Strengthening the Role of Communities in the Prevention of Sexual Violence in Higher Education: Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract. Komnas Perempuan's Annual Records noted that within 12 years, sexual violence had increased by 792%, and it can occur in various places, including higher education. Tirto's report in 2020, there were 174 reports of sexual violence spread across 79 universities in Indonesia. To prevent and deal with violence, the Minister of Education and Culture issued regulation 30/2021 on the prevention and handling of cases of sexual violence in higher education, where one of the primary roles of universities is to establish an anti-sexual violence community. This study focuses on the role and challenges of forming a higher-education community that supports efforts to prevent sexual violence. By conducting FGD's and surveys with sixteen campuses in Indonesia, the study explained that the regulation of sexual violence alone is not sufficient to prevent sexual violence. It requires the commitment of all parties to form a community on campus that can play an active role in preventing and being a supporting system in handling cases of sexual violence in Indonesia's higher education.

Keywords: Sexual Violence, Ministrial Regulation, Higher Education, Community Based Prevention

1   Introduction

The number of sexual violence cases in Indonesia continues to increase every year. The 2021 Komnas Perempuan's Annual Record noted that, in the past 12 years, sexual violence had increased by 792% [1]. Sexual violence can occur in various places, including higher education. Sexual violence can happen anywhere in both private and public spaces. Sexual violence on campus takes various forms, including physical and non-physical behavior (including external and internal sexual harassment). The victims are not only women but also men and people with disabilities. Thus, in order to create a safe college life for the civitas to carry out their activities, it is necessary to take action to create a safe space.

The creation of safe conditions is not only determined by the issue of facilities but also by the conditions in which the community members feel protected when carrying out teaching and learning activities and extracurricular activities. One of them is the guarantee of a sense of security not experiencing sexual violenceThe guarantee of security needs to take the form of a particular regulation in higher education, which is different from other administrative regulations [2], [3].

Although statistics on the number of cases of sexual violence in universities are not available, the news in the mass media shows that cases of sexual violence in Indonesia are still emerging. Based on a survey of 76 university managers in Indonesia, 75% of respondents stated that there were cases of sexual violence on campus [4], [5]. The survey results confirmed observations and reports about cases of sexual violence in universities. Cases of sexual violence are challenging to identify and uncover.

The existence of rules and policies related to sexual violence in universities is increasingly crucial because the number of sexual violence cases in universities is increasing yearly. For example, reports from Tirto, Vice Indonesia, and the Jakarta Post recorded 174 reports of sexual violence spread across 79 universities in Indonesia. Students reported 172 cases, one report by lecturers, and one report by staff [6]. This report is, of course, only the tip of the iceberg because, based on data from the Ministry of Education and Culture, there are 4550 universities with more than 8 million students, meaning that the potential for sexual violence is higher than the available reports.

This condition is not unnoticed by the government. The Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology has issued Ministerial Regulation 30/2021 regarding preventing and handling sexual violence in universities. The point of the problem lies in the assumption that all universities have the same resources and socio-cultural dynamics. It is crucial because not all universities have the same resources, competencies, capabilities, and commitments to implement the Ministerial Regulation. On the other hand, overcoming sexual violence cases relies not only on the existence of regulations but, more importantly, on how to form an internal university community that supports efforts to prevent and overcome sexual violence. This paper specifically focuses on the role and challenges of forming a community in higher education that supports efforts to prevent sexual violence.

2   Method

This study uses mixed research methods as a way of collecting data. This study conducted FGD and interviews on 49 lecturers and education personnel, and surveys in 1800 students. The research method intends to develop an understanding of individuals and events considering the relevant context. In this regard, determining the research location is crucial in research. It takes precise accuracy to determine the location, and this is because the research location will significantly affect the results of the research itself. As far as possible, the research location is where it is possible to collect data relevant to the objectives and research questions so that the answers to the various research problems can be found. This research was conducted in sixteen universities

spread across eight provinces: Jakarta, West Java, Yogyakarta, East Java, West Sumatra, Bengkulu, South Sulawesi, South Kalimantan.

