DIGITAL LITERACY AS A STRATEGY FOR PREVENTING AND HANDLING SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE **INDONESIAN ACADEMIC COMMUNITIES**

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Abstract

Sexual violence in universities represents an iceberg phenomenon. The Indonesian Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education has identified sexual violence as one of the most serious issues facing higher education. In response, the ministry enacted a regulation to address the prevention and handling of sexual violence (PHSV) within universities. While there is extensive research on the implementation of this regulation, as well as on the controversies surrounding it and the handling of sexual violence cases in universities, limited studies have explored the association between the prevention and management of such cases and the digital literacy levels among university community members. On the other hand, socialization and prevention programs related to sexual violence are mostly conducted through digital media platforms. This study employed qualitative research methods to assess the digital literacy levels of university community members in relation to PHSV. Initial data was collected through questionnaires, focus group discussions, and documentation of informants. The findings highlight that preventing and addressing sexual violence cannot be effectively achieved solely by disseminating PHSV information via digital media. These efforts must be supported by initiatives to enhance digital literacy across university communities. This research provides valuable insights into the intersection of digital literacy and gender-based violence prevention, particularly in academic settings. Methodologically, the study demonstrates the adequacy of the qualitative approaches in comprehensively exploring and describing this phenomenon. Moreover, the study contributes to the broader academic discourse by illustrating how social and digital media shape perceptions of sexual violence and play a critical role in raising awareness.

digital literacy, prevention and handling of sexual violence, higher education academic community

Keywords

Literacia Digital Como Estratégia Para a Prevenção e o Tratamento da Violência Sexual nas Comunidades Académicas da Indonésia

Resumo

A violência sexual nas universidades é um fenómeno icebergue. O Ministério da Investigação, Tecnologia e Ensino Superior da Indonésia reconheceu a violência sexual como um dos problemas mais graves que o ensino superior enfrenta, tendo promulgado um regulamento para abordar a prevenção e o tratamento da violência sexual (PTVS) nas universidades. Embora existam inúmeros estudos sobre a implementação da regulamentação, bem como sobre a controvérsia e o tratamento dos casos de violência sexual nas universidades, são escassos os estudos que associam a prevenção e o tratamento desses casos aos níveis de literacia digital dos membros da comunidade académica. Por outro lado, os programas de socialização e prevenção da violência sexual são maioritariamente realizados através de plataformas digitais. Este estudo aplicou métodos qualitativos para avaliar os níveis de literacia digital dos membros das comunidades académicas relativamente à PTVS. Os dados iniciais foram recolhidos por meio de questionários, discussões de grupos focais e entrevistas com informantes. Os resultados indicam que a PTVS não pode ser eficazmente alcançada com a mera disseminação de informações sobre a violência sexual nos média digitais. Estes esforços devem ser complementados por iniciativas direcionadas para a melhoria da literacia digital nas comunidades académicas. Este trabalho oferece contributos importantes sobre a interseção entre a literacia digital e a prevenção da violência sexual, particularmente em contextos académicos. Do ponto de vista metodológico, o estudo demonstra a adequação das abordagens qualitativas para explorar e descrever de forma abrangente este fenómeno. Além disso, o estudo contribui para o discurso académico sobre o papel das redes sociais e dos média digitais na formação de perceções sobre a violência sexual e na sensibilização para a sua prevenção.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

literacia digital, prevenção e tratamento da violência sexual, comunidade académica do ensino superior

1. Introduction

Sexual violence is a pervasive issue affecting various sectors worldwide, including education. Numerous studies conducted in different countries highlight the concerning prevalence of sexual violence cases, especially within universities. In Canada, a national survey conducted by the Canadian Federation of Students (2015) revealed that one in five female students reported having experienced sexual violence on campus. In Norway, 18% of female students and 9% of male students have experienced sexual harassment or unwanted physical contact during their time at university (Sivertsen et al., 2019). In the United States, 26.4% of female students and 6.8% of male students (Association of American Universities, 2019) reported similar experiences (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018).

Based on numerous studies on sexual violence across different countries, reported forms of sexual violence typically include sexual expressions, comments about the body, unwanted touching, hugging and/or kissing, attempted rape, and rape. Incidents perpetrated by students are reported more frequently than those committed by education staff (Sivertsen et al., 2019). Several studies have underlined the various effects of sexual violence, which include an increased risk of mental health issues and somatic symptoms. Generally, students who experience sexual violence exhibit poor academic performance and are more likely to engage in risky behaviors such as drug use, heavy drinking, and sexual risk-taking (Sivertsen et al., 2019).

