



The dilemma of a safe campus: Challenges in preventing and dealing with sexual violence in Indonesian universities

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on identifying obstacles, challenges in preventing and dealing with sexual violence on campus, based on case studies on three campuses in the Greater Jakarta region of Indonesia. The methods used included observation, FGD, interviews, and documentation, with analysis using Publish or Perish, Vos Viewer, and NVivo. The findings of this study show that the issue of sexual violence is a multidimensional and challenging issue: sexual violence is seen as a sensitive issue due to gender stigma; policy implementation needs to pay attention to cultural norms, and social order; campus response is not fast; lack of support of facilities and infrastructure, funds, time and workload, human resources; uneven socialization; Most victims have a hard time proving a case; the perpetrator has a higher power relationship than the victim; other cases of sexual violence: perpetrators of violence by the victim's closest people, cases that occur outside of Tridharma activities, gender-based violence in the digital realm, involving other institutions. Strategies to deal with obstacles and challenges can be carried out in collaboration with all parties (academics, campuses, government, Komnas Perempuan, and so on) in realizing a campus that is safe from the practice of sexual violence.

Keywords: barriers, challenges, sexual violence, higher education

Article history

Received:

17 December 2024

Revised:

29 May 2025

Accepted:

04 September 2025

Published:

01 February 2026

Citation (APA Style): Nursyifa, A., Somantri, G. R., & Seda, F. S. S. E. (2026). The dilemma of a safe campus: Challenges in preventing and dealing with sexual violence in Indonesian universities. *Cakrawala Pendidikan: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan*, 45(1), pp.71-83. DOI <https://doi.org/10.21831/cp.v45i1.85752>

INTRODUCTION

Sexual violence is a serious threat in contemporary society, especially when it occurs in an educational environment that ideally serves as a safe haven from various forms of violence. Sexual violence on campus not only destroys the sense of security of the academic community but also hinders the learning process and the development of academic potential. This phenomenon has become a global issue that has received widespread attention, including in the academic realm. Harris (2019) shows that sexual violence in universities has emerged as a crucial problem in recent years and has become the focus of attention of various higher education institutions in the world. In daily practice, there are problems that become obstacles to the implementation of policies in providing a sense of security from sexual violence on campus. Therefore, it is important to examine this problem so that the academic community feels safe, fair, and zero tolerance from various forms of violence.

The issue of sexual violence has become a global issue and even occurs in the higher education environment in Indonesia. In various universities around the world, this issue has become an important concern along with the increasing reports of survey results and research findings. International surveys show that women aged 18–24 are at risk of developing it; even 1 in 5 women have been victims of violence; 1 in 4 of them have reported the case; and 1 in 20 students admitted to experiencing sexual violence since they first entered college; 1 in 3 female students have been a victim of sexual violence (Bondestam & Lundqvist, 2020; Cantor et al., 2020;

Korman et al.,2017;Krebs et al.,2016; Perkins & Warner, 2017;Powell, 2022; Smith et al., 2022; Wamboldt et al., 2019). Similar findings were also found in a global study covering 25 countries, including the Asian region, which highlighted the high rate of sexual violence on campus (Pengpid & Peltzer, 2020). In Indonesia, through the Ministry of Education, quoted in the Komnas Perempuan (2024) report, which cites data from the Ministry of Education, noted that from 2021 to February 2024 there were 284 cases of violence in universities, with 128 cases of sexual violence. The data confirms that this case is not an individual phenomenon but has become a crucial and systemic problem that demands mutual attention and solutions.

As a form of state responsibility in protecting the academic community from the dangers of sexual violence, the Indonesian government has initiated a progressive policy through Permendikbud No. 30 of 2021 concerning the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence in Higher Education (Ministry of Education, 2021).This policy is strengthened by the presence of derivative regulations in the form of Regulation No. 17 of 2022, which contains technical references for the implementation of the Permendikbud Ristek (Ministry of Education, 2022).These two regulations are an important legal foundation in building a protection system in higher education that is more responsive and victim-perspectived. The implementation of this regulation is starting to show concrete results. Since the beginning of the regulation being issued until February 2024, 760 task forces have been formed in 93 state universities and 67 private universities. In addition, there are 269 cases in the handling process, and 229 cases have been decided with sanctions that vary from light, moderate, to severe (Komnas Perempuan, 2024). Although these figures show progress in handling sexual violence, critical evaluation of the effectiveness of these policies is still needed, including obstacles and challenges in implementation on campus.

