



# Factors associated with Sexual Violence Prevention Behavior among Female Students in Indonesia

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**Abstract:**

**Introduction:** Sexual violence is an act of speech or action committed by a person to intimidate, control, coerce, and manipulate another person to engage in unwanted sexual activity. This study aimed to analyze factors associated with sexual violence prevention behavior among female students in Indonesia.

**Methods:** This study used a cross-sectional research design. The sampling method used was simple random sampling, yielding a total of 259 respondents. Data were collected via an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, specifically the Chi-Square test.

**Results:** The results showed that there was no significant relationship between knowledge and sexual violence prevention behavior ( $p$ -value = 0.759). However, there were significant relationships between prevention behavior and the risk factors, such as attitude ( $p$  = 0.036), role of parents ( $p$  < 0.001), role of peers ( $p$  = 0.010), role of educational institutions ( $p$  < 0.001), and intensity of access to information media ( $p$  < 0.001).

**Discussion:** The findings support Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, highlighting that positive attitudes can enhance preventive behaviors. Furthermore, parental involvement through open dialogue and sex education, along with peer support and proactive roles of educational institutions, play a vital role in shaping protective behavior.

**Conclusion:** There are significant relationships between attitudes, the role of parents, peers, educational institutions, and access to media information with sexual violence prevention behavior. Therefore, frequent access to media information, especially through digital literacy and social media campaigns, significantly strengthens preventive actions among adolescents.

**Keywords:** Sexual Violence, Girls, Behavior, Prevention, Adolescent health, Reproductive health, Role of parents, Female students.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a crucial stage of life that is typically influenced by biological processes (both cognitive and physical) within a social, political, economic, and cultural framework [1]. Adolescence is a transition period from childhood to adulthood characterized by complex physical, emotional, and social development. In Indonesia, adolescents aged 13-17 years are vulnerable to various forms of violence, including sexual violence. The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KemenPPPA) reported that until November 2023, there were 8,489 cases of sexual violence against women, which is feared to continue to increase [2].

Surabaya City has the highest number of reported cases of sexual violence against women in East Java Province between 2019-2023. The number of cases of sexual violence against women that have occurred and been reported in Surabaya City from 2019-2023 was 465 cases. SIMFONI PPA data also explained the number of victims in Surabaya City by age in 2019-2023 where victims aged <6 years totalled 35 victims, victims aged 6-12 years totalled 166 victims, victims aged 13-17 years totalled 220 victims, victims aged 18-24 years totalled 41 victims, victims aged 25-44 years totalled 21 victims, and victims aged 45-59 totalled 3 victims. The following information from the SIMFONI PPA data also clarified the number of casualties in Surabaya City by educational level in 2019-2023. A total of 23 victims had never attended school, 24 victims had completed PG or KG level education, 25 victims had completed tertiary education, 90 victims had completed high school education, 139 victims had completed primary school education, and 154 victims had completed junior high school education [2].

Diverse social, cultural, and economic backgrounds can influence mindsets and behaviors in preventing sexual violence. Lack of comprehensive sexual supervision and education in schools is also a factor that can influence behaviour.

Based on data from the Annual Record (CATAHU) of violence against women, it was reported that in 2022, a total of 339,782 cases of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) had occurred against women, and 336,804 occurred in the personal sphere [3]. Based on data from complaints to Komnas Perempuan, the forms of violence reported in the Annual Record (CATAHU) in 2022 were 463 cases of women experiencing economic violence, 713 cases of women experiencing physical violence, 1,086 cases of women experiencing sexual violence, and 1,494 cases of women experiencing psychological violence [3]. Sexual violence is the second-highest case after psychological violence experienced by women. According to the Annual Record (CATAHU), Gender-Based Violence (GBV) against women in educational institutions was dominated by sexual violence, which amounted to 87.91% [3]. Based on this data, it is also stated that high school is the level of education with the highest number of victims of sexual violence, with 929 cases reported.