3   Result and Discussion

Sexual violence is a severe problem that affects the lives of millions of people every year worldwide, with exceptionally high rates among university students [7], [8]. To date, more countries have made efforts to address sexual violence with a focus on primary prevention rather than prevention before it occurs, as well as emphasizing reducing sexual violence at the population level rather than focusing on individual health or safety [9]. Over time, with more and more countries ratifying the CEDAW convention or efforts to issue policies for the protection and prevention of sexual violence, many countries have shifted the focus of prevention efforts from victims to perpetrators to reduce the level of sexual violence. Of course, primary prevention is only one part of efforts to reduce levels of sexual violence. This effort complements and works in tandem with other important work focused on risk reduction, criminal justice, prevention of repeat violence by perpetrators, and victim services.

In this regard, it is essential to understand the complexity of the issue of sexual violence and that acts of sexual violence are the product of various interacting levels of influence. To prevent acts of sexual violence in higher education, we can use the model proposed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC uses a four-tier socio-ecological model to understand violence and potential prevention strategies better [2]. This model considers individual characteristics, relationships between individuals, communities, and the larger socio-cultural context in which the individual is located. Framing violence in the context of this socio-ecological model highlights the need for comprehensive prevention strategies that focus on risk and protective factors at each of these levels. If applied in isolation, it is impossible for an approach focusing solely on the individual to have a broad societal impact.

The socio-ecological model is designed to consider multiple perspectives and, in this regard, the many factors that contribute to sexual violence. This model is used to prevent sexual violence by combining biological, psychological, cultural, and feminist approaches to explore the roots and causes of sexual violence. This model includes four levels: individuals, relationships, culture, and society/community. The visual representation of the model shows how the various levels interact with each other so that changes at one level can contribute to or amplify changes at another level. In addition, an initiative must focus on more than one model level to make change sustainable. For example, if we only focus on changing individual beliefs about sexual violence, and they still receive messages that support sexual violence from their friends, community, and society. It is impossible to expect changes in the attitudes and views of these individuals.

Various parties' cooperation is needed to eradicate sexual violence in higher education. It is essential to look at the academic community's role, both inside and outside the university's scope in preventing sexual violence on campus. When discussing the role of the academic community in efforts to eradicate sexual violence within the scope

of higher education, it is essential to look at the community at four levels: the university as a community, lecturers as a community, students as a community, and employees or education personnel as a community. Each community has its challenges and potential, which, to a certain degree, can encourage the presence of sexual violence.

At the tertiary level, the biggest challenge is the education system which has not freed all community members from sexual violence, at least in two aspects: facilities and organizational culture. In terms of facilities, the campus still allows the presence of acts of sexual violence in its institutions, especially in many areas that CCTV and weak supervision have not covered. Infrastructure at the higher education level is still on autopilot, with minimal digital supervision and the availability of security officers. Security officers, for example, are only in the lobby of the main building and do not go around to monitor every corner of the campus. Moreover, CCTV is only placed in the leadership, administrative, or parking spaces without any effort to increase the quantity in other gray areas. In addition, higher education is also not friendly to disabled groups, which opens up great opportunities for sexual violence against this group.

The campus still relies entirely on "moral wisdom" in organizational culture. The assumption is quite simple: as an academic, one would not sexually assault another person for reasons of morality. So, there is no need for rules that expressly prohibit or prevent sexual violence because everyone is considered to have good morals to know what is allowed and not, and will not violate these moral values. As a result, in the name of moral wisdom and maintaining the good name of the campus, every report of sexual violence at the university level is rarely or even never completely resolved.

On the other hand, several universities that have counseling and reporting services for violence often place service offices in places that are difficult to access. These rooms are often tucked away between the labyrinth of faculty offices, rarely in the rectorate room. These conditions caused the civitas who wanted to report to find it often challenging to find the intended room, and it was found, often the room was locked because the lecturer who was based there was teaching.

Another problem lies in the organizational culture in universities that the top-down bureaucratization model on campus makes it challenging to submit complaints or information from the bottom up. It will be even more complicated when there are no clear lines of communication regarding reporting sexual violence. Without a particular room or a party with authority to handle sexual violence cases, it will be complicated to report the cases. It is impossible to expect cases of sexual violence in higher education to decrease without a transparent system of authority at the university level.