This research adopts a gender structuring perspective, as in the view of Giddens (2016) structures and agents interact with each other in creating social reality; have a reciprocal role in social practice. This relationship is important to examine how structural barriers and the role of the academic community contribute to the barrier; the practice of power relations, patriarchal norms, and institutional culture ignore sexual violence that is produced and reproduced in the daily practices of the academic community. In line with Fielding-Miller et al (2021) violence is related to the inequality of power relations, male dominance in patriarchal cultures, so that it can cause women's vulnerability to violence. In addition, the theory of Institutional Betrayal (Adams-Clark et al.,2024; C. Smith & Freyd, 2014) explains that institutions that are supposed to protect individuals actually fail to act and even perpetuate losses. Sexual violence can be an institution's failure to create safety on campus.

This research highlights the problems in the implementation of Permendikbud No. 30 of 2021, although normatively it already has a legal basis, in its implementation it still faces various obstacles on various campuses. Some of the problems encountered on campus include lack of supporting facilities and infrastructure; limited human resources; lack of understanding of the academic community; and various obstacles, both structural and from the academic community, that can hinder the process of transforming the ideal campus culture in accordance with the expectations of being safe and free from violence. Therefore, the purpose of this study seeks to identify obstacles and challenges in efforts to prevent and deal with various forms of sexual violence on campus. By focusing on the dynamics of sexual violence on campus, this study is expected to contribute empirical novelty and become a reference for governments, universities, and related institutions in designing strategies to create a learning environment that is safe, inclusive, and free from various manifestations of violence.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method approach; this is because the researcher wants to understand in depth the results of research on the issue of sexual violence on campus. In accordance with the opinion of Creswell & Creswell (2018) qualitative research aims to explore the meaning of researchers' experiences in finding problem-solving solutions. A single case study was used in the research, specifically focusing on the issue of violence on campus. The

delimitation of this study is limited to problems in three campuses in the Greater Jakarta area of Indonesia, consisting of: campus X, campus Y, and campus Z. The three campuses have criteria for implementing regulations; have a task force; The implementation of the program has been running. This study started from 2023 to 2024, with a total of 29 participants, including: lecturers, students, education staff, Task Force, Komnas Perempuan, and the Ministry of Education.

Data were collected through observation activities in three higher education institutions, analysis of documentation sourced from ten-year scientific journals (2013-2023) processed using software from the VOSviewer Publish or Perish application, and in-depth interviews with all participants whose results were analyzed using Nvivo. This research has received approval from the Research Ethics Commission issued by Yogyakarta State University. Data validation uses data triangulation techniques from research data sources, namely interviews, observations, and documentation. The analysis process carried out includes reducing all data, presenting data, and drawing research conclusions about obstacles and challenges in providing a safe campus free from sexual violence.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Barriers are considered as obstacles or obstacles that can interfere with the process of implementing campus policies in an effort to prevent and deal with violence. Meanwhile, challenges can be understood as conditions that demand increased capacity or ability to overcome these problems. The focus of this research looks at the dilemma of policy implementation to present a safe campus, so it is necessary to face various obstacles and challenges that exist. Previous research on sexual violence on campus (Fitri et al., 2021; Hermawati et al., 2023; Suardi et al., 2023) are still limited to discussing the challenges of the problem of sexual violence, so the results of this research are an empirical novelty that specifically discusses the issue in Indonesia.

The researcher first conducted a literature study to find a gap in the novelty of the issue raised. The researcher collected various literature from Scopus and Google Scholar in the last ten years (2013-2023), the researcher used bibliometrics with Publish or Perish and VOSviewer. Keywords used to search for literature include: "Challenge", "Sexual Violence", "Higher Education". Based on the search results, 71 articles from Scopus were obtained that specifically discussed this matter. More details will be discussed in Figure 1.