Indonesia's Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Makarim, identified sexual violence as one of the three greatest issues in higher education, alongside bullying and intolerance. In response, he introduced the *Permendikbudristek* (regulation) of the Minister of Education and Culture for Research and Technology No. 30 of 2021, which addresses the prevention and handling of sexual violence (PHSV; *pencegahan dan penanganan kekerasan seksual*) in higher education. The number of reported cases indicates that higher education institutions account for the highest proportion of sexual violence cases, with 27%, followed by Islamic boarding schools or Islam-based education institutions at 19%. The educational environment ranks third in terms of the locus of sexual violence, with 15% occurring in high schools/vocational schools, 7% in middle schools, and 3% in kindergartens, elementary schools, and special schools (Komnas Perempuan, 2020).

The number of cases reported directly to the National Commission on Violence Against Women does not accurately reflect the actual incidence of sexual violence in society. As sexual violence against women is often concealed, cases of sexual violence in educational settings also tend to go unreported, primarily to protect the reputation of the institution (Fitri et al., 2021). Unequal power dynamics also contribute to victims' fear of reporting. Even when victims do report the crime, they frequently do not receive the support they expect from the institution. Usually, the university's focus on maintaining its undermines the position of the victims. A survey conducted by the Directorate General of Higher Education, Research, and Technology in 2020 revealed that 77% of lecturers acknowledged that sexual violence had occurred on campus, but 63% of them stated they did not report the known cases to the institution (Inspektorat Jenderal Kementerian Pendidikan Kebudayaan Riset dan Teknologi, 2021). The findings align with the results of previous studies, such as the survey conducted by Aguilar and Baek (2020), which surveyed around 400 respondents in the United States. The results of their research stated, "yet, despite the pervasiveness of sexual harassment in academic settings, evidence indicates that reporting rates in academia are generally low, potentially due to fear of retaliation—especially when the perpetrator is a prominent scientist" (p. 2). These survey results further reinforce the iceberg phenomenon of sexual violence in universities.

Other reasons for the underreporting of sexual violence cases in the educational environment include fear, shame, and the absence of mechanisms for complaints, handling, and victim recovery (Komnas Perempuan, 2020). In addition to these factors, the public's literacy level regarding the PHSV remains limited. The public's low level of literacy regarding sexual violence against women is evident in numerous situations that, despite being forms of sexual harassment and violence, are perceived as normal. Similarly, awareness that both perpetrators and victims of sexual violence can be anyone and that such incidents can occur anywhere — including in educational settings — remains low. Even after the enactment of the *Permendikbudristek* No. 30 of 2021, some people still considered the regulation unnecessary (Anbarini et al., 2023). This situation underscores the importance of enhancing the academic community's literacy regarding PHSV in universities. As information about PHSV is predominantly disseminated through digital media, improving digital literacy becomes a crucial prerequisite for increasing PHSV literacy as well.

Digital technology serves as a crucial communication medium for the successful implementation of the ministerial regulation aimed at PHSV in universities. Following the enactment of the regulation, the Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education actively conducted various offline and online communications (via Zoom meetings and YouTube channels), which all lecturers and education staff are required to attend. Each university is also mandated to establish a PHSV task force and conduct offline and online communication through their respective digital media channels. Research by Yuniar et al. (2022) entitled "Literacy of Sexual Harassment and Abuse Toward Adolescent Protection Behavior" concluded that the literacy level of university community members regarding sexual violence is essential. The higher the literacy level, the greater the students' ability to protect themselves from sexual violence. In today's digital era, the dissemination of information about PHSV is predominantly carried out through digital media. Consequently, in the context of globalization, information literacy is increasingly supported by digital literacy (Kutner & Armstrong, 2012).

"Digital literacy" is defined as a set of skills necessary to access, search for, manage, and edit digital information, as well as to join online communication networks (Setiansah et al., 2021). Proficiency in digital literacy has become crucial due to the ubiquity of digital technology in daily life, especially within the academic community, which includes students, lecturers, and education staff. The strong relationship between digital literacy levels and sexual violence is evident in a study entitled "Online Violence Against Women: Reports From the COVID-19 Pandemic Experience" (Simões et al., 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic abruptly forced individuals to shift most of their activities from offline to online, leading to an unforeseen increase in cases of online gender-based violence against women. This situation may be attributed to the limited digital literacy within the community, as the transition from offline to online activities occurred suddenly and at a rapid pace. It underscores the need for digital literacy that not only imparts technical skills but also enhances ethical awareness and digital security. In the era of globalization, digital literacy serves as a key to accessing information, raising awareness, and contributing to campaigns and collaborations related to PHSV. For example, in many countries, universities use social media platforms to disseminate information about anti-violence policies and foster online communities that support victims. In South Africa, digital technology has been employed to support case reporting, with social media also playing a role in providing education about sexual violence (Olaitan,

2024). In the United States, social media has proven to be an effective tool for social movements aimed at combating gender-based violence (Battisti et al., 2024).

