Community-Based Science Education on Sexual Violence Prevention: A Case Study at St. Xaverius Catholic High School Gunungsitoli Bintang Laut Teluk Dalam

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Abstract: Sexual violence in schools is a serious and growing concern that demands a comprehensive educational and preventive response. This study aims to introduce science-based education on the recognition and prevention of sexual violence among senior high school students through a community intervention model. A case study approach was conducted in two private high schools in the Nias Islands, involving five lecturers from the Pastoral High School and 154 students from grades X and XI. The intervention included socialization sessions, knowledge transfer, and structured assistance from school principals and teachers. The educational content was enriched by legal perspectives from the Nias and South Nias Police Departments, psychological insights, and child protection material from the Center for Child Protection Studies. The findings reveal strong student engagement, active participation in discussions, and increased awareness regarding the forms and dangers of sexual violence. The program encouraged critical reflection and fostered a sense of responsibility among students. Overall, this community-based science education initiative shows promising outcomes in empowering students as agents of change and in promoting a safer, more supportive school environment.

Keywords: children and women; community-based intervention; science education; sexual violence.

Introduction

Sexual violence is a pervasive issue with lasting physical and psychological impacts, particularly among women and children, the most vulnerable populations both globally and in Indonesia (Neherta et al., 2015). Despite the enactment of Law No. 12 of 2022 on Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence, which emphasizes prevention, victim protection, and recovery (Griffin et al., 2022), reports of abuse remain prevalent. This reflects a critical gap between the existence of legal instruments and their effective implementation at the grassroots level (Suardi et al., 2024). Research shows that legal enforcement

alone is insufficient; what is needed is a preventive, educational, and community-rooted approach to address this complex issue comprehensively.

Recent national reports from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) indicate that more than 800 cases of violence occurred in educational settings in 2023, including sexual violence, physical abuse, and bullying (Komisi Perlindungan Anak Indonesia, 2024). Data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KemenPPPA) through the SIMFONI-PPA system show that children remain disproportionately vulnerable to sexual violence, often perpetrated within school environments (KemenPPPA,

2023). These findings underscore the need for comprehensive, school-based prevention strategies that go beyond punitive measures to include early sexual education and social awareness programs. Empirical evidence demonstrates that interactive approaches such as combining lectures, question-and-answer sessions, and video-based learning significantly improve students' knowledge and attitudes toward preventing sexual violence, bullying, and cybercrime (Asmara, Prasetyo, & Ningsih, 2024). Moreover, schools must be positioned not only as academic institutions but also as spaces for fostering empathy, respect, and gender sensitivity, aligning with national regulations such as the Ministry of Education Regulation No. 46/2023 on the prevention of violence in educational units(Kemendikbudristek, 2023). Such insights reinforce the relevance of community-based science education models that integrate legal, psychological, and participatory approaches to build students' cognitive and affective competencies in preventing sexual violence.

Recent studies also underscore the urgency of addressing sexual violence among children and adolescents in Indonesia, as reflected in WHO (2020) and Komnas Perempuan (2023) data indicating persistently high prevalence rates and low reporting due to stigma and limited access to justice (Anggraini et al., 2024). The school environment, alongside family and community support systems, plays a pivotal role in fostering students' awareness and skills to respond to risky situations effectively. However, many educational institutions have yet to integrate sexual violence prevention into their curricula, and conventional lecture-based approaches often fail to engage students meaningfully. Experimental evidence demonstrates that interactive methods such as role play can significantly improve students' knowledge of sexual violence prevention showing an average score increase of 38.11 points ($p < 0.05$), while also enhancing social skills, communication, empathy, and the courage to address potentially harmful situations (Anggraini et al., 2024). These findings support the adoption of community-based and interactive pedagogies, including science education interventions, to equip students with both cognitive and affective competencies necessary for preventing sexual violence.