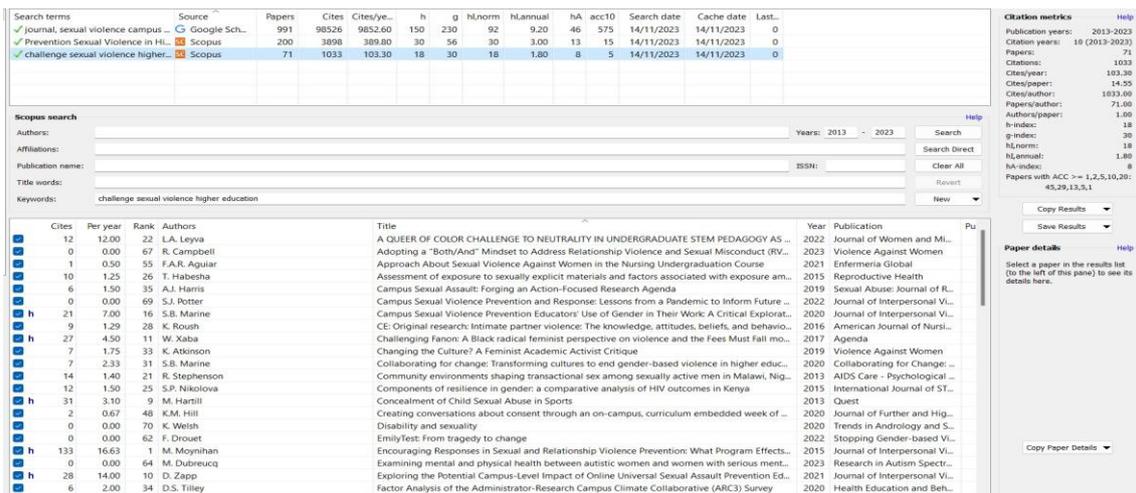


Figure 1. Research Results Processed Using Publish or Perish

Figure 1 presents the results of data that have been analyzed using Publish or Perish from previous studies published in the last ten years, with special screening on the theme of violence. From the results of the Scopus data-based literature, 71 papers were found related to the research theme. The articles have been cited 1033 times; with an H-index value of 18, G-index 30; hI-norm 18; hI-Annual 1.80; hA index of 8. These findings indicate that this issue is still relatively

limited to be discussed by previous researchers. Therefore, this topic opens up novelty opportunities in this study.

The data from the research from Publish or Perish was then processed by the researcher using VOSviewer. Data processing from previous research literature review using VOSviewer to show important themes that can be discussed in the research. This can be shown in the visualization results of Figure 2.

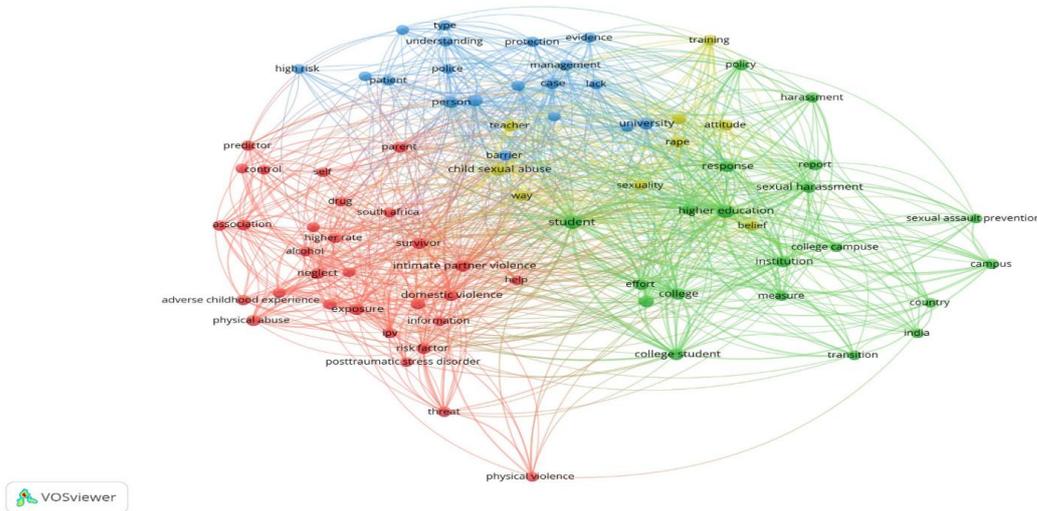


Figure 2. Research Results Processed to See Network Visualization

Figure 2 presents a Network Visualization that illustrates the relationship between keywords in this study. The word "higher education" is related to: "violence, sexuality, harassment, rape, policy, and training", indicating the complexity and multidimensionality of this issue. This network not only reflects existing problems, but focuses on research. These findings reinforce the importance of new scientific contributions, considering the lack of comprehensive research in this domain. This visualization also emphasizes the urgency and position of researchers in expanding academic discourse related to sexual violence on campus, especially in Indonesia. Furthermore, in figure 3, the researcher analyzed interview data using Nvivo 12 Plus to produce thematic visualizations that reveal problem patterns so that they become the basis for the preparation of relevant solutions.