Given the high number of sexual violence cases in universities, the widespread use of digital media, and the importance of literacy regarding PHSV in mitigating instances of sexual violence, this study was conducted to analyze the digital literacy levels of university community members in relation to the PHSV in universities. Although numerous studies on sexual violence in universities have been widely conducted (Daigle et al., 2008; Faturani, 2022; Grummert & Rall, 2021; Sivertsen et al., 2019; Swedish Council for Higher Education, 2020; Young & Wiley, 2021; Zarkasi et al., 2023) research specifically analyzing the competence of university community members in accessing, understanding, evaluating, and digitally producing information about PHSV remains limited. Several studies on media literacy and digital literacy have been conducted, offering recommendations on the application of media literacy across various subjects. However, research exploring the use of media literacy to prevent violence remains very limited (Moorhouse & Brooks, 2020). A comprehensive understanding of the digital literacy levels of university community members regarding PHSV will contribute significantly to the development of effective communication strategies or models for preventing and handling sexual violence in universities.

2. DIGITAL LITERACY

Digital literacy is an extension of media literacy concept that have been widely applied in society. With the continuous development of digital media, there is no universally agreed-upon definition of digital literacy (Tinmaz et al., 2022). However, it is generally understood as a set of skills necessary to access, search for, manage, and edit digital information, as well as to join online communication networks (Setiansah et al., 2021). This definition aligns with Heitin's perspective (Tinmaz et al., 2022), which categorizes digital literacy into three components: (a) finding and consuming digital content, (b) creating digital content, and (c) communicating or sharing digital content.

Hobbs (2010, as cited in Erika, 2019) classifies digital competencies into several key areas. First, access competencies focus on enabling individuals to use digital media platforms to obtain useful information effectively. Second, critical understanding competencies involve evaluating messages based on their truthfulness, credibility, and the perspective of the message creator, as well as understanding the potential effects and consequences of the message. Third, content production competencies involve the ability to create content using creativity and techniques appropriate for digital platforms. Fourth, reflection competencies emphasize the importance of producing and sharing content in accordance with ethical standards, cultural norms, and social responsibility. Fifth, collaboration competencies empower individuals to engage with their families, communities, and society actively, promoting kindness, sharing knowledge, and solving various problems.

Digital literacy is distinct from information literacy, but achieving information literacy becomes easier with digital literacy (Cordell, 2013). By mastering digital literacy, individuals can more effectively access information and fulfill their information needs, including those related to the PHSV.

In Indonesia, the Ministry of Communication and Information has developed a roadmap for advancing digital literacy, focusing on four key pillars. The first pillar, digital skills, refers to an individual's ability to know, understand, and use information and communications technology hardware, software, and digital operating systems in daily life. The second pillar, digital ethics, is defined as the ability to recognize, model, adjust, rationalize, consider, and develop digital ethical governance (*netiquette*) in everyday interactions. The third pillar, digital security, refers to the ability to identify, recognize, apply, analyze, evaluate, and enhance awareness of personal data protection and digital security in everyday life. The fourth pillar, digital culture, involves the ability of individuals to interpret, understand, engage with, examine, and promote the national vision and the values of *Pancasila* and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (unity in diversity) in everyday life, as well as the digitalization of culture through the use of information and communication technology (Katadata Insigh Center & KOMINFO, 2021).

Proficiency in digital literacy among university community members is crucial in preventing sexual violence. Lecturers, students, and education staff must be not only proficient in using technology to access and create content about sexual violence but also develop social and critical skills for effectively engaging with digital media. Therefore, digital literacy education should extend beyond the mere acquisition of information and communication technology skills, encompassing the understanding of when and where to apply these digital competencies (Suwana & Lily, 2017).