Sexual violence causes various negative impacts experienced by victims. Victims may have long-term

impairment of sexual and reproductive function, as well as bruising and injuries brought on by the perpetrator's coercion. Additionally, survivors of sexual assault will have long-term melancholy, phobias, nightmares, and extreme distrust of other people [4]. Sexual violence has a highly detrimental impact on victims; therefore, individuals need to engage in behaviors that help prevent it.

Qualitative research conducted by Solehati *et al.* [5] showed the necessity for education to prevent sexual violence against children in schools in a thorough and organized way by integrating rules with cultural and religious values in order to give children safety and skills. Parental awareness is crucial, and assuming full parental responsibilities is one way to prevent sexual offenses against children [6]. Bandura, in the book of Social Learning Theory, shows that mass media also play an influential role in shaping social behavior and attitudes [7]. This study analyzes social factors such as the role of peers and institutions, which is designed by the Theory of Planned Behavior, which has not been widely used in the context of preventing sexual violence among adolescents in Indonesia, especially in urban areas such as Surabaya. Hence, the study aimed to analyze the factors associated with sexual violence prevention behavior in high school students.

## 2. METHODS

### 2.1. Study Design

This research employed a quantitative approach with an analytic observational design and a cross-sectional framework. The study aimed to examine the relationship between multiple factors (knowledge, attitude, parental role, peer role, institutional support, and media access) and sexual violence prevention behaviors among high school female students.

### 2.2. Participants

The study population comprised all female students at SMA Negeri 19 Surabaya, totaling 722. The sample size was calculated using the LEMESHOW formula [8], with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, yielding a minimum required sample of 259 high school students from the Surabaya City population. Between January and March of 2024, data was gathered. The data were gathered using a self-administered online questionnaire via Google Forms, which was distributed after obtaining informed consent and validated for reliability. A simple random sampling technique was employed to ensure equal opportunity for all members of the population to be selected.

### 2.3. Instrumentation and Variable

The main instrument was a structured questionnaire consisting of eight sections, designed to measure both independent and dependent variables. Before distribution to the main sample, the questionnaire underwent a pilot study with 31 respondents from a comparable group not included in the main sample. This was conducted to evaluate the instrument's statistical validity and reliability.

The study assessed six key variables using structured questionnaires (**Supplementary 1**), each with a defined scoring system and classification threshold. Knowledge was measured using six questions, with correct answers scored as 1; respondents were considered knowledgeable if their total score exceeded the average of 4.55. Attitude was evaluated through nine Likert-scale questions (strongly agree to strongly disagree), with scores above the average of 29.62 indicating a positive attitude. Similarly, the role of parents was assessed using 12 items, with a total score above 38.03 signifying a good parental role. The influence of peers was measured using eight Likert-scale questions (always to never), with scores above the mean of 24.01 interpreted as positive peer influence. The role of educational institutions was determined using six similar items; scores above 17.91 were considered supportive. Lastly, the intensity of access to media information about sexual violence was gauged through eight questions using the same Likert scale, where scores exceeding the mean of 21.1 indicated high media exposure. These variables collectively provided a comprehensive view of the individual, familial, social, and informational factors potentially influencing the respondents' awareness and attitudes toward sexual violence.

### 2.3.1. Sexual Violence Prevention Behavior

Consisted of 8 questions that describe all forms of responses or actions from respondents towards efforts made to avoid sexual violence. Respondents' answers used a Likert scale (always, often, sometimes, and never). Categorized as positive if the score is more than the mean.

### 2.3.2. Knowledge of Sexual Violence

Consisted of several multiple-choice questions that assess respondents' understanding of the definition, types, causes, impacts, and preventive actions related to sexual violence. Responses were scored based on accuracy. Categorized as positive if the score is more than the mean.

### 2.3.3. Attitude Toward Sexual Violence Prevention

Consisted of statements that assess respondents' agreement or disagreement with statements about preventing sexual violence. Responses used a Likert scale (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree). Categorized as positive if the score is more than the mean.