This research introduces a novel approach by integrating science education as a medium for community-based intervention to prevent sexual violence. While many existing programs focus on character education or legal awareness, few leverage science education as a transformative platform to develop students' self-awareness, critical thinking, and understanding of bodily autonomy. The intervention program, titled "My Self is Valuable: Recognizing and Preventing Sexual Violence," was implemented in two private high schools in Nias Island, Indonesia Santu Xaverius Gunungsitoli and Bintang Laut Teluk Dalam regions where socio-cultural dynamics often silence discussions about gender-based violence. By embedding gender-sensitive values into science instruction, this model addresses a critical gap in both education and protection systems. It not only enhances students' scientific literacy but also fosters a safe, informed, and resilient youth generation.

In the Indonesian context, children and women remain the primary victims of violence, both in domestic and institutional environments (Glenn et al., 2018). Actions such as harassment, verbal abuse, physical assault, and even sexual exploitation or murder are serious violations of human dignity and have long-term consequences for victims' mental and emotional development (Afolabi et al., 2025). Schools, as part of the educational ecosystem, are not immune to such incidents; in fact, they can serve both as risk sites and as platforms for intervention.

In this regard, the role of schools is vital not only to provide academic instruction but also to shape character and instill values of empathy, respect, and gender awareness. Legal frameworks such as Law No. 12 of 2022 aim to ensure protection through formal mechanisms. However, implementation must be supported by awareness, vigilance, and collective action within schools, families, and communities (Abeid et al., 2015). The synergy between regulation and education is essential to creating environments that are safe, inclusive, and empowering.

Recent national data highlight the urgent need for comprehensive strategies to address sexual violence in Indonesia. In 2023 alone, 401,975 cases of violence against women were recorded, with 24.69% classified as sexual violence (Lubis, 2024 as cited in Anggraini et al., 2025). The enactment of the Crime of Sexual Violence Law (Law No. 12 of 2022) and the Health Law (Law No. 17 of 2023) has established a legal framework that not only protects victims but also prescribes standardized procedures for prevention and management (Anggraini et al., 2025; Komnas Perempuan, 2023). Empirical findings demonstrate that the understanding of service providers regarding legal and procedural aspects significantly influences the effectiveness of sexual violence case management ($\beta = 0.450$, $p < 0.05$), underscoring the importance of targeted training and interdisciplinary collaboration (Anggraini et al., 2025). These insights reinforce the premise that prevention programs such as community-based science education integrating legal, psychological, and scientific perspectives can play a pivotal role in equipping students with the knowledge and competencies

necessary to prevent and respond to sexual violence effectively.

Sexual violence remains a critical public health and human rights issue in Indonesia, with persistent prevalence in school settings despite the enactment of comprehensive legal frameworks such as Law No. 12/2022 and Ministry of Education Regulation No. 46/2023. National data from KPAI, KemenPPPA, and Komnas Perempuan reveal significant implementation gaps, particularly in preventive education and community engagement. This study addresses this urgent need by introducing a pioneering community-based science education model for sexual violence prevention, an approach that uniquely integrates legal, psychological, and gender-sensitive perspectives into science instruction. Unlike conventional character education or legal awareness programs, this model leverages interactive, evidence-based pedagogies within the science curriculum to enhance students' cognitive and affective competencies. Implemented in the culturally distinct context of Nias Island, where gender-based violence discourse is often silenced, this intervention represents an innovative and contextually responsive strategy with the potential for scalable impact across diverse educational settings.

Therefore, this study emphasizes the strategic role of science education as a space for value transmission, critical engagement, and student empowerment. It seeks to demonstrate how integrating gender awareness and violence prevention into scientific learning contexts can contribute to sustainable behavioral change. Ultimately, this research aspires to support national efforts in building a resilient and high-quality generation, equipped not only with knowledge but also with the moral compass to confront social challenges (Suardi et al., 2024).

Method

Time and Place of Research

In qualitative research, the time and place of study are essential for establishing the research context and ensuring transferability of findings (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This study was conducted in January, 2025 at two public high schools in South Nias, Indonesia. Both schools are located in urban areas and were purposively selected based on three criteria: (1) active student organizations, (2) willingness to participate in a prevention program, and (3) accessibility for the research team.

Tools and Materials

The selection of tools and materials in intervention-based research plays a significant role in ensuring message clarity and learner engagement (Mayer, 2020).

