendis) of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag) Number 5494 of 2019, then in Decree of the Director of Pendis Number 1143 of 2024. Decree of the Rector then adopted this Decree. These guidelines led to the establishment the Task Force for the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence (SATGAS PPKS) at State Islamic University Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung (UIN SATU) in August 2024. However, the UIN SATU Satgas PPKS has not been able to start its programs because it lacks funding and support from the Legal Aid Agency for both victims and the task force itself.

The aforementioned reality has prompted the Service Team to undertake initiatives aimed at eradicating gender-based violence against women within the purview of the UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung campus. Gender-based violence must be eradicated as a matter of concern for human rights. The prevailing traditional values that perpetuate gender-based violence need to be changed. Within the Indonesian socio-cultural context, it is imperative to recognise women as equal to men and to ensure the provision of legal protection for their rights as human beings.

The objective of this service program is to facilitate the development of an understanding and awareness of the law among students, to prevent all acts of gender-based violence. The immediate impact of this initiative is expected to be the prevention of sexual violence against students at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. In the long term, the program's contributions could facilitate the establishment of a safe, just, and prosperous society.

Methods

The implementation of this community service employed the Participatory Action Research (PAR) method, which involves the implementation of research aimed at identifying problems and applying information to address these issues. PAR is a subtype of action research, defined as a philosophical approach that acknowledges the necessity for the community or group under study to participate in the design and implementation of the entire research process (McNiff & Whitehead, 2002). The PAR approach synthesizes participatory and action research, distinguished by recurrent cycles as shown in [Figure 1](#).

The service team utilized the PAR method to facilitate discussions and educational initiatives to empower the student community to identify and address latent potential (Daulay & Sukarja, 2023). It is anticipated that the service team will be able to carry out activities as a parasitic partnership for service partners at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung as subjects during the service process.

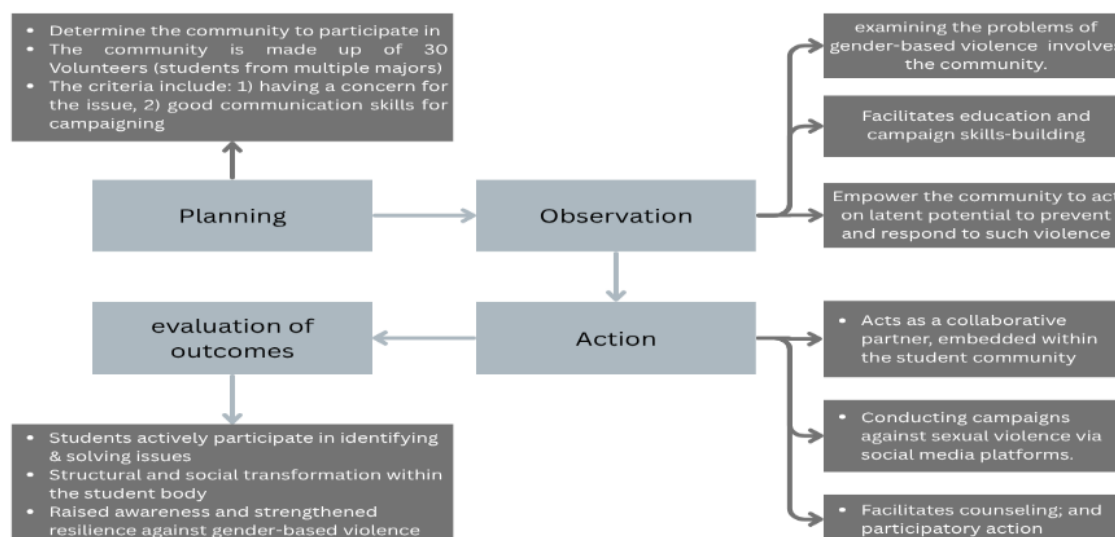


Figure 1. The stages of the community service program using PAR

Result and Discussion

To prevent and address gender-based violence on the campus of UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, the service team, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, has implemented a series of activities designed to empower students as agents of change through legal education at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung.