### 2.3.4. Parental Role in Prevention

Consisted of questions that measure the involvement of parents in educating and supporting respondents to prevent sexual violence. Responses used a Likert scale (always, often, sometimes, and never). Categorized as positive if the score is more than the mean.

### 2.3.5. Peer Role in Prevention

Consisted of questions about how peers support and influence the prevention of sexual violence. Responses used a Likert scale (always, often, sometimes, and never). Categorized as positive if the score is more than the mean.

### 2.3.6. Educational Institution's Role

Consisted of questions that assess the school's role in providing support and education related to sexual violence prevention. Responses used a Likert scale (always, often, sometimes, and never). Categorized as positive if the score is more than the mean.

### 2.3.7. Media Information Access

Consisted of questions regarding how frequently respondents access information from various media sources related to sexual violence prevention. Responses used a Likert scale (always, often, sometimes, and never). Categorized as high if the score is more than the mean.

## 2.4. Data Collection

This research obtained ethical approval from the Health Research Ethics Commission in the Faculty of Dentistry, Universitas Airlangga, with reference number 0047/HRECC.FODM/I/2024. The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki for research involving human subjects. This study also collects consent from the teachers, who serve as guardians for the respondents. The questionnaire instruments used to assess knowledge, attitudes, the role of parents, peers, educational institutions, media access, and sexual violence prevention behavior were tested for validity and reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.612 to 0.767, indicating acceptable reliability.

## 2.5. Data Analysis

To describe each variable, a frequency distribution with the proportion (%) was conducted on the independent variables (knowledge, attitudes, role of parents, role of peers, role of educational institutions, and intensity of access to media information about sexual violence) and the dependent variable, namely, sexual violence prevention behavior. The statistical analysis used in this study was the Chi-Square test to determine the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The tested variable was considered to have a significant relationship if the *p*-value was less than 0.05. Odds ratio and confidence interval 95% also provided.

## 3. RESULT

Based on Table 1, a total of 259 respondents in this study, most of whom were 16 years old (124; 47.9%). Most respondents lived near the school (186, 71.8%) and used private vehicles to commute to school (231, 89.2%). Additionally, 234 respondents (90.3%) lived with their parents, and 116 respondents (44.8%) had two siblings. A total of 106 respondents (40.9%) reported not having a boyfriend or girlfriend. In terms of knowledge about sexual violence, 148 respondents (57.1%) demonstrated good understanding, while 146 respondents (56.4%) held negative attitudes. Regarding parental roles, 134 respondents (51.7%) indicated that their parents played a good or supportive role. Conversely, 138 respondents (53.3%) reported that their peers played a less supportive or negative role. Educational institutions were perceived

as playing a good or supportive role by 141 respondents (54.4%). Furthermore, 138 respondents (53.3%) had low intensity in seeking information through media, while 144

respondents (55.6%) exhibited positive behavior in preventing sexual violence.

**Table 1. Characteristics of respondents (N=259).**

Variable	n	%
<b>Age</b>		
15 years old	23	8.9
16 years old	124	47.9
17 years old	76	29.3
18 years old	31	12.0
19 years old	5	1.9
<b>Distance from Home to School</b>		
Far	73	28.2
Near	186	71.8
<b>Vehicle Used</b>		
Private Vehicle	231	89.2
Public Vehicle	28	10.8
<b>Place of Residence</b>		
Boarding House/ Renting	14	5.4
Lived with Parents	234	90.3
Lived with Other Families	11	4.2
<b>Number of Siblings</b>		
1	35	13.5
2	116	44.8
3	74	28.6
4	24	9.3
5	10	3.9
<b>Dating Status</b>		
Ever had a relationship	100	38.6
Being in a relationship	53	20.5
Never had any relationship	106	40.9
<b>Knowledge</b>		
Lack	111	42.9
Good	148	57.1
<b>Attitudes toward Sexual Violence Prevention</b>		
Negative	113	43.6
Positive	146	56.4
<b>Role of Parents</b>		
Lack	125	48.3
Good	134	51.7
<b>Role of Peers</b>		
Lack	138	53.3
Good	121	46.7
<b>Role of Educational Institution</b>		
Lack	118	45.6
Good	141	54.4
<b>Information Media Intensity</b>		
Low	138	53.3
High	121	46.7
<b>Sexual Violence Prevention Behavior</b>		
Negative	115	44.4
Positive	144	55.6

Source: Processed data, 2024.

