

## **Challenges and Strategies in the Implementation of Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Task Forces in Religious Higher Education Institutions in Indonesia**

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to analyze the challenges and strategies in enhancing the effectiveness of sexual violence prevention and response task forces in Indonesian religious higher education institutions. The study identifies various obstacles that universities face in implementing policies for the prevention and handling of sexual violence, as well as the strategies they employ to overcome these challenges. This research adopts a qualitative approach, collecting data through in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with heads of gender and child study centers, members of the sexual violence prevention and response task forces, and lecturers across seven religious higher education institutions in Indonesia. The findings reveal that, although several universities have established task forces, they still encounter major challenges, such as limited trained human resources, victims' reluctance to report incidents, and conservative campus cultures. However, the strategies implemented, including continuous training for staff and lecturers and the use of technology for reporting, have proven effective in raising awareness and improving responsiveness to sexual violence. This study contributes significantly to the development of policies for the prevention and handling of sexual violence in religious higher education institutions. It recommends strengthening institutional structures, intensifying training programs, and developing more integrated digital reporting systems to create safer and more responsive campuses. Furthermore, this research provides an original contribution by exploring the challenges and strategies faced by religious universities in implementing sexual violence prevention and response policies, offering new insights into how these strategies can be improved and adapted to the specific context of religious higher education in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** Digital reporting systems; religious higher education institutions; sexual violence prevention; sexual violence response task forces; training programs.

### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tantangan dan strategi dalam meningkatkan efektivitas satuan tugas pencegahan dan penanganan kekerasan seksual di perguruan tinggi keagamaan Indonesia. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi berbagai hambatan yang dihadapi oleh perguruan tinggi dalam menerapkan kebijakan pencegahan dan penanganan kekerasan seksual, serta strategi-strategi yang diterapkan untuk mengatasi tantangan tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam dan Focus Group Discussion (FGD) dengan kepala pusat studi gender dan anak, anggota satuan tugas pencegahan dan penanganan kekerasan seksual, serta dosen di tujuh perguruan tinggi keagamaan di Indonesia. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun beberapa perguruan tinggi telah membentuk satuan tugas, mereka masih menghadapi tantangan besar, seperti keterbatasan sumber daya manusia yang terlatih, ketidakpercayaan korban untuk melapor, dan masalah budaya kampus yang konservatif. Namun, strategi-strategi yang diterapkan, seperti pelatihan berkelanjutan untuk staf dan dosen, serta penggunaan teknologi dalam pelaporan, terbukti efektif dalam meningkatkan kesadaran dan responsivitas terhadap kekerasan seksual. Hasil penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi penting bagi pengembangan kebijakan pencegahan dan penanganan kekerasan seksual di perguruan tinggi keagamaan. Penelitian ini mengusulkan perlunya

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penguatan struktur kelembagaan, pelatihan yang lebih intensif, dan pengembangan sistem pelaporan digital yang lebih terintegrasi untuk menciptakan kampus yang lebih aman dan responsif terhadap kekerasan seksual. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi orisinal dalam menggali tantangan dan strategi yang dihadapi oleh perguruan tinggi keagamaan dalam implementasi kebijakan pencegahan dan penanganan kekerasan seksual. Penelitian ini menawarkan wawasan baru tentang bagaimana strategi yang diterapkan dapat diperbaiki dan disesuaikan dengan konteks perguruan tinggi keagamaan di Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: Sistem pelaporan digital; lembaga pendidikan tinggi agama; pencegahan kekerasan seksual; tim tanggap kekerasan seksual; program pelatihan.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The prevention of sexual violence in Indonesian higher education institutions, particularly in religious universities, is a critical issue that has received serious attention from campus authorities and policymakers (Saputra, Rapita, Utami, & Katmawanti, 2023). According to data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek), there were 65 reported cases of sexual violence in higher education institutions as of July 2023 (Wahyuni, 2024). Additionally, Komnas Perempuan reported 82 cases of sexual violence in universities between 2021 and 2024 (Komnas Perempuan, 2025). These figures indicate that sexual violence on campus remains a growing problem that requires serious intervention. Universities should serve as safe spaces for all members of the academic community, yet these statistics reveal a concerning reality.

Several cases of sexual violence in Indonesian universities have attracted public attention, particularly those occurring in religious higher education institutions. One case at Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram involved a lecturer, identified by the initials WJ, who sexually assaulted seven Bidikmisi scholarship students, which came to light after WJ admitted his actions and reenacted 65 incidents across two campus locations in May 2025 (Detik.com, 2025). Another case occurred at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, where four female students reported physical sexual harassment by three different lecturers during 2016–2018, which, despite media coverage, has not been fully clarified (C. Wijaya, 2019). Furthermore, the Legal Aid Institute (LBH) Makassar documented four cases of sexual harassment at UIN Alauddin Makassar between 2023 and 2024 (Syawaluddin, 2024). These incidents demonstrate that sexual violence in religious universities occurs frequently but remains underreported.