Another issue that is no less crucial at the higher education level is the fundamental fact that gender issues have not yet been mainstreamed in curricula. Nevertheless, sexual violence has not been seen as a problem of inequality in power relations in higher education. Furthermore, gender issues are still considered only women's issues. This condition makes it difficult to carry out gender mainstreaming, not only at the campus policy level but also at the subject level. In various universities, various gender issues are only included as elective courses, and even then, only two credits. As an elective subject, not all faculties understand how to put gender mainstreaming in faculty policies and study program subjects. The gender perspective has not been included in various courses, and this causes knowledge about power relations to be never fully understood

by the university members. In many universities, policymakers from natural sciences and engineering families tend to stutter in understanding gender issues. To make matters worse, those who come from social groups also often fail to understand gender mainstreaming. Thus, it is unsurprising that cases of sexual violence are still very high in universities.

In the scope of lecturers, the crucial problem lies in the unequal relationship between lecturers and students and among lecturers. Regarding the relationship between lecturers and other lecturers, the definite sense of seniority makes young lecturers vulnerable as victims of sexual violence. Young lecturers, often without academic positions, are very vulnerable to being manipulated by other lecturers, especially in the case of team-teaching courses, where the senior lecturers are tasked with guiding younger lecturers. In many cases, these young lecturers are often invited to the homes of more senior lecturers to discuss the division of tasks in teaching. Because of the unequal relationship pattern, young lecturers cannot refuse. It opens up great opportunities for sexual violence to occur.

Lecturers also still view the issue of sexual violence as an issue that only occurs when there is physical contact. On many campuses, jokes about the body and sexuality still crop up, even in official university forums. With a reason to lighten the mood, university policymakers easily tell about sexual violence as a joke. The situation is even worse in the lecturer's room, where jokes and catcalling occur in public. Catcalling mainly occurs between lecturers and students, especially students who come to the lecturer's room to look for particular lecturers. Of course, students cannot reprimand the lecturers, apart from the fact that the area is the lecturer's area of authority. However, also students are concerned that such actions may anger other lecturers and hinder their studies. This condition is exacerbated by the fact that other lecturers who may be in the same room are reluctant to reprimand other lecturers. In addition to their reluctance to open conflict in the name of politeness, they also think that catcalling is just an ordinary joke that is accepted as a general norm.

Students later adopted the behavior that occurred among lecturers related to catcalling because a mistaken understanding causes the act of imitating or adopting such behavior. Because the lecturer did that, the action is considered publicly accepted. On the other hand, the relationship between lecturers and institutions is also problematic For lecturers, it is an obligation to apply for a rank and to be able to apply for a rank, and it is necessary to implement the Tri Dharma of higher education. The problem becomes complicated when in the implementation of the Tri Dharma there is an unequal relationship pattern. Various cases that arise are not only in the scope of teaching but also in research and community service. There are many narratives of how female lecturers, primarily young and new, were harassed by their teammates.

When they want to report, the problem is pressure to remain silent to protect the institution's good name. Several narratives emerged of how threats pressured lecturers that if they reported acts of sexual violence, the faculty would not continue to apply for the lecturer's rank. A more severe condition is experienced by contract lecturers, that if they report sexual violence, they will be immediately disabled. It applies not only to lecturers who experience sexual violence but also to lecturers who become whistle-

blowers. This condition encourages lecturers to be more silent when discovering or becoming victims of sexual violence.

For students, the biggest challenge is the exploitation of lecturers, and the main mantra of social solidarity is to cover their mouths and eyes from any sexual violence. Sexual exploitation and violence usually occur between lecturers and students. In general, sexual violence occurs between lecturers and students during the mentoring process, especially during final project guidance. There are many narratives of how students cannot refuse to come to a place requested by their supervisor, which is, of course, far from the reach of campus observation. This unequal relationship arises based on the ability of the lecturer to refuse to guide the threat of not graduating students if they do not follow what is asked by the lecturer. There is also a narration of how the Academic Advisor used his position to commit sexual violence against the students under his guidance, citing discussions about the study plan. This condition makes it difficult for students to report, especially if the perpetrator is a person who occupies a structural position, either as the head of the study program or even the dean. It also encourages students to choose silence rather than reporting and not being passed by the campus.