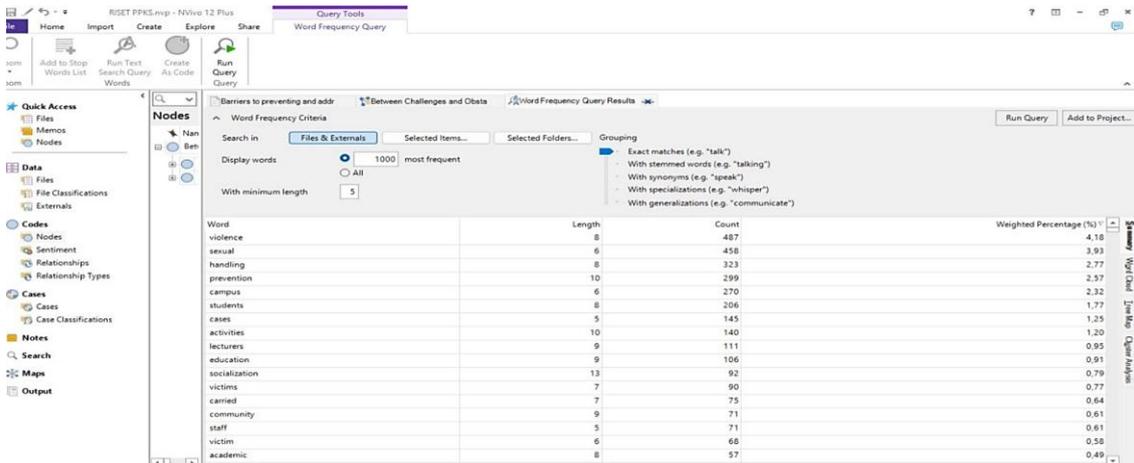


Figure 3. Summary of the results of the Research Interview Processed Using Nvivo 12 Plus

Figure 5 shows the results of the Project Map from the research, as a reference to grouping the main findings based on the crucial themes that emerged from the field interview data, which illustrates the complexity of the problems faced by higher education institutions in responding to sexual violence. There are eight key findings that stand out: 1) Lack of case reporting; 2) Implementation does not pay attention to policy elements, norm values, culture, and social order; 3) Lack of agility in responding to violence; 4) Lack of facilities; funding; time limitations; and human resources; 5) Socialization that does not reach the entire campus community; 6) Lack of strong evidence of sexual violence; 7) The perpetrator has a higher power relationship than the victim who comes from a certain circle; 8) Other cases of sexual violence.

Officially, data show that the number of cases of sexual violence reported to campuses remains limited. Interview data indicate that many victims do not proceed with formal reporting. In various cases, victims do not continue with reporting due to concerns related to social stigma, academic consequences, and potential psychological or social pressure after disclosure.

An analysis of institutional policies reveals the absence of explicit regulations governing interactions within the academic community. The lack of specific regulations governing interactions between members of the academic community, in various contexts, has been shown to create a serious gap. The absence of clear guidelines leads to a vacuum of responsibility and opens up space for violence to occur without effective protection mechanisms. Each campus's policies are merely adjusted to the values of social norms, local culture, and the prevailing social order.

Following the absence of clear regulatory frameworks, the findings indicate constraints in institutional responsiveness to cases of sexual violence. There is limited institutional readiness in responding to cases in a timely and transparent manner. The data indicate that institutional responses are often cautious, particularly in relation to reputational considerations. In addition, the absence of emergency response mechanisms, accessible reporting systems, and available psychosocial support is evident across cases and institutions.

The findings also identify limitations in institutional resources that support the handling of sexual violence cases. Campuses generally do not yet have safe and private consultation or examination rooms for victims. This is exacerbated by budget constraints. The amount of funding affects the operations of the task force, including limited compensation, facilities, and outreach activities. Furthermore, the availability of trained human resources, such as experts in psychology, law, and sociology, remains limited. The findings also indicate that time is a constraint. Many task force members hold multiple roles within the institution, preventing them from working optimally on a single case.