Pre-Research Activities

Before the program's implementation, the service team conducted a Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The objective of this FGD was to identify the problems and causes of gender-based violence in the UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung environment and find alternative solutions. The FGD activities were conducted on 21 August 2024 in collaboration with the Satgas PPKS team and students. The participatory approach in this activity utilized various methods, including discussion, dialogue, brainstorming, and sharing personal experiences.

The findings of this Focus Group Discussion (FGD) indicate that issues of gender-based violence occurring among students at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung can be identified, such as the forms of violence, contributing factors, and the resulting impacts. Gender-based violence commonly experienced by students at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung take the form of sexual harassment, including the following: 1) The sexualizing jokes targeting the victim, 2) The staring of the victim with sexual and/or uncomfortable connotations, 3) The harassment of the victim's body, 4) The touching, rubbing, fingering and holding of the victim's body parts, 5) The transmitting sexually suggestive messages, jokes, and images via WhatsApp, 6) The forcing of the victim to send personal photos via whatsapp with the threat of poor grades if the order is not fulfilled.

The perpetrators of sexual violence are predominantly male students and lecturers. In contrast, female students who are subjected to sexual harassment often lack the courage to report these incidents. This reluctance is further compounded when the perpetrators are

lecturers, as victims fear retribution from those in positions of authority. The fear of negative consequences, such as poor grades or failure in courses, further hinders the reporting of sexual violence. Furthermore, other students who are aware of cases of sexual violence experienced by victims are often unaware of the appropriate steps to be taken and the relevant reporting mechanisms. Consequently, students who are victims of sexual harassment are not receiving the treatment and protection they require. Furthermore, the UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung has not facilitated a sexual violence help centre.

Following the identification of the problem of sexual violence and its causes, it was mutually agreed that Socialization and capacity building on sexual violence prevention and handling in the university environment are required. After this, the service team undertook program planning based on the needs assessment. Recruiting program participants was conducted openly through social media to identify students who could assume a role as activists against gender-based violence on the UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung campus. The recruitment process was conducted transparently using Google Forms, reaching students across four faculties at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. Participants were determined based on several predetermined criteria, which are: (a) active students in semesters 3 and 5 of UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung; (b) recommendation from the Vice Dean for Student Affairs and Cooperation; (c) demonstrated interest, ability, and commitment to collaborate in a team to prevent and address sexual violence on campus; and (d) no history of violence, including sexual violence. A total of 30 program participants have been selected based on their compliance with the predetermined criteria.

Implementation

To cultivate a secure university environment and forestall sexual violence, the community service team collaborated with the Task Force for the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence (Satgas PPKS) UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, which was newly constituted in August 2024, to hold counselling and capacity-building activities for Satgas PPKS volunteers for UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung students. The program was conducted over two days, from 24th to 25th September 2024. The participants were student representatives from various faculties and Satgas PPKS volunteers of the UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung.

On day one (24 September 2024), the participants were administered a pre-test to ascertain their level of understanding of gender-based violence before delivering the training materials. The results of the pre-test indicated that, generally, the training participants lacked a comprehensive understanding of the various forms of gender-based violence and the mechanisms for its prevention and management.

Moreover, the material delivery session was divided into two sessions (see [Figure 2](#)). In the initial session, the subject of discussion was the phenomenon of gender-based violence against women in the context of Islamic universities, with the presentation being led by the chairman of the Tulungagung Regency Education Commission. The participants were provided with a comprehensive understanding of gender-based violence that frequently occurs in the university environment, including the various forms of gender-based violence, the factors that

contribute to the widespread violence against women, the legal system for protecting victims of violence, and the measures that can be implemented to prevent violence.