**Table 2. Factors associated with sexual violence prevention behavior.**

Variable	Sexual Violence Prevention Behavior				p-value	OR (CI 95%)		
	Negative (n=115)		Positive (n=144)					
	n	%	n	%				
<b>Knowledge</b>								
Lack	51	45.9	60	54.1	0.759	1.17 (0.69 - 1.81)		
Good	64	43.2	84	56.8				
<b>Attitudes toward sexual violence prevention</b>								
Negative	59	52.2	54	47.8	0.036	1.76 (1.09 - 2.84)		
Positive	56	38.4	90	61.6				
<b>Role of Parents</b>								
Lack	73	58.4	52	41.6	<0.001	3.08 (1.88 - 5.02)		
Good	42	31.3	92	68.7				
<b>Role of Peers</b>								
Lack	72	52.2	66	47.8	0.010	1.97 (1.22 - 3.18)		
Good	43	35.5	78	64.5				
<b>Role of educational institution</b>								
Lack	67	56.8	51	43.2	<0.001	2.54 (1.52 - 4.11)		
Good	48	34.0	93	66.0				
<b>Information media intensity</b>								
Low	76	55.1	62	44.9	<0.001	2.63 (1.62 - 4.27)		
High	39	32.2	82	67.8				

Source: Processed data, 2024.

Based on Table 2, attitudes ( $p = 0.036$ ), the role of parents ( $p < 0.001$ ), the role of peers ( $p = 0.01$ ), the role of educational institutions ( $p < 0.001$ ), and the intensity of access to information media ( $p < 0.001$ ) were related to sexual violence prevention behavior. In contrast, the variable of knowledge about sexual violence did not show a significant relationship.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

This study aimed to analyze the factors associated with sexual violence prevention behavior among female students at State Senior High School 19 Surabaya. The results showed that knowledge did not have a significant relationship with sexual violence prevention behavior ( $p$ -value = 0.759). However, there is a significant relationship between prevention behavior and attitudes, the roles of parents, peers, and educational institutions, and access to information media.

This study found that the level of knowledge about sexual violence did not always correlate with preventive actions. This finding aligned with research by Fuaidah [9], which demonstrated that although students have a good understanding of sexual violence, not all of them implemented preventive measures in their daily lives.

The results showed that attitudes towards sexual violence had a significant relationship with preventive behavior. These findings aligned with research conducted by Pradanie *et al.* [10], which stated that attitude was the factor most significantly related to sexual violence prevention behavior. Adolescents with negative attitudes tended to engage in risky sexual behavior, whereas a positive attitude increased the likelihood of taking

preventive actions. This suggested that the more positive the attitude of female students towards preventing sexual violence, the greater their inclination to act to prevent it. This study supported Social Cognitive Theory [7], which posits that a person's attitudes and beliefs can shape actual behavior. Similarly, research by Edwards *et al.* [11] found that adolescents with positive attitudes towards sexual violence prevention were more likely to avoid risky situations.

The role of parents had a highly significant relationship with sexual violence prevention behavior ( $p$ -value <0.001). Parents who actively provide sexual education to their children enhance awareness and equip them with skills to address potential sexual violence [6]. Open communication between parents and children about sexuality and sexual violence was crucial in fostering a protective environment.