The findings of this study indicate that the dissemination of information related to sexual violence prevention has not reached all members of the academic community. This reveals differences in the level of understanding regarding sexual violence among members of the academic community. Some participants reported limited knowledge about what constitutes sexual violence and the available institutional response mechanisms.

The research findings indicate limitations in the availability of strong evidence in handling these sexual violence cases. In various cases, difficulties in evidence collection lead to delays or even termination of the case processing. According to participants, the greatest challenge is when the perpetrator cannot be clearly identified. This includes cases of social media-based sexual violence that require digital evidence.

The findings also reveal power asymmetries between perpetrators and victims within the campus environment. Perpetrators often occupy positions with higher authority or influence than victims. For example, the perpetrator may be someone in a position with differing institutional status, someone with academic seniority, someone with greater access to resources, and/or someone with social influence within the campus environment.

The findings identify several additional case characteristics that fall outside the main patterns previously described. These characteristics include cases involving personal relationships, incidents occurring outside formal academic activities, gender-based violence, and cases involving individuals from different campus institutions. Interview data also reveal cross-institutional cases, where victims and perpetrators are affiliated with different universities,

thereby creating additional procedural complexities. Digital-based cases further add challenges related to evidence handling and coordination (Campus Task Force X, 2024).

Discussion

In the life of society, sexual issues are seen as a sensitive and taboo topic to be discussed openly, especially in the campus environment. This view has caused many parties to be reluctant to raise or discuss it directly, which ultimately reinforces a culture of silence. As revealed in previous research on the issue of sexuality, it is still considered taboo (Asriani, 2020; Kågesten et al., 2021; Wismayanti et al., 2021); less urgent, too sensitive, and concerned with personal issues (Yusran et al., 2023); is not a problem, male involvement in the program is still limited (Azmat et al., 2023). On the other hand, the risk of getting gender-based violent behavior is experienced by women, even the victim is considered as a perpetrator, considering that the perpetrator's actions do not include sexual violence, women are socially marginalized and cornered (Fielding-Miller et al., 2021). This is in accordance with Moletsane (2023) research, gender violence on campus is triggered by inequality in space, gender identity, and social level. Negative stigma of victims, security concerns, lack of trust in reporting mechanisms; reporting is only normative (Hill & Crofts, 2020). This makes victims of violence unwilling to report to the campus (Khan et al., 2018; Sethi & Ghatak, 2018). Therefore, the importance of sex education with a gender perspective can be started early before pursuing higher education (Jatmikowati et al., 2015). Incorporating education about sexual violence into the campus curriculum is a strategic and transformative step in creating a safe, inclusive, and gender-responsive higher education environment. Lecturers encourage students to think critically, analyze problems, and solve problems in increasing knowledge about sexual violence issues (Herawati & Ermakov, 2022). A change in the mindset of campus policymakers and the entire campus academic community about an equal and gender-fair campus.

The existence of the Minister of Education's regulation on sexual violence on campus is a guideline for higher education policies in implementing these rules in their respective higher education. But on the other hand, the policy needs to be re-analyzed in accordance with cultural values, as well as campus social life (Nengyanti et al., 2023). The 3 campuses that are the focus of this research already have derivative rules about sexual violence but specifically regulating interactions between academic and non-academic academics needs to be strengthened. This can be an obstacle because there are no rules that control the behavior of the academic community. As stated by the Ministry of Education as follows: "Higher education must immediately issue a rector regulation as a derivative rule from a more detailed Ministerial regulation, rules on the value of norms and ethics, rules on rules of conduct for all citizens, of course, these policy rules are adjusted to the culture of each higher education, adjusted to the vision and mission of the campus and maintain the academic dignity of the campus" (Interview with the Ministry of Education, 2024).

Policy rules regarding violence on campus can be the basic foundation for the academic community, as well as a tool of control in interacting and behaving on campus. as Nursyifa et al., (2024) that the entire campus community can comply with campus rules in the form of written and unwritten rules, including: rules regarding operational hours including activities outside campus hours; rules on final project guidance; codes of ethics and codes of conduct; rules on guidelines, guidelines, and operational standards that regulate sexual violence on campus; and so on. The proposed policies as a reference for the implementation of various good practices on campus, including gender-responsive policies, policies on violence, policies on training on handling violence (Richards & Kafonek, 2016). Therefore, it is a challenge in the future in building a campus climate that has implications for programs and policies on sexual violence on campus (Coulter & Rankin, 2020). Recommendations for higher education to create policies to be able to open information about cases of sexual violence (Shields, et al., 2022). Policies from the structure of higher education are also important for a gender perspective, all academic communities, both women and men, get the same rules and programs in an integrated manner so that they can have the potential for greater impact and synergism in sexual violence programs (Orchowski et al., 2020).