Research on sexual violence prevention and response in universities has explored multiple approaches. First, several studies emphasize the importance of clear policies and consistent implementation to combat sexual violence (Rubiano-Matulevich, 2019; Sukeni & Bhanu Prakash, 2023). These policies include the establishment of internal committees or task forces that facilitate reporting and provide support to victims. Second, other studies highlight the importance of gender-based approaches to create responsive campus environments, including education and training to improve awareness of gender issues among lecturers, educational staff, and students (Khoiri & Kafa, 2024; Nilawati, Antasari, Erniwati, Adib, & Sobari, 2023). Third, some research focuses on the use of technology as a preventive strategy, recognizing that digitalization enables victims to report incidents more easily and access support quickly (Pont & Nurfatihah, 2022).

Despite these studies, gaps remain regarding the implementation of policies in religious higher education institutions, especially in contexts with limited resources and institutional commitment. Previous research has not thoroughly addressed how religious universities can strengthen the role and effectiveness of their sexual violence prevention and response units.

This study aims to analyze the needs and challenges faced by religious universities in enhancing the function of their sexual violence prevention and response task forces. Through a needs assessment, this research provides a solid foundation for developing policies and strategies to create safe and responsive campus environments. Moreover, it identifies obstacles that hinder policy implementation and explores how religious universities can overcome these challenges.

The study argues that preventing and addressing sexual violence in religious higher education institutions requires serious attention to strengthening the existing task forces. Internal needs mapping, including understanding current regulations, available resources, and challenges, serves as a crucial first step. By adopting a data-driven approach, universities can design targeted strategies to enhance the implementation of sexual violence prevention and response policies. Improving task force capacity, complemented by technology use and gender-based training, can significantly impact the creation of safer and more responsive campuses. Finally, the establishment of task forces functions to create structured mechanisms for the prevention, reporting, and handling of sexual violence, providing protection and support for victims, raising awareness among the academic community, and fostering a safer campus culture.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study focuses on analyzing the needs and challenges faced by *sexual violence prevention and response task forces* in religious higher education institutions. The units of analysis include heads of *gender and child study centers*, members of the sexual violence prevention and response task forces, and lecturers from seven religious higher education institutions in Indonesia.

The study adopts a qualitative approach to obtain an in-depth understanding of the needs and challenges in preventing and handling sexual violence within these institutions (Lune & Berg, 2017; Maxwell, 2009). This approach was selected because it allows for detailed and exploratory data collection regarding the situations encountered by task force personnel and provides a comprehensive explanation of the factors influencing policy implementation at the universities.

Data were collected from three groups of informants. First, the head of the *gender and child study center* (*Pusat Studi Gender dan Anak/PGSA*) at one of the religious universities (hereafter referred to as University A) provided information regarding task force performance monitoring. Second, members of the sexual violence prevention and response task forces provided data on reported cases and the challenges they encountered. Third, lecturers participated in Focus Group Discussions (FGD) to share insights on campus conditions and the importance of sexual violence prevention and response services. For confidentiality, the names of the seven lecturers were anonymized as Lecturer A, Lecturer B, Lecturer C, Lecturer D, Lecturer E, Lecturer F, and Lecturer G.

Data collection employed two primary methods: in-depth interviews and FGDs. Interviews followed a structured guide developed based on prevention, reporting, case handling, decision-making, and the challenges faced by the task force. FGDs were conducted to explore lecturers' understanding of the importance of sexual violence prevention and response services. All interviews and FGDs adhered to ethical research principles, ensuring the privacy and anonymity of participants and their respective institutions.

The collected data were analyzed using *interactive analysis theory* (Miles & Huberman, 2013), following three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data validity was ensured through methodological triangulation, comparing the results of interviews and FGDs. When findings from both methods aligned, the data were considered valid and reliable. The establishment of the

task force serves to create structured mechanisms for preventing, reporting, and handling sexual violence. It provides protection and support for victims, raises awareness among the academic community, and fosters a safer campus culture.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Needs of the Task Force in Sexual Violence Prevention and Response

Preventing and responding to sexual violence in religious higher education institutions requires the establishment of a clearly defined and well-organized task force. The government mandates that each higher education institution establish a *Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Task Force (Satgas PPKS)*. This obligation is outlined in *Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Permendikbudristek) No. 30 of 2021 on the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence in Higher Education Institutions*. Based on interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with heads of *gender and child study centers*, members of the sexual violence prevention and response task forces, and lecturers at seven religious higher education institutions, the study found that, although government regulations require the establishment of task forces at every university, not all religious universities have a well-structured task force. Some universities do not even have a separate task force, and sexual violence prevention and response duties are often managed by existing *gender and child study centers*.