In the second session, material on Strategies for Preventing and Addressing Sexual Violence in the Environment of Islamic universities was presented by a lawyer from Tulungagung. This material was given to equip students with various effective prevention strategies, ranging from legal awareness campaigns to appropriate reporting mechanisms. With this new knowledge and skills, students are expected to be able to support victims of sexual violence and play an active role in creating a campus culture that is safe, comfortable, and free from sexual violence.



Figure 2. First Day of Training

In these two sessions, each participant was invited to share a single instance of sexual violence that they had either personally experienced or come across within the student of UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. Additionally, participants were prompted to offer their insights on these cases and propose potential initiatives they could undertake as ambassadors to combat sexual violence on campus. Following the conclusion of the session, the participants were administered a post-test on gender-based violence to assess their comprehension after the presentation of the material across two sessions. The results of the post-test revealed an enhancement in the understanding of program participants concerning gender-based violence and effective prevention strategies. This finding indicates that the assistance activities carried out by the service team are effective in raising awareness about the necessity of education about the prevention and handling of sexual violence as a means to eliminate sexual violence in the campus environment.

Day two, on 25 October 2024, the first session was held, which comprised a training workshop to create educational content on preventing sexual violence in universities (see [Figure 3](#)). The activity was overseen by the head of the Tulungagung Sumbergempol Ansor who has digital competence, and the results of the activity were published in the form of pamphlets, posters, and videos that can be used as a tool for disseminating information about sexual violence prevention measures on campus.



Figure 3. Second Day of Training

The following elements must be present in pamphlets, posters, and videos: 1) a concise yet powerful description, along with information on what sexual violence is, examples of cases, and contact information. 2) attractive images are to be used, unique and brightly coloured graphic design to ensure the message is well received. 3) contact information for institutions that can encourage support and assistance for victims of sexual violence, such as the Satgas PPKS of UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. The appearance of the resulting pamphlets is shown in [Figure 4](#).



Figure 4. Participants Created-Pamphlets

In the second session, the Satgas PPKS volunteers were established with the following tasks: 1) to disseminate and socialise information regarding the prevention and handling of sexual violence among students through pamphlets, posters, and anti-sexual violence videos; 2) to foster awareness of anti-violence in the student environment; and 3) to provide advocacy to victims of sexual violence.



Figure 5. PPKS Volunteer

The organisational structure of the PPKS volunteer team comprises the following divisions: coordination, secretary, media, and preventive (see Figure 5). The establishment of this volunteer team is predicated on the expectation that it will serve as a solution to prevent and overcome cases of sexual violence in the environment of UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. The team has been trained in the prevention and management of sexual violence, and they have assisted victims of sexual violence. In this service program, the team handled two cases of sexual violence experienced by two students of the Faculty of Sharia and Legal Sciences. The service team's assistance to victims of sexual violence is currently focused on providing counselling, with the primary objectives of strengthening and providing a sense of security for the victim, disseminating information regarding the victim's rights to obtain protection, and facilitating coordination with the authorised unit, which is the Satgas PPKS of UIN SATU Tulungagung.

Evaluation

Based on the program's implementation, participants gained new information, particularly regarding the types of sexual violence and strategies for its prevention and handling in higher education. The results of the pre-test and post-test of the participants of the community service program were then analysed using a descriptive test to determine the average results of students' understanding and legal awareness of the prevention and handling of sexual violence. Table 1 shows the average increase in understanding and legal awareness of sexual violence.