Another obstacle experienced is that campuses are not quick to respond to the problems that occur, this is not only caused by the neglect of the institution, but also by the limitations of facilities, infrastructure, funding, human resources, and time. This shows that a solid and comprehensive support system has not been built. Institutional reforms need to include: strengthening policies; provision of facilities and infrastructure; Increasing the capacity of human resources; special budget allocation to run programs including for incentives, even higher education should have a funding source that specifically addresses sexual violence (Quinlan et al., 2016; Mitra et al., 2022); division of work of the campus task force in carrying out dual roles as task forces, lecturers, students, or education personnel. The importance of collaboration with various human resources who have competence in the fields of legal science, psychology, sociology, health, digital forensics; as well as cooperation with external institutions such as: central and regional governments, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, the National Commission on Women, psychologist institutions, legal aid institutions, and so on. Each skill has an important role in dealing with the complexity of this issue, including as a sociologist, we must be able to study complex social changes, the application of laws, policies in higher education, and social movements about sexual violence (Gronert 2019). Strengthening human resource capacity can be done through training, seminars, workshops, and comparative studies between universities to share good practices (Mitra et al., 2022).

Limited human resources are the main challenge in efforts to prevent and handle sexual violence in higher education, because not all campuses have adequate experts. Therefore, cross-disciplinary collaboration with legal experts, psychology, sociology, health, digital forensics, as well as cooperation with external institutions such as Komnas Perempuan, the Ministry of PPPA, the government, and legal aid institutions is needed. Every skill has an important role in dealing with the complexity of this issue, even according to Gronert (2019) that sociologists must be able to study laws, higher education policies, and social movements regarding sexual violence in higher education so that sociologists can contribute scientifically to the study of sexual violence in higher education as well as complex social changes. Strengthening human resource capacity can be done through training, seminars, workshops, and comparative studies between universities to share good practices (Mitra et al., 2022).

The obstacles that often occur in implementation do not reach the entire campus community so that they do not understand the form of violence and even normalize violence. As research conducted by Schwarz et al., (2017) violence is considered a normal thing because the community does not understand it. Therefore, it is important to provide understanding to the entire academic community in a synergistic and sustainable manner. The academic community needs to increase knowledge, dispel myths, reduce stigma, and improve skills to recognize forms of violence (Allen et al., 2023); implicit in the content of the campus curriculum of gender-sensitive courses (Yusran et al., 2023); the formation of non-violent campus communities (Potter et al., 2021; Noer et al., 2024); the academic community can be direct observers who are quick to report (Cares et al., 2015; Evans et al., 2019; Wamboldt et al., 2019; Yule & Grych, 2020; Exner-Cortens & Cummings, 2021); carrying out innovative activities by utilizing social media; and the need to increase quality empirical research (Harris, 2019); through community service activities; as well as various programs in an effort to prevent and deal with cases of violence on campus (Backman et al., 2020; Casey, et.al, 2021; Champion, et.al, 2022; Tarzia et al., 2024).

The problem of sexual violence in higher education has a complex problem. Many victims of sexual violence are unable to present evidence, so this becomes an obstacle in handling cases of sexual violence and imposing sanctions on the perpetrators. Higher education should facilitate victims of sexual violence reporting to the authorities in higher education by guaranteeing the victim's right to continue higher education, providing means to recover the victim's condition by providing psychological assistance to relieve the victim's trauma, and even legal assistance. The importance of higher education providing services for victims of violence (Sabina & Ho, 2014); Peltzer & Pengpid, 2016). Therefore, it is important to make higher education biased towards the victim.

Another challenge of sexual violence is in handling sexual violence if the perpetrator who comes from a certain circle, has a higher power relationship than the victim both socially, economically, educationally, and so on. Giving sanctions to perpetrators is a challenge because both perpetrators and victims can be dissatisfied with the leadership's decision on sanctions recommendations from the sexual violence task force. The government takes part in monitoring higher education leaders in determining sanctions that must be reported periodically, so that if there are complex problems where the perpetrator appeals the administrative sanctions that have been imposed on the perpetrator and also the problem if the perpetrator of violence is a leader of higher education, then the government can facilitate the task force to carry out its duties.