3. Sexual Violence in Higher Education and the Enactment of *Permendikbudristek* No. 30 of 2021

The World Health Organization (2024b) defines sexual violence as

any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, or other act directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting. It includes rape, defined as the physically forced or otherwise coerced penetration of the vulva or anus with a penis, other body part, or objects, attempted rape, unwanted sexual touching and other non-contact. (para. 9)

Violence has had a profound impact on the lives of millions of people worldwide (World Health Organization, 2024a). Sexual violence has become a global issue, affecting not only women but also men, young and old, and even children, in families, communities, and educational settings. In Indonesia, the high incidence of sexual violence in universities can be attributed to the legal vacuum regarding sexual violence in academic settings (Faturani, 2022). Before the enactment of the *Permendikbudristek* No. 30 of 2021, Indonesia lacked specific laws and regulations addressing sexual violence on campuses. The Child Protection Law only protects victims of sexual violence under the age of 18, while the Domestic Violence Prevention Law is limited to cases of violence in domestic settings. The Trafficking in Persons Law only supports victims of sexual violence when it is linked to a trafficking syndicate (Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan, 2021). As a result, victims of sexual violence not covered by those laws are managed under the provisions of the Criminal Code despite its numerous limitations (Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan, 2021). Among these limitations are the lack of recognition of online gender-based violence and the narrow definition that only includes obscenity and rape. The enactment of *Permendikbudristek* No. 30 of 2021 marks a new direction in the PHSV in Indonesian universities.

Article 1.°, Paragraph 1 of the *Permendikbudristek* No. 30 of 2021 concerning PHSV in higher education institutions states that

sexual violence is any act of degrading, insulting, harassing, and/or attacking a person's body and/or reproductive function due to imbalances in power relations/or gender, which results or can result in psychological and/ or physical suffering, including harm to reproductive health and the loss of a person's ability to pursue higher education safely and optimally. (Faturani, 2022, p. 482)

Furthermore, Article 5.° outlines the forms of violence, which include verbal, nonphysical, and physical actions, as well as acts through information and communication technology. These forms of violence include: (a) making remarks that discriminate or harass the victim based on their physical appearance, body condition, and/or gender identity; (b) deliberately exposing one's genitals to the victim without their consent; (c) making sexual advances, jokes, and/or whistles directed at the victim; (d) staring at the victim in a sexually suggestive manner that causes discomfort; (e) sending sexually suggestive messages, jokes, images, photos, audio, and/or videos without the victim's consent, even after they have expressed disapproval; (f) taking, recording, and/or sharing sexually suggestive photographs and/or audio and/or visual recordings of the victim without their consent; (g) uploading sexually suggestive photos of the victim's body and/ or their personal information without the victim's consent; (h) disseminating information related to the victim's body and/or personality that has sexual connotations without their consent; (i) peeping or intentionally observing the victim during private activities and/or in private spaces; (j) persuading, promising, offering, or threatening the victim to engage in sexual transactions or activities against their will; (k) imposing punishment or sanctions with sexual undertones; (I) touching, caressing, holding, hugging, kissing,

and/or rubbing any part of the perperator's the body againts the victim's body without their consent; (m) undressing the victim without their consent; (n) forcing the victim to engage in sexual activity; (o) perpetuating a culture among students, lecturers, and education staff that includes sexual undertones; (p) attempting rape without penetration; (q) committing rape with penetration using objects or body parts other than the genitals; (r) coercing or tricking the victim into having an abortion; (s) coercing or tricking the victim into becoming pregnant; (t) allowing sexual violence to occur intentionally; and/ or (u) committing other forms of sexual violence.

Based on the description of the forms of violence above, it appears that *Permendik-budristek* No. 30 of 2021 already has a reasonably broad scope and has also addressed forms of sexual violence through digital technology that were previously not recognized in the Criminal Code and other pre-existing laws. Disseminating information digitally and ensuring all the university community members possess adequate digital skills is crucial so that they can prevent and protect themselves from all forms of sexual violence. With digital literacy, it is expected that the members can (a) access all digital information sources about sexual violence and its prevention, (b) understand content and information related to sexual violence in digital media, (c) produce digital content to participate in campaigns for sexual violence prevention including creating reports using digital platforms, (d) reflect on the digital content they access and produce, and (e) collaborate and jointly carry out digital literacy initiatives in PHSV.

Indonesia is not the only country that has issued policies related to the PHSV. The United States, through Title IX, requires universities to have procedures for reporting and addressing sexual violence incidents seriously (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). Similarly, the United Kingdom has published specific guidelines to prevent and address gender-based violence in higher education (Universities UK, 2016), and Australia has a national campaign aimed at raising awareness and responding to sexual violence on campuses (Universities Australia, 2016).