The need to establish a separate task force with a clear organizational structure is critical, considering the wide range of responsibilities, from prevention, reporting, and case handling to providing recommendations for university leadership. Some universities, particularly non-religious higher education institutions such as *Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM)* (Grehenson, 2025), *Universitas Siber Asia (UNSI)* (2024), *Universitas Katolik Parahyangan (UNPAR)* (2023), *Universitas Airlangga (UNAIR)* (2025), *Universitas Pasundan (Unpas)*, and *IBLAM School of Law*, have successfully established task forces. However, a major challenge remains: the shortage of trained human resources to manage these responsibilities. Several universities face difficulties in providing experts with the necessary skills to handle sexual violence cases, such as psychologists, medical personnel, or trained administrative staff.

*"It is essential to have a team with specific expertise in handling sexual violence cases, such as psychologists and medical personnel. Without them, the task force cannot perform its functions effectively"* (AB, Head of Gender and Child Study Center, University A, Interview, February 2025).

One of the main challenges faced by universities is the lack of personnel with specialized skills to handle sexual violence. This shortage reduces the task force's effectiveness, slows response times, and limits the quality of services. For instance, during an FGD, one religious university reported that they do not have enough staff to conduct policy socialization or provide training necessary to increase understanding of the importance of sexual violence prevention.

*"We have a limited number of personnel, so we have to rely on the Gender and Child Study Center to manage sexual violence prevention. This makes it difficult for us to provide optimal services"* (B, Lecturer at University A, Interview, February 2025).

Furthermore, universities that do not have separate task forces depend on *gender and child study centers* to handle sexual violence issues. This arrangement creates a heavy workload for these centers, which often lack sufficient resources and facilities to provide optimal services. In several cases, these centers also manage other gender and child-related issues, which results in sexual violence prevention and response not receiving adequate attention. For example, research by Musyafaah (2022) indicates that

PSGA not only handles cases in the advocacy domain but also engages in research and community service activities.

Another critical need is policy socialization and training, which serve as preventive measures implemented by universities. These activities involve multiple stakeholders, including university leadership, *gender and child study centers*, administrative staff, and students. Some universities conduct seminars, workshops, and produce educational materials such as pocketbooks and posters distributed across campus (Psikologi UIN Jakarta, 2022; UNY, 2021). Additionally, information on how to report sexual violence is disseminated through social media platforms like Instagram and WhatsApp, as well as through articles raising awareness of the importance of addressing sexual violence.



Figure 1. Sexual violence prevention poster on campus

In addition to the training programs and workshops, universities also utilize visual aids to raise awareness of sexual violence prevention. One such initiative is the distribution of posters across campuses, which provide crucial information on how to report incidents and the resources available for victims. Figure 1 shows a sexual violence prevention poster displayed on campus, highlighting key actions that students and staff can take if they witness or experience sexual violence. The inclusion of QR codes in the poster allows for easy access to reporting links, ensuring that students can quickly and discreetly seek help when needed.

Despite several initiatives to raise awareness about sexual violence on campus, many students and staff still do not clearly understand how to report sexual violence or how cases are handled.

*“Many students do not know where to report if they become victims of sexual violence. We still lack sufficient training to ensure that the entire academic community knows what to do in such situations”* (Lecturer C, Interview, February 2025).

Another emerging challenge is victims’ distrust in reporting incidents. Many victims feel afraid or ashamed to report sexual violence, especially when it involves lecturers or other academic staff. This issue has become a national concern. For example, at *Universitas Hasanuddin (Unhas)*, a student initially hesitated to report due to extreme fear, but eventually filed a complaint after encouragement from friends

and family (Amri, 2024). Following the report, the perpetrator received a severe sanction. Similar cases occurred at UGM (Sastra, 2022), where victims were reluctant to report incidents of sexual violence, and at Universitas Andalas, where students did not report to the police, resulting in unresolved cases (Kompas TV, 2025). During FGDs, several lecturers stated that many victims believe their cases will not be taken seriously or that reporting could damage their own reputation and that of the institution. This situation creates a major obstacle in preventing and handling sexual violence, as efforts to stop such acts cannot proceed effectively without clear reporting.