Table 1. The result of Pre-Test and Post-Test

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation
Pre-test	30	45	76	1924	64,13	1,240	6,791
Post-test	30	80	90	2533	84,43	0,535	2,932
Valid N (listwise)	30						

Table 1 above illustrates that the mean result of participants prior to the socialisation and capacity building activities was 64.13 out of 30. Following the socialisation and capacity-building activities, the mean score increased to 84.43. This increase indicates the efficacy of the socialisation and capacity-building activities in preventing and addressing sexual violence in higher education. The program's success can be seen from the indicators shown by several outputs from the program's implementation, including: 1) increased students' knowledge and understanding of the prevention and management of sexual violence on campus. This is indicative of an increased awareness that sexual violence is a social problem rather than an individual one. 2) There was an increase in students' legal awareness regarding the prevention of sexual violence on campus and understanding of the procedures to be followed to obtain protection if they experience sexual violence. 3) Increased legal awareness of students regarding the prevention and management of sexual violence on campus to assist their peers in the event of sexual violence within the university environment, 4) The establishment of a community that acts as an activist for the anti-violence movement on campus.

The program participants were also equipped with the knowledge and skills to create content on the prevention and handling of sexual violence. Following participation in counselling and education on the prevention and management of sexual violence, program participants can contribute to the advancement of the education sector by creating engaging content and promoting student awareness of the significance of preventing and managing violence within higher education.

Strategies for Preventing and Addressing Gender-Based Violence on Campus

Sexual violence is an act that degrades the degree and dignity of humanity and which is still widely found today. This egregious form of criminality can be perpetrated by any individual, at any moment, and in any location, particularly universities, and may even be perpetrated by the role models within these institutions. The consequences of sexual violence are far-reaching, affecting victims physically, psychologically, and sociologically. Consequently, it is incumbent upon us to collectively eradicate sexual violence.

The community service team plays a pivotal role in addressing and preventing sexual violence against students of UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. The prevention activities carried out in this service are in the form of socialisation and capacity building, which include legal counselling and educational content training on preventing and handling sexual violence. The overarching objective of this program is to empower students as agents of change, thereby enabling them to prevent and address cases of sexual violence within the university environment. The program participants were furnished with a comprehensive understanding of gender-based violence that frequently occurs in higher education. Furthermore, they were equipped with a plethora of effective prevention strategies, ranging from awareness campaigns to appropriate reporting mechanisms. It is anticipated that the integration of newfound knowledge and the cultivation of transferable skills will empower program participants to provide meaningful support to victims of sexual violence and assume an active role in the establishment

of a university environment characterised by safety, comfort, and the absence of sexual violence.

Sexual violence, which predominantly affects female victims, necessitates protection from both the state and society at large. As articulated in Articles 66 and 67 of Law No. 22 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence, victims of sexual violence are entitled to treatment, protection, and recovery. Following the provisions stipulated within the framework of the Law, the designated service team is entrusted with the responsibility of safeguarding and managing cases of sexual violence within the jurisdiction of UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. Following the delivery of educational programs aimed at the prevention of sexual violence, the service team proceeded to assist victims of sexual violence. In this capacity, the service team established a volunteer companion group to provide advocacy for cases of sexual violence experienced by students of UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung.

The function of the student companion volunteers is to provide advocacy for victims of sexual violence. The advocacy process involves furnishing victims with information regarding their rights to obtain protection and accompaniment when reporting cases of sexual violence. In this service activity, the service team has handled two cases of sexual violence that occurred to female students in the form of sexual harassment experienced by these two female students, including verbal, physical, and online forms of abuse perpetrated by male lecturers.

In the initial instance, the victim was subjected to objectionable treatment by the perpetrator, a lecturer in a specific course. The perpetrator frequently employed sexualised language (teasing) towards the victim, and on one occasion, made physical contact and rubbed the victim's thigh in a classroom with the door closed. The incident induced feelings of anxiety and fear in the victim, who was reluctant to report the incident to other faculty members or officials. The victim experienced a state of constant anxiety and trepidation whenever she attempted to attend class. The sexual violence experienced by the victim had a detrimental effect on her academic performance. This finding aligns with the extant research that demonstrates a link between sexual violence and adverse outcomes, including but not limited to: diminished academic performance, withdrawal from educational institutions, and learning difficulties (Molstad & Weinhardt, 2021). The victim's feelings of anxiety and fear led to isolation from her peers. Consequently, the victim disclosed her experiences of sexual harassment to a close friend, who subsequently referred her to one of the service team's lecturers.