4. Research Methodology

This qualitative research was conducted to gain an in-depth understanding of the digital literacy phenomenon among university community members related to PHSV in universities. The results of qualitative research will be presented as representations and insights derived from data analysis. Research outputs can offer new perspectives on the social issues being studied (Saldana, 2011).

The informants in this study included lecturers, students, and education staff from various faculties at the university. The researchers employed a nonprobability sampling method, specifically accidental sampling, to select the informants. Accidental or convenience sampling is a technique used to select participants without specific criteria, aiming to preserve the study's natural setting. This method was chosen under the assumption

that all members of the academic community possess adequate digital literacy related to the PHSV. However, if any selected participants exhibit low levels of digital literacy, this will be incorporated into the study's findings.

To identify the necessary participants, the researchers first distributed Google Forms (G-forms) to all faculties. The G-forms included initial questions regarding the participants' digital literacy related to PHSV and their willingness to participate in the focus group discussions (FGD). A total of 50 lecturers completed the G-forms, and 12 of them attended the FGD. Among the education staff, 19 filled out the G-forms, with eight attending the FGD. Lastly, 26 students completed the G-Forms, and 17 attended the FGD.

The FGD was conducted by dividing the participants into three groups: lecturers, education staff, and students. Each group participated in a focused discussion led by a facilitator (a lecturer) and assisted by a student who took minutes. Data collection focused on the informants' digital literacy, specifically their ability to access, understand, evaluate, and produce information related to sexual violence, as well as its prevention and handling on campus. The data analysis technique employed in this study is descriptive data analysis. According to Arikunto (1993), descriptive data analysis involves categorizing data into two groups: qualitative data in the form of words or sentences and quantitative data in the form of numbers. In this study, all the data collected were qualitative. Thus, data analysis was conducted by organizing the data into specific categories based on the research questions. The analysis process was interactive, involving the creation of field notes, documentation, and transcripts during data collection. This was followed by categorizing and reducing the data, presenting findings, and drawing conclusions (Miles et al., 2014). To enhance the trustworthiness of the data, the researcher employed triangulation techniques, specifically method and source triangulation. This involved comparing and corroborating data obtained from different informants, including lecturers, education staff, and students, as well as cross-checking data collected through questionnaires (G-forms), FGDs, and interviews.

5. Results

Data on the informants' level of digital literacy were analyzed by integrating five digital literacy indicators proposed by Hobbs and Jensen (2009): the ability to access, understand, produce, reflect, and collaborate and the four pillars of digital literacy outlined by the Indonesian Ministry of Communication and Information: digital skills, digital ethics, digital security, and digital culture. Based on the results of the data analysis, the following findings were obtained.

5.1. DIGITAL SKILLS: THE ABILITY TO ACCESS AND PRODUCE

Social media serves as the primary source of information among the informants, as it is deeply integrated into their daily lives. Informants commonly use platforms like Instagram, TikTok, X, and YouTube. The informants' occupations and ages influence differences in accessing information sources. Among the lecturers, an informant mentioned using the university's learning management system to access information about PHSV. However, this platform was not widely utilized by staff or students, who instead relied on alternative sources. Staff reported that, in addition to social media, they also obtain PHSV information through mandatory training sessions conducted by the ministry for all civil servants. While these training sessions were deemed essential, they were seen as supplemental to the more immediate and informal information available on social media.

Another notable difference is related to age. Lecturers tend to rely more on messaging applications such as WhatsApp than other social media platforms. They obtain information about PHSV not only from social media but also through their surroundings, including family members or even individuals directly involved in cases of sexual violence. This was exemplified by one of the lecturers from the Faculty of Health Sciences:

> my mother was a counselor assisting victims of sexual violence, so I became familiar with the topic when I was a child. I read books on abnormal psychology and followed news about cases that went viral due to social media algorithms. The familiarity with such topics sparked my curiosity about similar cases. (FGD, August 17, 2023)

Conversely, younger informants, particularly students, exhibited a more dynamic approach to accessing and interacting with digital information. Their digital fluency allowed them to navigate various platforms effortlessly, often integrating this skill into their academic and organizational activities. Similarly, variations in proficiency regarding accessing digital information about PHSV were parallelled by differences in the ability to produce content among lecturers, staff, and students. Participants in the FGDs generally acknowledged that they rarely create content on social or digital media related to PHSV issues. There is noticeable hesitancy, particularly among lecturers and education staff, to produce content on these topics. One staff member explained that while it has become relatively easy to make an issue go viral on social media, the restrictive Law on Electronic Information and Transactions poses significant challenges. They commented, "it is said that without virality, there's no justice, but we must also be cautious as the ITE Law could penalize us".