*"We often find that victims do not want to report because they fear their cases will not be handled seriously or that they themselves will be blamed"* (Lecturer G, Interview, February 2025).

Cultural factors also significantly affect the successful implementation of policies. In some universities, conservative social and cultural values exacerbate the situation, pressuring victims not to report or even blaming them for the incidents. A study conducted by Ester Lince Napitupulu (2021) at Universitas Negeri Semarang (Unnes) found that, among 133 respondents, 59 reported having experienced sexual violence on campus. However, many were reluctant to report due to psychological and cultural fears. Patriarchal norms remain deeply ingrained, and women who report are often perceived as weak or at fault. Consequently, female victims are frequently blamed in sexual violence cases.

The research also identified issues related to the availability of structured and systematic digital applications for reporting sexual violence. Although some universities already use platforms such as WhatsApp, Google Forms, and Instagram to report cases, these applications often lack integration and tracking systems to monitor case progress. Most applications function only as reporting channels without enabling victims to track the handling of their cases, resulting in non-transparent reporting processes.



Figure 2. Example of a sexual violence reporting poster at one UIN campus  
Source: Instagram (2025)

In line with efforts to improve reporting systems, universities have also made strides in raising awareness through visual communication. Figure 2 showcases an example of a sexual violence reporting poster displayed at one of the UIN campuses, emphasizing the importance of reaching out for support if individuals experience or witness any form of violence. Such visual campaigns play a critical role in encouraging victims to report incidents, especially in environments where cultural stigma and fear often prevent them from speaking up. The accessibility of these platforms, such as the contact information provided in the poster, can serve as a bridge to overcoming these barriers, though there is still a need for more integrated and effective reporting systems.

*“We have tried several platforms to report sexual violence, but many challenges remain due to poorly integrated reporting systems. Specialized applications are needed, but they are expensive. This is a major issue for monitoring case handling”* (D, Task Force Member, Interview, February 2025).

Currently, no public Islamic or other state religious universities in Indonesia have their own dedicated applications for reporting sexual violence. Consequently, in several universities, WhatsApp remains the most effective platform due to its widespread use and accessibility, while other platforms like Instagram and Google Forms are not fully utilized. Therefore, the presence of a more integrated and accessible digital reporting system is urgently needed to support the prevention and handling of sexual violence in religious higher education institutions.

Considering these challenges, it is evident that religious universities require significant improvements in establishing well-organized task forces, enhancing trained human resources, and developing more transparent and effective reporting systems. A more serious and structured implementation of government policies at the university level will greatly contribute to creating campuses that are safe from sexual violence.

To address the challenges in handling sexual violence in religious higher education institutions, several critical needs must be met to improve the overall effectiveness of prevention and response efforts. These needs include the establishment of a dedicated task force, comprehensive training for personnel, and enhanced victim support. As highlighted in Table 1, these elements are essential in creating a well-structured and responsive system that can effectively address and manage sexual violence cases on campus. Each of these needs plays a crucial role in ensuring that the academic community is equipped to prevent, report, and respond to incidents of sexual violence.

**Table 1. Needs for Sexual Violence Prevention and Response in Religious Higher Education Institutions**

Need	Description
Establishment of a Separate Task Force	Each religious higher education institution must have a structured task force to handle sexual violence efficiently.
Staff and Personnel Training	Provide appropriate training for psychologists, medical personnel, and administrative staff responsible for handling sexual violence cases.
Policy and Reporting Socialization	Conduct socialization to ensure that the entire academic community understands how to report sexual violence and the case handling procedures.
Enhancing Victim Confidence to Report	Create a safe and supportive environment that encourages victims to report incidents without fear or shame.
Development of a Digital Reporting System	Improve digital applications to report and monitor the progress of sexual violence cases transparently.



The table above illustrates the key needs for sexual violence prevention and response in religious higher education institutions. Every institution is expected to establish a well-structured and organized task force to handle sexual violence cases more effectively. One of the most critical needs identified is the establishment of a separate task force with a clear organizational structure to manage sexual violence cases on campus.

Additionally, training staff and personnel with specialized expertise, such as psychologists and medical personnel, is crucial for effectively executing prevention and response tasks. Policy and reporting socialization are also essential to ensure that all members of the academic community are aware of how to report sexual violence and understand the case handling process. Another equally important need is enhancing victim confidence to report by creating a safe and supportive environment, allowing victims to disclose their experiences without fear of negative consequences. Finally, developing a structured digital reporting system is essential to facilitate reporting and ensure that the handling process can be monitored transparently and efficiently.