In the second case, the victim experienced online sexual violence at the hands of the same lecturer as in the first case. The perpetrator coerced the victim to transmit personal photographs via the instant messaging application WhatsApp, with the threat that failure to comply would result in a grade of C being awarded. The motivation behind the victim's compliance was the desire to avoid a poor grade, which was a significant factor in the perpetrator's coercive actions. Following the transmission of these images, the perpetrator lauded the victim's physical attractiveness and assured her that she would receive an A grade. The lecturer's actions instilled a sense of discomfort and trepidation in the victim, manifesting as a state of apprehension whenever she attended the lecturer's class. The victim subsequently

conveyed her ordeal to the service team, comprising individuals who also taught in the same class as the perpetrator.

In overcoming these two cases, the service team provided counselling to victims of sexual violence, so that victims felt secure and encouraged to disclose their experiences. The service team also informed victims about their rights to obtain protection and facilitated coordination with the authorised unit, namely the recently established Satgas PPKS of UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. Furthermore, the service team reported cases of violence experienced by students of the Faculty of Sharia and Legal Sciences to faculty leaders, then followed up by issuing a warning to the perpetrator.

Sexual violence against students is a grave violation that undermines fundamental human dignity, resulting in a range of detrimental physical, psychological, and social consequences. In instances of sexual violence within higher education institutions, strategic initiatives are imperative to eradicate this issue through the implementation of legal education programs and the provision of support to victims. Promoting legal awareness and prevention among students is a strategic approach to fostering a secure and conducive higher education environment, while ensuring women's rights and dignity on campus (Tarzia & Brooks et al. 2023).

In the context of efforts to prevent sexual violence, the social learning theory proposed by Albert Bandura posits that individual behaviour is shaped by observations of the surrounding environment (Boone & Reilly et al., 1977). In this case, the campus environment implements an educational program on sexual violence that aims to help provide students with a better understanding of the issue and what can be done to reject sexual violence behaviour. Through socialisation and training, students are positioned as agents of change to support a safe campus environment for women.

The application of Law Number 12 of 2022 on Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence (UU TPKS) in handling cases of sexual violence in higher education can be linked to the theory of legal certainty. The aforementioned theory posits that the law functions as a safeguard for vulnerable individuals, including victims of violence. In this sense, the law is not merely a legislative framework but is consistently implemented to ensure security and justice (Rahardjo, 2009). Establishing a volunteer team to address cases of gender-based violence within the student community at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung indicates community empowerment theory. The volunteer team's involvement in advocating for the victims of sexual violence is a crucial aspect of the community-based approach, which emphasises the provision of moral and psychological support (Hu and Zhu, 2020)

The existence of sexual violence cases in the campus environment involving power authorities or lecturers, in social domination theory, explains that the power structure in the organisation can act as a barrier for individuals who do not have the power to seek justice (Agusta, 2008). Consequently, academic institutions must establish reporting mechanisms that guarantee security and confidentiality, thereby ensuring the protection of victims and preventing academic threats and psychological pressure. Furthermore, the concept of trauma theory of victim recovery is an effort of psychological and social support, which is an essential value in

victim recovery efforts (Pitria & Karneli, 2024). The service team provides counselling to victims, intending to eliminate trauma and prepare them to resume their lives in a meaningful way.

Strategy Implications for the Legal Awareness of Students on Gender Based Violence

Education on the prevention and management of sexual violence for students at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung is imperative, given the prevalence of sexual violence cases within the university environment. It is imperative to continue fostering a collaborative environment among students, empowering them to assume a proactive role in combating violence on campus. A key strategy to prevent gender-based violence against students in the university environment is to provide education and raise legal awareness (Zhafarina & Anditya, 2022). Consequently, it is imperative for students to receive education on the prevention of sexual violence.