There are many other challenges that make violence cases complicated, including: sexual violence cases involving the perpetrator's closest ex-girlfriend; cases of sexual violence outside of tridharma activities; cases of perpetrators and victims from other campuses; Cases of gender-based cyberviolence that are difficult to trace by the perpetrators, as has been researched by Mas'udah et al., (2024) cyberviolence include: sharing pornographic video photos, involvement in online prostitution, and threatening that personal photos or videos will be shared with the public. Therefore, there is a need for collaboration between higher education in handling cases; as well as many other cases faced by the task force. This work is a noble task to save the young generation to be able to continue their lives, a job that is full of pressure and even threats, does not know time, energy, and cost. Therefore, the task force needs to be protected socially, psychologically, and legally.

The complexity of the problem of violence does not only involve individual actions but is also influenced by social and institutional structures in higher education. Adopting Anthony Giddens (2016) regarding the theory of Structuring, that sexual violence on campus is the embodiment of individual actions (agencies) and complementary structures, the existence of causal relationships, very strong patriarchal norms, and an institutional culture that ignores sexual violence produced and reproduced by the daily practices of the academic community. On campus, unequal gender relations, for example: the dominance of male lecturers over female students in guidance or the vulnerable position of students in field practice is strengthened by a system that does not limit or regulate the power relationship fairly. The campus structure is not neutral; It produces and reproduces gender inequality through the absence of policies, weak grievance mechanisms, and silence that allows violence to be considered normal. Meanwhile, Jennifer Freyd (2014) through the concept of Institutional Betrayal, that institutions can do the following: ignore case reports; fear of tarnished reputation; blaming the victim, not providing protection for the victim (legal, psychological, even from the risk of social sanctions); lack of adequate support (human resources, budget, infrastructure, policies, and so on). These two theories underline that this issue is not a personal realm, but a structural and institutional reflection. This analysis shows the need for systemic transformations in campus policies, culture, and governance to truly ensure justice and security for all campus residents.

Transforming thinking and real practices is essential to ensure that programs in higher education run effectively, inclusively, fair to victims, and involve collaboration. All campus communities need to work together to overcome various obstacles, especially those faced by campus task forces, so that they do not give up easily in the face of challenges. Government program support is a form of concern for the academic community, because anyone can become a victim, and the impact is very serious: victims lose the ability to carry out their academic roles, and institutions lose academic dignity. The future of the next generation and the sustainability of higher education are also threatened if left unchecked. Therefore, it requires a strategy in dealing with obstacles and challenges by collaborating with all parties (academics, campuses, government, national commission on women, and so on) to create a superior generation without sexual violence.

CONCLUSION

The issue of sexual violence is an issue that is not easily full of challenges, including: sensitive issues due to gender stigma; weak policy implementation, need to pay attention to

cultural norms, and social order; campus response is not fast; lack of support of facilities and infrastructure, funds, time and workload, human resources; uneven socialization; Most victims have a hard time proving a case; the perpetrator has a higher power relationship than the victim; other cases of sexual violence: perpetrators of violence by the victim's closest people, cases that occur outside of Tridharma activities, gender-based violence in the digital realm, involving other institutions. This research recommendation is aimed at all parties, including: the academic community, higher education leaders, educational institutions, legal institutions, psychological institutions, local and central governments, Komnas perempuan, and various related institutions can cooperate in carrying out their responsibilities, duties and functions. This includes increasing awareness, supervision, and the implementation of monitoring and evaluation of various efforts that have been made in overcoming these problems. Recommendations for the next study to be able to delve deeper into sexual violence in the digital space.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This research received funding from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia in 2024. The author expresses his appreciation to the Department of Postgraduate Sociology, University of Indonesia as an educational institution where the author underwent doctoral studies, as well as to Pamulang University for the permission and support provided during the study process. Thank you are also expressed to the resource persons and all parties who have contributed to the completion of this research.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study has received official approval from the Research Ethics Commission of Yogyakarta State University, with approval number: T/59.1/UN34.9/PT.01.04/2024. This study has received informed consent from all study participants

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