### Strategies to Enhance the Effectiveness of the Task Force

Preventing and responding to sexual violence in religious higher education institutions requires well-organized strategies supported by various policies and practical actions. One of the main strategies proposed to enhance the effectiveness of *sexual violence prevention and response task forces* in universities is the strengthening of institutional structures. Although regulations regarding sexual violence prevention and response are clear and well-established, many religious universities still face challenges in forming a clearly structured task force. This situation leads to inefficiencies in handling sexual violence cases. The *Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Permendikbudristek) No. 30 of 2021 on the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence in Higher Education Institutions (2021)* serves as the policy foundation requiring every university to have an independent task force fully responsible for handling such cases. However, in practice, implementation is often hindered by mere formal compliance without genuine commitment to executing the tasks effectively.

As stated by A, Head of the *Gender and Child Study Center (PGSA)* at one university, it is essential to establish a task force with a clear institutional structure that not only exists on paper but can function effectively in practice (Interview, February 2025). This highlights the need for practical work in running the task force rather than merely complying with regulations without producing meaningful impacts on sexual violence prevention and response. One major obstacle is the appointment of personnel who do not fully fulfill their responsibilities. Therefore, it is crucial to clearly define the task force's workflows and programs to ensure sustainability in the long term.

Furthermore, strengthening institutional structures must involve all campus stakeholders, including lecturers, students, and university leadership. All parties must collaborate to create a safer environment that supports sexual violence prevention. One critical element that should exist in religious universities is supporting institutions, such as professional *psychological service centers* (Suwendi, 2019). Not all religious universities provide these services, even though professional psychological support is a crucial entry point in assisting victims of sexual violence. Strengthening institutional structures must be conducted comprehensively and systematically to achieve effective prevention, rather than merely fulfilling administrative obligations.



In addition to institutional strengthening, another strategy involves the use of technology to facilitate sexual violence reporting and provide support to victims. Technology can offer victims a more accessible channel to report incidents anonymously and safely, without fear of stigma or retaliation.

*"Digital reporting systems are extremely important, but even more importantly, the system must be monitored and provide adequate transparency. With the right system, reporting can be conducted more efficiently"* (Lecturer F, Interview, February 2025).

Some universities have started implementing reporting applications, such as WhatsApp or Google Forms, as initial steps in handling sexual violence. However, although these steps are useful, these applications are often poorly integrated and do not allow comprehensive monitoring of case developments. This situation renders case handling less effective and inefficient. F, one of the study informants, stated that the use of more advanced and integrated applications is highly necessary. Applications downloadable through platforms like PlayStore, which are more comprehensive, would be extremely important and hopefully could be implemented across all religious universities in Indonesia. A comprehensive application would allow all campus stakeholders to access and monitor case developments with better transparency and systematically.

According to F, using more advanced reporting applications not only facilitates reporting but also allows relevant parties to monitor and handle cases more systematically and efficiently. With such applications, all campus stakeholders—including university leadership, task forces, lecturers, and students—can collectively oversee and ensure that the handling process is conducted transparently and effectively. The transparency generated by these systems guarantees that each case receives appropriate attention without neglect, while encouraging the entire academic community to respond more proactively to sexual violence.

Moreover, integrated reporting applications can also change the perception of sexual violence on campus. Cases that might previously have been regarded as individual or personal issues are increasingly recognized as collective concerns that must be addressed collectively. Through technology, religious universities can create systems that not only respond quickly to cases but also operate inclusively and transparently, thereby strengthening the campus commitment to preventing and addressing sexual violence.

Additionally, continuous training for staff and lecturers forms part of the proposed strategy to enhance task force effectiveness. This training involves not only administrative staff and medical personnel but also lecturers, who play a critical role in identifying and responding to potential sexual violence on campus. Training provides a better understanding of applicable regulations, how to recognize signs of sexual violence, and how to support victims appropriately.

*"Training for lecturers is very important because they are often the first point of contact for victims. If they do not understand how to handle sexual violence cases correctly, victims will be further neglected"* (C, Lecturer at one religious higher education institution, Interview, February 2025).

Based on the Focus Group Discussion (FGD), participants agreed that training for lecturers and staff aims to raise awareness about sexual violence issues that may occur on campus. This training is particularly important because lecturers and staff are sometimes perpetrators of sexual violence in higher education institutions, as evidenced by incidents at *UGM* and *Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram*, where lecturers were involved. Consequently, training helps lecturers and staff become more aware and cautious in their interactions with students. The training also serves as a warning for both lecturers and students to maintain healthy behaviors and relationships on campus. Although some may consider this training

taboo or unusual due to the sensitivity of sexual violence issues, it is crucial to conduct it. Without such training, the issue remains taboo, whereas properly conducted training can serve as a collective reminder to create a safer campus environment for all.