Meanwhile, the students displayed a different phenomenon. As digital natives, they are more skilled in producing content. Contents created by students can be categorized into two types: content aimed at building awareness by reposting relevant content or expressing opinions in online discussions and content created as a form of emotional release stemming from personal experiences of sexual violence or incidents involving people close to them. "Yes, usually it's because we're distressed, so we post content as a way to feel a sense of relief", said one of the FGD participating students from the Faculty of Social and Political Science.

Students embrace digital culture by incorporating PHSV issues into organizational activities such as those conducted by the Youth Information and Counseling Center (PIK-R) and the Students Association. They also integrate educational content on sexual violence into campaigns featured on their organization's digital media platforms.

5.2. DIGITAL CULTURE: THE ABILITY TO REFLECT AND UNDERSTAND

Digital culture encompasses the ability to reflect on societal issues and understand their implications in various contexts. It includes the capacity to identify instances of sexual violence. Two female lecturers participating in the FGD — one from the Faculty of Medical Sciences and the other from the Faculty of Social and Political Science — emphasized that one key competency for identifying whether an action qualifies as "sexual violence" is understanding the context, power dynamics, and patterns of interaction between men and women.

Verbal or non-verbal abuse in male-dominated environments teaches us certain patterns. Knowing when to disengage or redirect conversations is crucial. I have to know when to stay away from suspicious individuals, when to steer the conversation in a different direction, and so on. In such environments, you can't just generalize and avoid immediately. (FGD, August 17, 2023)

This nuanced understanding underscores the importance of situational awareness in addressing sexual violence. Power relations, especially in professional or academic settings, influence how individuals perceive and respond to inappropriate behaviors. For example, lecturers pointed out the challenges in distinguishing between jokes and harassment, noting that the intent and context often determine how such interactions are interpreted. Another lecturer remarked:

we need to understand the context and interlocutor. Utterances [including those considered as jokes] directed at the victim but not accepted by them are regarded as sexual violence. If the interlocutor shares the same perspective, they will understand the context of the utterances [that it is a joke]. However, power dynamics in private conversations and public discussions are different. We can shift the conversation when it makes us uncomfortable. (FGD, August 17, 2023)

The extensive media coverage, past cases, and the widespread dissemination of *Permendikbudristek* No. 30 of 2021 concerning PHSV have raised the informants' awareness of sexual violence cases. What were previously considered normal or mere jokes,

without physical contact, and not seen as forms of violence, are now being recognized as actions that could potentially escalate into sexual violence. One of the male lecturers, aged around 35, shared a shift in his understanding of sexual violence:

> in the past, the understanding of sexual violence was limited to rape and related to anything physical. Now, I learned from social media that even catcalling is a form of harassment. It's that complex. Digital literacy from social media is important, and reading the Eldiru module increased my knowledge. Now, we need to be more careful in our interactions with male and female students when tutoring, with colleagues, or when we're in vacant rooms. (FGD, August 17, 2023)

The shift in understanding sexual violence cases was also reflected by a senior lecturer from the Faculty of Biology, who shared the following:

> now, one has to be more cautious because things that were once considered ordinary or mere jokes are now seen differently. It could indeed be the case. I also understand better that anyone can be a perpetrator or a victim, whether known or unknown. (FGD, August 17, 2023)

The importance of a shared understanding of the forms of sexual violence was also emphasized by an informant from the education staff group who is also the coordinator for Academic Affairs, as follows:

> we are creatures of habit. It was only 1–2 years ago that we were exposed to the concept of sexual violence. So, we must spread awareness about this concept to ensure we are on the same page. For example, I'm close to Heri, and physical touch without any sexual intent is usual for us, but others might perceive it differently. That's why the boundaries should be clear. (FGD, August 17, 2023)

When reflecting on or evaluating a sexual violence case, the informants not only seek to understand the context and social patterns but also verify the information through other sources. These sources vary widely. Some informants report consistently consulting regulatory references related to the case in question. In contrast, others turn to social media, such as TikTok and other news outlets, to confirm the accuracy of the information they have received.