This study utilized laptops, LCD projectors, and PowerPoint slides to facilitate the delivery of educational content. The materials consisted of:
1. Legal aspects of sexual violence prevention, delivered by the Nias and South Nias Police.
2. Psychological and child protection perspectives, presented by the Center for Child Studies and Protection – Nias.
3. Science-based community intervention modules, developed by the research team to promote interactive and contextually relevant learning.

Research Methods

The case study approach is widely recognized for providing an in-depth exploration of contemporary issues within real-life contexts, particularly when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin, 2018). In this study, the case study method was chosen to investigate how science-based community interventions can introduce and prevent sexual violence among high school students. This approach enables the exploration of complex social phenomena through multiple sources of evidence, aligning with the recommendations of recent school-based prevention research (Orchowski et al., 2023).

Research Stages

Structuring research into clear stages enhances both process transparency and replicability (Flick, 2022). The study was carried out in three sequential stages:
1. Preparation
   Coordination with school principals and teachers, development of educational materials, and logistical arrangements.
2. Implementation
   Structured socialization sessions delivered by experts from law enforcement, child protection agencies, and the research team. Sessions incorporated interactive lectures, real-life case discussions, and multimedia tools to enhance student engagement.
3. Reflection and Follow-Up
   Guided discussions to capture students' perspectives, feedback collection, and facilitation of a school-based anti-sexual violence community.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is a flexible and rigorous method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2021). In this study, data were collected through participant observation, field notes, and semi-structured interviews with students and teachers. The analysis followed an inductive coding process to allow patterns to emerge naturally from the data. Triangulation was achieved by

integrating multiple data sources and perspectives, thereby enhancing the trustworthiness of the findings in line with best practices in program evaluation (Pliogou et al., 2025).

The overall research process is illustrated in Figure 1, which depicts the flow from preparation to reflection, highlighting the interactive and multi-stakeholder nature of the intervention.
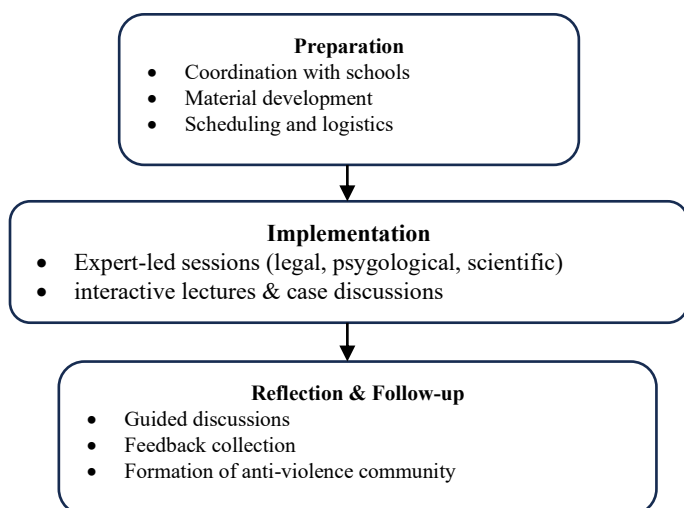
Preparation
- Coordination with schools
- Material development
- Scheduling and logistics

Implementation
- Expert-led sessions (legal, psygological, scientific)
- interactive lectures & case discussions

Reflection & Follow-up
- Guided discussions
- Feedback collection
- Formation of anti-violence community

Figure 1. Research Procedure Flowchart

Result and Discussion

Program Implementation Stage

The core program, which involved socialization, was carried out on Monday, March 24, 2025, at the Hall of the Parish of Santa Maria Bunda Para Bangsa Gunungsitoli with the target group of SMA Swasta Santu Xaverius Gunungsitoli and on Wednesday, March 26, 2025, at the Hall of SMA Swasta Katolik Bintang Laut Teluk Dalam. This event took place from 08.10 to 11.30 WIB. The entire team worked together to ensure the readiness of the speakers and all facilities and infrastructure.