In addition, universities must develop clear guidelines for lecturers, staff, and students regarding the steps to take if sexual violence occurs. The FGD results in this study emphasized the importance of having detailed guidelines for preventing and handling sexual violence cases on campus. Although universities currently disseminate information via social media, educational tools, and posters, very few provide clear procedures on how to effectively prevent and manage sexual violence. Students, in particular, often feel confused and unsure about where to report incidents, due to fear and uncertainty. For example, in some cases at *Universitas Riau (UNRI)*, victims chose to publicize incidents online rather than report them through formal procedures (BBC, 2022). This situation highlights the urgent need to clarify reporting and case-handling procedures so that victims feel safe and supported in taking appropriate actions. Clear guidelines are expected to reduce confusion and fear among victims and encourage formal and structured reporting.

Furthermore, it is essential for universities to establish systems for evaluating and monitoring the implementation of sexual violence prevention and response policies. Evaluation should not only occur after incidents of sexual violence but also as part of ongoing preventive efforts. Effective monitoring enables universities to identify weaknesses in the system and make necessary adjustments to ensure policies function properly.

*“A clear evaluation system is needed, in which each policy implementation can be regularly monitored and assessed. This allows universities to continuously improve and enhance the effectiveness of the task force”* (E, Interview, February 2025).

However, this evaluation must be conducted fairly and transparently, without favoritism or selective handling of cases. Reports indicate that in some universities, sexual violence cases are often treated selectively, particularly when the perpetrator is an important figure, such as a lecturer. In such cases, resolution through informal reconciliation is preferred over formal legal processes (BBC, 2022; Komariah, 2024; Kompas.id, 2025; Sinombor, 2023; P. C. Wijaya, 2025). This practice undermines justice and reduces public trust in the system. Universities must ensure that all cases are treated equally, regardless of the perpetrator's status or position, to avoid creating the impression that the campus protects sexual violence offenders. Therefore, fair evaluation and monitoring must involve all relevant stakeholders to maintain system integrity and ensure that everyone is treated equitably.

Finally, an essential strategy is to increase the budget for sexual violence prevention and response task forces. Many universities face challenges in allocating sufficient funds to support all task force activities, including training, awareness programs, and facilities for victims. According to a task force member, D, without adequate funding, the task force cannot perform its duties optimally, as many tasks remain under-resourced, especially services required by victims (Interview, February 2025).

With increased funding, sexual violence prevention and response programs can be implemented more extensively and effectively, thereby creating a safer and more supportive campus environment. However, budget increases also present challenges, as they may require diverting funds from other higher-priority activities. Nevertheless, if universities aim to ensure the comprehensive success of sexual violence prevention and response, increasing the budget cannot be delayed. In the future, adequate budget allocation will be crucial to achieving optimal outcomes in sexual violence prevention and response on campus, enabling these efforts to function effectively and sustainably.

In order to overcome the challenges faced by religious higher education institutions in addressing sexual violence, it is crucial to implement strategic actions that enhance the effectiveness of prevention and response efforts. As outlined in Table 2, several strategies can be adopted to strengthen the existing framework, from improving institutional structures to utilizing technology for more transparent reporting systems. These strategies aim to not only address the immediate needs of victims but also create a sustainable system that fosters a culture of awareness, support, and accountability on campus.

**Table 2. Strategies to Enhance the Effectiveness of Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Task Forces in Religious Higher Education Institutions**

Strategy	Description
Strengthening Institutional Structures	Establish a clearly defined and structured task force within the university, involving all campus stakeholders, and ensure that the task force operates effectively rather than merely fulfilling formal obligations.
Use of Technology	Implement integrated and transparent reporting applications to facilitate anonymous and safe sexual violence reporting and enable the efficient monitoring of case progress.
Continuous Training for Staff and Lecturers	Provide training for lecturers and staff to raise awareness of sexual violence issues and equip them to offer appropriate support to victims.
Development of Clear Guidelines	Prepare detailed guidelines for lecturers, staff, and students outlining the steps to take when sexual violence occurs, reducing confusion and fear among victims.
Evaluation and Monitoring System	Establish a fair and transparent evaluation system to monitor the implementation of sexual violence prevention and response policies.
Budget Enhancement	Allocate adequate funding to support all task force activities, including training, awareness campaigns, and facilities for victims.