5.3. Digital Security and Ethic: The Ability to Collaborate

One essential digital literacy competency among digital media users in the context of the PHSV is their ability to collaborate. Here, collaboration is understood as the capacity of digital media users to organize themselves and others to address the problems they face. Effective collaboration involves coordinating collective actions, verifying information, and promoting a shared understanding of digital security and ethics. These competencies are particularly vital when fostering collaboration among stakeholders. Through collaboration, informants can cross-check the information they receive with each other. Additionally, to engage in effective collaboration, informants must also possess literacy in digital ethics.

However, findings indicate that lecturers and staff face significant barriers to collaborative action. Several participants in the FGD reported that when confronted with problems or information related to sexual violence or when another lecturer, especially a senior, makes statements about the issue, they often choose to remain silent or make indirect comments using humor, citing discomfort as the primary reason. Directly reprimanding others, whether on an individual or collective basis, is considered impolite, particularly when addressing sensitive issues like sexual violence. As one lecturer explained, "instead of directly reprimanding, we resort to humor, saying things like, 'be careful; there's a task force now'. It feels safer" (FGD, August 17, 2023).

Several student informants explained that some of them had collaborated by integrating the PHSV context into their student organizational activities. The student organizations are the Communication Student Association (HIMAKOM) and the PIK-R, with their respective campaigns.

> HIMAKOM has an external division that plans to share specific information related to sexual violence. HIMAKOM asks its members to adhere to curfew regulations and effectively carry out their activities according to the applicable SOPs. The preventive actions we take also include campaigns and watching videos related to sexual violence, namely a 3-minute video or a pop-up text. (FGD, August 17, 2023)

> I was appointed as the Ambassador of PIK-R in 2022. The contents we created for roadshows to provide education and information about sexual violence prevention are usually in the form of materials on the handling of sexual violence cases, reporting procedures, and the provision or appointment of mediators or psychologists. We also provide an understanding of what actions are necessary and unnecessary if we're in the victims' shoes. (FGD, August 17, 2023)

Based on these data, it appears that lecturers and education staff face more challenges in enforcing digital ethics than students. The culture of avoiding direct reprimands tends to result in normalization and permissiveness towards cases of sexual violence within the lecturers and staff groups. On the other hand, students seem to be more assertive in expressing their stance regarding the enforcement of ethical issues related to sexual violence in digital media. The topic of digital security, especially related to the protection of identity and career continuity, seems to be one of the factors that make lecturers and staff much more cautious in expressing their rejection of sexual violence on campus.

Although lecturers and staff still face many obstacles in enforcing ethics and creating a sense of comfort in collaborating to support PHSV, one of the informants, who is also a member of the PHSV task force, admitted that collaboration in PHSV is very important because PHSV cannot be addressed alone.

That's right, the task force cannot solve everything on its own. Personally, I feel there is a need for interest groups and pressure in any situation. At some point, the task force will need help, so there should be volunteers who can eventually provide support to the task force. In the Faculty of Law, there is no volunteer team yet. FISIP [Faculty of Social and Political Science] already has one. FIKES [Faculty of Medical Sciences], MIPA [Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences], FIB [Faculty of Cultural Sciences] need to have responders as well. Student organization advisors, including BEM [Student Executive Board], also need to be more vigilant. (FGD, August 17, 2023)

This sentiment underscores the need for a coordinated approach to address the complex and multifaceted issue of sexual violence on campus.

6. DISCUSSION

Results show that PHSV efforts in higher education cannot rely solely on one aspect, such as the level of digital literacy. Many factors intersect in the implementation of digital literacy as a strategy for addressing PHSV.

The fact that the digital skills of lecturers and education staff are lower than those of students aligns with the Indonesian digital literacy index survey conducted by the Ministry of Communication and Information. The survey revealed that 66.8% of Generation Z possess high digital skills, compared to 57.6% of Generation Y, while only 38% of Generation X demonstrate high digital skills (Katadata Insigh Center & KOMINFO, 2021). In this study, lecturers and education staff are predominantly from Generation Y and Generation X, aged between 23 and 55. When compared to the findings of this study, it appears that age differences also influence digital media behavior, including in the search for information about PHSV.