Establishing a volunteer team within this service is anticipated to be a sustainable measure and a source of new knowledge for students, with the potential to impact the reduction of sexual violence on campus. This assertion is supported by the discourse during the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) session with UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung students. The FGD revealed that there have been numerous incidents of sexual violence experienced by students, perpetrated by both male students and lecturers. The victims of such crimes often choose to remain silent, since they are often in an inferior and subordinated position when the perpetrators are lecturers and campus officials, as the victim may fear retaliation from the perpetrator or adverse consequences, such as poor academic performance or failure in the course. Concomitantly, peers who become aware of such incidents often lack comprehension regarding the appropriate course of action. Consequently, there is an imperative for effective interventions to be implemented with the dual objectives of preventing and addressing cases of sexual violence.

The presence of a volunteer team can serve as a bridge for victims who feel afraid or uncomfortable reporting to the authorities. With this support, victims are expected to feel more courageous to speak up and report in order to achieve clear legal protection. In general, the preventive programme for sexual violence and the implementation of the law at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung not only increase students' awareness of the law but also build a safe and friendly campus culture. This education will also help create an environment where students can actively contribute to preventing and addressing gender-based violence. Education on legal rights, volunteer empowerment, and the provision of a safe reporting system are important steps that need to be continuously synergised to achieve a university environment free from sexual violence and gender-based discrimination.

A total of 26 peer volunteers were selected from 30 people, equipped with the following criteria: (1) A robust comprehension of sexual violence prevention and management; (2) Active involvement in counselling and capacity building activities; (3) Effective communication skills; (4) The capacity to utilise information technology to create content on sexual violence prevention; (5) The ability to influence others. The selection criteria were determined through monitoring and evaluation, which was conducted during the socialisation and capacity-building

process of PPKS volunteers. The selected volunteers will be given skills in campaigning for the prevention and handling of sexual violence and advocating for victims of sexual violence.

The issue of online gender violence is a matter of pressing concern that must be addressed in the university environment, including at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. The results of the community service indicate that the forms of violence that occur at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung include sexual harassment and threats of sexual violence through social media. This phenomenon invariably exerts a profound psychological impact on its victims, particularly when the perpetrator holds a position of authority within the university, such as a lecturer or a leader. As a result, a significant number of victims do not report incidents due to concerns regarding the potential academic or social repercussions they may encounter. Consequently, the provision of education on the identification and management of gender-based violence is imperative to curtail the occurrence of sexual violence cases on campus and to ensure the protection of students' rights and well-being (Ardiansyah et al. [2023](#)).

On the legal aspect, Indonesia has several regulations related to gender-based violence, both online and offline, as stipulated in Law Number 12 of 2002 concerning the Crime of Sexual Violence. This legislation establishes a legal framework for law enforcement agencies to act on cases of sexual violence (Nurisman, [2022](#)). In the context of online gender-based violence, the Electronic Information and Transaction Law (UU ITE) can be utilised to prosecute perpetrators (Safela & Mahmud, [2024](#)). However, the lack of awareness regarding this legislation hinders students' ability to utilise the available legal mechanisms. To address this gap in understanding, a collaborative effort between the campus community and students is crucial to enhance awareness of existing legal safeguards.

Conclusion

This Community Service was undertaken in response to the prevalence of sexual violence cases among students at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. Through this program, students are equipped with an understanding and skills in the prevention and handling of sexual violence, enabling them to contribute to reducing the incidence of sexual violence on campus. Overall, the preventive and handling taken by the team have demonstrated a multidisciplinary approach, integrating social theory, law, and psychology to break the chain of sexual violence within the campus environment. Therefore, the synergy between legal education, community empowerment, and advocacy can create a safe space for students to pursue their education. Peer volunteers can serve as an alternative solution for preventing acts of sexual violence, as well as for reducing its prevalence in the university environment. Given this, it is necessary to recommend the optimization of volunteers in the prevention and handling of sexual violence at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung.

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