The table 2 presents the main strategies required to enhance the effectiveness of sexual violence prevention and response task forces in religious higher education institutions. Each strategy provides a detailed description of the concrete steps that universities must take to ensure that sexual violence cases are handled systematically and sustainably. Strengthening institutional structures and utilizing technology will help create a more transparent and effective system, while continuous training for lecturers and staff aims to increase awareness and their capacity to address these issues. Additionally, developing clear guidelines, implementing fair evaluation and monitoring systems, and increasing budget allocations are essential to support the successful execution of these strategies. The effective implementation of all these strategies can create a safer campus environment and strengthen efforts to prevent and respond to sexual violence.

## Discussion

This study shows that *sexual violence prevention and response task forces* in Indonesian religious higher education institutions still face significant challenges. Major obstacles include the limited number of trained human resources, low victim confidence in reporting, persistent patriarchal culture, and the lack of integrated digital reporting systems. Universities that do not have a separate task force often rely on the *Gender and Child Study Center*, resulting in heavy workloads and suboptimal services for victims. Furthermore, socialization and training for the academic community remain limited, leaving many

students and staff unaware of sexual violence reporting procedures and case-handling processes. These factors indicate that, although government regulations exist, their implementation in practice is not yet optimal and remains vulnerable to cultural and structural barriers.

Based on the research findings, several factors influence the obstacles in preventing and handling sexual violence. First, the unequal power relations between lecturers, as the dominant party, and students, as victims, create conditions in which sexual violence continues without effective intervention. Second, the entrenched patriarchal culture on campus reinforces lecturer superiority and discourages victims from reporting, due to fear of stigma or social consequences. Third, the shortage of specialized human resources, such as psychologists or medical personnel, along with the absence of structured digital reporting applications, causes task force responses to be slow and non-transparent. The combination of these factors explains why the implementation of sexual violence prevention and response policies in religious higher education institutions remains suboptimal.

The findings of this study align with previous research that emphasizes the importance of clear policies and consistent implementation to address sexual violence in universities (Rubiano-Matulevich, 2019; Sukeni & Bhanu Prakash, 2023). Prior studies highlight the necessity of establishing internal committees or task forces that facilitate reporting and support victims, which also emerges as a key need in this research. In addition, gender-based approaches through training and education for the academic community serve as important strategies consistent with the findings of this study (Khoiri & Kafa, 2024; Nilawati et al., 2023). The use of technology as a tool for reporting and monitoring cases also aligns with previous studies, where digitalization enables faster access and greater transparency for victims (Pont & Nurfatimah, 2022). This study adds new value by highlighting the context of religious higher education institutions in Indonesia, particularly regarding the influence of patriarchal culture and power imbalances on task force effectiveness.

Historically, this study shows that sexual violence in religious higher education is not a new phenomenon but is related to long-standing power structures and patriarchal culture. Lecturer dominance over students creates power imbalances that increase the risk of sexual violence on campus (Kirkner, Plummer, Findley, & McMahon, 2022; Riwanto, Harisudin, Suryaningsih, & Firmandiaz, 2023). Students' subordinate positions discourage victims from reporting due to fears of academic or social consequences, while institutions often prioritize reputation over victim protection (Gómez, 2022; Nilawati et al., 2023). Consistent with these findings, global studies demonstrate that gender hierarchies and power inequalities in educational institutions are significant factors contributing to repeated sexual violence (Sayadi, Khatami, & Kasastra, 2020; Yount et al., 2024).

From a social perspective, this study highlights the injustice and inequality experienced by victims, particularly female students, who occupy structurally and culturally subordinate positions (Hermawati, 2023; Marfu'ah, Rofi'ah, & Maksun, 2021). The deeply entrenched patriarchal culture on campus pressures victims not to report or even blames them for the incidents they experience (Riwanto et al., 2023). A lack of trust in institutional responses exacerbates the situation, leaving many cases unreported and unaddressed appropriately (Kennedy, Malinen, & Gunn, 2025; Mahmudah & Fatimah, 2022). These factors underscore the need for continuous training for staff and lecturers, as well as the development of transparent digital reporting systems, to provide victims with safe and easily accessible mechanisms (Pont & Nurfatimah, 2022; Voth Schrag, 2017).

From an ideological perspective, the findings emphasize that universities, as educational institutions, should act as agents of change that reduce patriarchy and promote gender justice, rather than perpetuate a culture of dominance that reinforces inequality (Bull, Duggan, & Livesey, 2022). The

implementation of structured *sexual violence prevention and response task forces*, supported by collaboration among stakeholders, becomes a key strategy to create a responsive environment for victims (Gleckman-Krut, Armstrong, & Bonar, 2022; Nursyifa, Somantri, & Ery Seda, 2024). By prioritizing justice for victims through transparent procedures and protecting their rights, institutions can foster a campus culture that is safe and free from sexual violence while mitigating the risk of reputational damage when case handling is conducted openly and consistently (Bull et al., 2022; Cheng, Does, Gündemir, & Shih, 2024).