A study in the United Kingdom highlighted the generational differences in digital competence but also challenged the notion of digital natives solely based on age. It argued that factors such as one's field of work, experience, education, and gender also play crucial roles in determining whether a person can be classified as a digital native. Notably, the study suggested that older generations, especially those involved in the field of education, can also be considered digital natives (Helsper & Eynon, 2010). Therefore, while this

study's findings conclude that lecturers and staff have lower digital skills than students in accessing and producing content about PHSV, the root cause may not solely be a lack of digital proficiency. Other factors, such as cultural aspects, policies, and time constraints due to their professional responsibilities, could also be significant. Lecturers and staff often prioritize their core duties over engaging with digital media to seek information about PHSV. A culture that normalizes sexist humor and treats sexual violence as commonplace leads to reduced sensitivity among individuals. Previous research examining the content of sexist humor in a reality show indicated that perpetrators of sexist humor are usually unaware that their actions constitute violence (Perwita et al., 2023). Sexist content is often considered a strategy to make communication messages, such as advertisements, more memorable (Pereira et al., 2013). In this study, informants agreed on the importance of applying safe digital media ethics to prevent sexual violence. However, in certain situations, courtesy also prevented informants from directly reprimanding perpetrators or discussing sexual violence issues in forums or online conversation groups. Lecturers and staff who tend to remain silent when witnessing incidents of sexual violence often permissively normalize such behavior. Leaders who are less proactive in addressing this issue are not unique to this study. A systematic review of studies on sexual violence in higher education suggested similar patterns (Bondestam & Lundqvist, 2020).

In addition to the cultural issues of silence and permissiveness among lecturers and staff regarding sexual violence, structural constraints also significantly influence their attitude toward involvement in PHSV. A person's role and position within the community determine their attitudes and perceptions of sexual violence (McMahon & Banyard, 2012). The power dynamics that position lecturers and staff superior to students contribute to differing approaches and perceptions of sexual violence within higher education. Lecturers and staff tend to view digital media primarily as a tool to support their professional tasks, often not considering participation in PHSV as part of their responsibilities. Conversely, students, due to their subordinate position, tend to be more vulnerable to sexual violence, which fosters greater awareness and interest in seeking information and even producing PHSV-related content through digital platforms they regularly use. Social media and digital media offer students greater opportunities to observe and establish their presence within the campus environment (Marwick & Boyd, 2011).

The limited involvement of lecturers and staff in concrete actions to support PHSV may also stem from the lack of opportunities for collaboration among lecturers, staff, and between these two groups. In contrast, students have a wider range of possibilities to engage in collaborative activities through extracurricular programs, student activity units, and student associations within their respective courses. The importance of collaboration is evident in the success of numerous social movements worldwide, such as the #MeToo movement (Kaufman et al., 2021).

Although many factors must be considered and present significant challenges, digital literacy can still serve as an important strategic tool in addressing PHSV within the academic environment (Puchner et al., 2022). However, it is essential to acknowledge that efforts to prevent and tackle sexual violence on campus require a strong commitment and the active involvement of all campus members, without exception. Communication and socialization through various media, namely initiatives aimed at enhancing digital literacy, will be ineffective without the shared commitment, careful attention, and collaboration of all involved stakeholders.

7. CONCLUSION

Lecturers and education staff exhibit lower levels of digital literacy compared to students. The characteristics of digital natives and the digital skills students possess make them more adept at accessing, understanding, evaluating, and producing information about sexual violence.

Preventing and handling sexual violence cannot be achieved merely by disseminating PHSV information through digital media; it must be coupled with an increase in digital literacy. This enhancement of digital literacy should focus not only on improving technical skills but also on reinforcing ethics and digital culture.

This research provides valuable insights into the intersection of digital literacy and gender-based violence prevention, particularly within academic settings. It underscores the importance of integrating communication frameworks with digital tools to empower individuals to identify, report, and prevent sexual violence. Methodologically, the findings demonstrate that the research method used is effective in comprehensively exploring and describing the phenomenon under investigation. As such, this research methodology can serve as a model for similar studies.

Moreover, the study contributes to the field by highlighting the role of social and digital media in shaping perceptions of sexual violence and raising awareness. It underscores the potential of digital literacy to transform cultural attitudes by equipping individuals with the critical skills needed to evaluate and challenge normalized forms of gender-based violence. These findings provide a solid foundation for future research on the relationship between digital literacy and societal attitudes toward gender-based issues.

Acknowledgment

This article is the result of research conducted under the Rector's Decree No. 1218/UN23/PT.01.02/2023 and Agreement/Contract Number 27.146/UN23.37/PT.01.03/ II/2023. We want to express our gratitude to the Institute for Research and Community Service of Universitas Jenderal Soedirman for funding this research through the 2023 Basic Research Grant scheme.

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Submitted: 03/04/2024 | Accepted: 18/12/2024



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