Parents played an important role in preventing sexual violence. This was in accordance with the Program for Combating Violence against Women and Children, which emphasized that parents served as key implementers of promotive and preventive measures [5]. Preventive actions taken by parents can be achieved through sexuality education, monitoring activities, and fostering effective communication. The implementation of sexuality education was most effective when parents were actively involved, providing understanding about healthy sexual behavior through lectures and discussions. This was in line with research by Riani *et al.* [12], which stated that both parents have a pivotal role to play in preventing child sexual violence through efficacious communication and early sexual education.

Parents' encouragement for children to be aware of the surrounding environment can be fostered through effective communication, with parents acting as communicators. This aligned with other research, which said that effective communication between parents and children regarding sexual abuse is imperative for prevention [13]. In addition, parental supervision had been shown to reduce the likelihood of physical attacks. Previous research showed that a close parent-child relationship increased adolescents' ability to choose prosocial friends [14]. However, the processed results of the questionnaire revealed a contrasting finding: only 100 respondents (39%) stated that their parents played an open role and attempted to answer questions related to sexuality. Parents had the potential to create a supportive environment by engaging in open and honest communication about their children's sexuality. This environment can influence the development of individual behavior [7].

This study also demonstrates that peer support has a significant relationship with sexual violence prevention behavior. Research findings indicate that sexual violence is prevalent in adolescent romantic relationships, with heterosexual males being the most frequently reported perpetrators [15]. Consequently, maintaining a social connection with the opposite sex and refraining from romantic involvement emerges as a potential strategy for mitigating the risk of sexual violence. The role of peers in providing emotional and social support to adolescents is also noteworthy. Peer support can be facilitated through a peer education model that has demonstrated efficacy in enhancing knowledge and self-efficacy to prevent physical sexual violence [16]. This finding aligns with the extant literature, which has demonstrated that peer education is among the most efficacious strategies for enhancing adolescents' sexual knowledge, attitudes, and behavior [17].

Peer support can be facilitated through a peer education model that has proven successful in enhancing knowledge and self-efficacy to prevent physical sexual violence [16]. This assertion is further substantiated by a study conducted by Elisa *et al.* [17], which demonstrates that the dissemination of knowledge through peer education significantly impacts adolescents' attitudes regarding the prevention of sexual violence.

Schools play a pivotal role in shaping awareness and prevention of sexual violence (*p*-value <0.001). This study finds that female students who receive education from schools about sexual violence are more likely to implement preventive behavior. In adolescents, social support from peers serves as a crucial source of support, helping to prevent the risk of adolescent sexual violence [18]. In addition, educational institutions play an important role in prevention because almost one fourth of students' time is spent in the school environment, so that the role of school principals, teachers, staff, and students can reduce the number of sexual violence cases [19].

Research conducted by Islamiyati *et al.* [20] found that the roles of teachers and the schools are needed to help prevent and overcome sexual violence. Educational

institutions can prevent sexual violence by implementing learning programs that incorporate sexual education. The integration of sexual education within educational institutions has been demonstrated to positively influence the social environment, develop self-confidence, and increase positive behavior models in accordance with the assumptions of Social Cognitive Theory that environmental factors provide limits to behavior [21].

The implementation of the Population Alert School (SSK) can be an example of the role of educational institutions in implementing population education, family planning, and family development through curriculum integration and external activities outside the classroom. Research conducted by Kartikasari and Hidayah [22] showed that the Population Alert School (SSK) is an effort to reduce juvenile delinquency, such as free sex, substance abuse, and other social challenges. In addition, research by Wafa *et al.* [23] also indicated that the implementation of sexual violence prevention can be through the school's commitment to implement regulations through school environment pickets carried out by counselling teachers and transparency of sexual violence prevention efforts through communication between student guardians and teachers to provide information on preventing sexual violence.

In learning various behaviors, the source of symbolic modeling is provided by television media, films, visual media, and others, which are sources of social learning [7]. Research conducted by Subtiwati *et al.* [24] demonstrated that the use of social media is a risk factor for sexual violence prevention. The utilization of media, gender-perspective campaigns can direct people to form values, ideas, and meanings towards preventing sexual violence [25]. Consequently, the regulation and education of media utilization emerge as a pivotal element in the prevention of sexual violence.