The study also shows that the unavailability of adequate digital services impedes rapid task force responses, slowing case handling and discouraging victims from reporting (Kirkner et al., 2022; Voth Schrag, 2017). This challenge is compounded by insufficient understanding and socialization of policies among the academic community, resulting in unclear reporting procedures and uncertainty for victims (Fethi, Daigneault, Bergeron, Hébert, & Lavoie, 2022). These conditions reinforce the conclusion that strengthening institutional structures, increasing staff capacity, and integrating digital reporting systems are essential steps to reduce patriarchal dominance and enhance protection for victims on campus.

The purpose of establishing task forces is to create structured mechanisms for preventing, reporting, and handling sexual violence, providing protection and support for victims, raising awareness among the academic community, and fostering a safer campus culture. However, dysfunction arises when task force implementation is suboptimal due to limited resources, power imbalances, patriarchal culture, and inadequate digital reporting systems. This study finds that lecturer dominance and students' subordinate positions create power imbalances that can exacerbate sexual violence on campus, consistent with international literature on *institutional betrayal*, where victims hesitate to report because institutions fail to provide adequate protection and response (Adams-Clark, Harsey, & Freyd, 2024). Cultural and structural barriers, such as patriarchal practices, secretive institutional cultures, and lack of accountability, further worsen the situation and shield perpetrators from accountability (Sinha & Bondestam, 2022; Towl & Humphreys, 2022; Wooten & Mitchell, 2015).

Moreover, limited trained human resources and financial support constitute significant barriers to task force effectiveness. Related studies emphasize that strengthening human resource capacity and providing adequate funding are necessary to develop task forces capable of handling sexual violence comprehensively, including counseling services, case monitoring, and rapid, secure digital reporting mechanisms (Mitra et al., 2022; Soenarto-Putri et al., 2024). Without such support, reporting processes become slow, case responses are delayed, and victims' trust in institutions declines, preventing the task force from fully achieving its primary goal of creating campuses free from sexual violence.

Furthermore, this study highlights the importance of a survivor-centered institutional approach, in which transparent policies and reporting procedures can enhance victim safety and confidence to report incidents (Franklin, Jin, Ashworth, & Viada, 2016; McElveen, 2025). Without clear mechanisms and integrated digital systems, victims still rely on informal channels or social media, which do not guarantee effective case resolution (Kirkner et al., 2022; Voth, Dixie, Megan, & Leila, 2021). Therefore, the emerging dysfunction not only affects the speed and effectiveness of case handling but also reinforces patriarchal culture and power dominance, which hinder social change within religious higher education environments.

Consequently, the findings underscore that strengthening institutional structures, increasing human resource capacity, and integrating digital reporting systems alongside survivor-centered practices constitute crucial strategies to address task force dysfunction, reduce power imbalances, and build a safer, more just, and responsive campus environment regarding sexual violence (Bull et al., 2022; Sukeni & Bhanu Prakash, 2023).

## **CONCLUSION**

This study demonstrates that the effectiveness of sexual violence prevention and response task forces in Indonesian religious higher education institutions still faces significant challenges. The main findings indicate that dysfunction arises due to limited human resources, power imbalances between lecturers and students, persistent patriarchal culture, and the lack of integrated digital reporting systems. These conditions result in low victim confidence in institutions, slow responses to cases, and difficulties in ensuring protection and justice for victims. Moreover, this study emphasizes the importance of survivor-centered approaches, continuous training for staff and lecturers, and strengthened institutional structures to create campuses that are safe, responsive, and equitable regarding sexual violence.

The scientific contribution of this study lies in mapping the needs and challenges of task forces in religious higher education institutions, providing empirical data on structural, cultural, and technical barriers in the implementation of sexual violence prevention and response policies. This study also adds a new perspective on the relationship between power imbalances, patriarchal culture, and institutional dysfunction, highlighting the importance of integrated digital systems and cross-stakeholder collaboration. Therefore, this research provides both practical and conceptual insights for developing more effective policies and strategies to establish campuses free from sexual violence, particularly in the context of religious higher education institutions.

This study has limitations, including its focus on seven religious higher education institutions in Indonesia and reliance on qualitative data collected through interviews and FGDs. As a result, the findings may not fully represent all higher education institutions in the country. Future research could expand the sample, integrate quantitative data to measure intervention effectiveness, and explore the implementation of digital reporting technologies in greater depth. Longitudinal approaches could also be employed to assess the long-term impact of strengthening task forces on reducing sexual violence incidents on campus.

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