Sexual violence often occurs among students. There are many narratives of how students experience violence from other fellow students, not only in the lecture room but also in the practicum room, not only on campus and outside the campus during the implementation of Real Work Lectures (KKN) and Field Work Practices (PKL). In street vendors, for example, there are quite a few cases of how sexual violence occurs. However, when it is conveyed to the lecturer, the thing that most often appears is an apology, and the problem is considered solved.

In terms of violence that occurred among students, quite a lot of reports emerged. However, most of these cases are usually lost along the way. The cessation was caused either by mediation carried out by the campus or by the complainant withdrawing the report. In most cases of sexual violence, the complainant withdrew his report due to pressure to maintain the good name of the campus. Furthermore, the intimidation or abuse of power also prevented the perpetrator from being sanctioned by the campus.

On the other hand, the culture of violence among students is also a concern. Several narratives show how bullying perpetrated by senior students against their first- and second-year students exacerbated sexual violence on campus. This bullying does not only occur on campus but even outside campus. Bullying occurs not only for new students when they are introduced to campus life but can last until graduation. There are several narratives of bullying among resident doctors in hospitals or bullying when practicing field studies away from campus. Bullying and sexual violence are two sides of the same coin, which are often justified to strengthen students' mentality so that they are not whiny and able to survive under pressure.

The problem becomes even more complicated when group values emerge that in the name of social solidarity, sexual violence should not be reported, especially if the perpetrator is a classmate. With pressure from the head of student associations, classmates, and even academic supervisors, many violence cases do not arise because of concerns about the consequences of reporting.

In the scope of employees or education personnel, the main challenge in preventing sexual violence is the vulnerable position of employees as the basis of the campus social

pyramid. Sexual violence usually arises from lecturers or structural members toward employees or educational personnel. The main potential for sexual violence against employees occurs around the pantry or bathroom, which is rarely installed with CCTV or security surveillance.

On the other hand, there are also cases of sexual violence from students to employees. It usually arises because of an unbalanced pattern of relations between students and employees, which mainly places employees as workers whom anyone can order. As cases arise, violence against employees goes unreported because of fears of being fired from campus. In the social structure of higher education, employees or education personnel, especially those with a contractual nature, occupy the lowest structure. Their positions are most vulnerable to being replaced by other people, in contrast to lecturers whose dismissal process is longer or students who are very rarely dismissed, especially for private higher education which is very dependent on the presence of students.

Among employees or education personnel, the potential for cases of sexual violence is also high, especially before office hours and after office hours are over. On many occasions, learning and other activities in higher education can last into the evening. It encourages employees or education staff, especially if the activity is a lecturer meeting, to postpone returning home until the activity is finished. Poor campus infrastructure can open up opportunities for cases of sexual violence.

On the other hand, the absence of a particular organization for employees on campus makes it difficult to advocate for cases of sexual violence that afflict employees or education personnel. Suppose students have a potential student association as a learning medium and advocate for student rights. In that case, moreover, students can have representatives in the Board of Trustees so that their voices can be heard at higher education institutions. However, at the employee level, it is not easy to implement.

The various challenges at each level are not separate from each other. There are intersections at various levels, be it the campus level, lecturers, students, and employees, so efforts to prevent sexual violence must be carried out at all levels. Efforts to prevent sexual violence at the student level, like it or not, will be closely related to efforts to prevent sexual violence at the lecturer level. This effort is impossible without efforts to prevent sexual violence at the university level.

4   Conclusion

To prevent sexual violence in higher education, universities must take various preventive measures at the community level, and this step has tremendous implications, especially at the university level. Campuses can begin to take steps to implement sexual violence prevention strategies based on the conditions of each campus. It is a fact that there must be standardization of policies, but not all policies can be implemented because not all universities have the same resources.

Campuses should be better able to identify opportunities to understand the nature of sexual violence on campus, including using data on reports of sexual violence or harassment, information from students, faculty, or staff, or other innovative approaches to

gather or identify the most pressing risks and needs. Relevant data can inform the selection of prevention strategies that best suit the needs and key risk indicators. Data sources can also be used to assess the impact of the implemented prevention strategies. In this case, understanding the complexity of the layers in the community on campus and how the intersection of the various communities will be very helpful in formulating strategic campus policies to prevent sexual violence [2], [10].

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