Research conducted by Permatasari *et al.* [26] pointed out that digital literacy is a potential approach in reducing and overcoming sexual violence in social media. Apart from digital literacy, research conducted by Kurnia *et al.* [27] demonstrated that short films are a medium that can be accessed by respondents to retrieve information in the form of behavior and self-awareness in efforts to prevent sexual violence. Through short film media that combine visual and audiovisual elements and are accessible to students, it is possible to foster autonomous awareness and understanding that influence anti-sexual violence behavior [28].

Adolescents are capable not only of consuming one-way information media but also of producing two-way interactive forms of communication. Adolescents are required to always be active, innovative, and selective in the use of social media. One way that teenagers can communicate in two directions is by using internet-based media, participating in virtual talk shows, and discussing directly to get information about sexual violence. A social media campaign informed by a gender perspective can serve as a conduit for disseminating information regarding sexual violence, thereby fostering the development of

communal values, concepts, and interpretations aimed at preventing such incidents [25].

The data collection process in this study yielded information that occasionally did not reflect the actual situation of the respondents. This discrepancy can be attributed to the influence of variables such as differences in understanding, thoughts, and opinions, which were honestly expressed by the respondents and influenced the completion of the research questionnaire. This study also does not describe the actual data related to the incidence and victims of sexual violence that occurred at SMA Negeri 19. The primary focus of this study is the examination of factors contributing to the development of sexual violence prevention behavior.

## 5. LIMITATIONS

This study has several limitations. Its cross-sectional design prevents conclusions about causality. Data were self-reported, which may be subject to social desirability bias. The study was also limited to one school, so the findings may not be generalizable to other settings. Future research should involve broader samples and consider qualitative methods to explore underlying factors in greater depth.

## CONCLUSION

This study discovered that while attitudes, parental involvement, peer support, educational institutions, and media information access were significantly correlated with sexual violence prevention behavior among female students, knowledge alone was not. These findings imply that key elements of successful prevention strategies include promoting access to trustworthy media content, building peer and school support networks, promoting positive attitudes, and promoting open parent-child communication. In order to create an environment that supports adolescents in developing protective behaviors and making informed decisions to prevent sexual violence, families, schools, and communities must work together.

## AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The authors confirm their contributions to this paper as follows: L.A.S., M.M., and R.C.: The study conception and design were conducted by; R.C.: Data collection was carried out by; L.A.S., R.C., and Y.P.D.: Data analysis and interpretation were performed by; L.A.S, M.M., M.E., and R.C.: Methodology development was contributed by; L.A.S.: The investigation was led by; L.A.S., Y.P.D., M.E., A.C.S., and L.L.: The manuscript was drafted by; All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of the manuscript.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SSK	= <i>Sekolah Siaga Kependudukan</i> (Population Alert School)
KemenPPPA	= <i>Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak</i> (The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection)

SIMFONI PPA = *Sistem Informasi Online Perlindungan (Perempuan dan Anak/ Online Information System for the Protection of Women and Children)*

CATAHU = *Catatan Tahunan* (the Annual Record)  
GBV = Gender-based Violence

## ETHICS APPROVAL AND CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

This research obtained ethical approval from the Health Research Ethics Commission in the Faculty of Dentistry, Universitas Airlangga, Indonesia with the reference number 0047/HRECC.FODM/I/2024.

## HUMAN AND ANIMAL RIGHTS

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of institutional and/or research committee and with the 1975 Declaration of Helsinki, as revised in 2013.

## CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION

This study also collects consent from the teachers as guardians for the respondents.

## STANDARDS OF REPORTING

STROBE guidelines were followed.

## AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIALS

The datasets generated and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author [L.A.S] upon reasonable request.

## FUNDING

None.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author(s) declare no conflict of interest, financial or otherwise.

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## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

Supplementary material is available on the Publisher's website.

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