Figure 2. Sexual Violence Prevention through Education Activities at Santu Xaverius Private High School, Gunungsitoli

Figure 3. Sexual Violence Prevention Through science education Activities at the Bintang Laut Catholic Private High School in Teluk Dalam

Based on the entire presentation of the material, several essential keys must be owned and held to recognize and prevent sexual violence. First, parents or adults carry out proper parenting and bonding with children. Parents can provide sexual through science education. The delivery of education or information regarding this must be adjusted to the age and comprehension of the child so that the child can properly digest the information obtained. There is an impression that sexuality is taboo (Krafchick, 2013; Rooks-Ellis & Achey, 2023). This is what needs to be eliminated and replaced by providing information about sexuality as an essential thing that is part of every human life. Parents can invite children to tell stories about their entire journey throughout the day, what they did, who they met, and what they felt after a full day of activities. This closeness can be built by spending more time with children. The way, for example, is by taking children to school, helping them complete schoolwork, and being a fun friend where children can complain (Gamez et al., 2024; Lereya et al., 2013; Li et al., 2023; Stam et al., 2023; Yarosh et al., 2009). Moreover, parents can engage in interactive storytelling, where they and their children collaboratively rewrite stories. This activity not only boosts children's agency but also strengthens the parent-child bond (Lee et al., 2022). In addition, including play in daily routines and participating in joint leisure activities can significantly enhance emotional closeness and family bonding (Dong et al., 2024). For this, a warm emotional closeness is needed between children and parents.

Second, providing sex through science education. Sex education in this case is not about adult sexual activities. A significant emphasis on sex education is giving insight into body parts that can be touched and absolutely should not be touched by others, or only parents or oneself are allowed to touch them. This education targets children 's self-confidence and courage to refuse if there is an indication that someone else is trying to touch their body (Kapit, 2025; Richmond et al., 2023). Children can be taught to recognize all their body and private parts correctly from an early age.

Furthermore, children are still guided to identify the difference between good and bad touches. All of this education is directed so that children can maintain their safety and discuss sexual behavior that the family accepts (Najafi et al., 2024; Salim & Tambunan, 2022).

Third, conduct early detection. Sexual violence experienced by each individual does not always have clear signs or can be seen with the naked eye. The victim may try to cover up what they experienced by not telling others about the violence because there are feelings of shame, fear, anxiety, and so on. There are several indicators of sexual violence in children, including behavioral and psychological in the form of changes in behavior and the presence of mental health symptoms. Victims, especially children, may exhibit significant behavioral changes. Pediatricians should carefully observe and inquire about these changes during examinations (Szewczak et al., 2021). Moreover, victims often experience mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, and mood swings. Monitoring these symptoms can provide clues to underlying abuse (Anderson et al., 2021; Bengtson & Lynch, 2025). In addition, indicators such as physical can include anogenital injuries and genital and anal complications that need to be alerted, especially by health workers. However, parents or people around need to carefully observe signs or suspicious physical or psychological things that appear in children over a long period. If such conditions are found, they must be immediately reported to parties who can help with treatment, such as doctors, psychologists, law enforcement officers, and other authorities.

Fourth, teach children to set boundaries and take full responsibility for themselves. From an early age, every individual, especially children, is trained to dare to express their feelings, provide motivation, and provide structured and continuous direction. Children's self-esteem and independence are essential so that children do not depend on or become attached to others (Burgess, 2014; Kenny et al., 2008; Rudolph et al., 2018). Independence is a fundamental skill for every child to have for the ease of children living their lives later. However, suppose the above are not able to maximally protect children from the possibility of becoming victims due to other factors. In that case, some things that need to be done are: understand that violence occurs not the victim's fault (Gracia & Tomás, 2014), ensure security and safety, keep evidence, try to be open and tell people they trust, and ask for help from authorized institutions (Kumar et al., 2021; Ravi et al., 2022; Zaykowski, 2014).

Discussion

This model of community-based intervention involves experts collecting data in the community of nearby institutions, identifying factors that increase the risk of sexual violence, and then analyzing them together to produce solutions that can be implemented at the community level (Hoxmeier et al., 2020). The program was developed in Ayacucho, Peru. It showed significant increases in participants' willingness to intervene in situations of potential sexual violence as well as a reduction in rape myth acceptance (Marhayati et al., 2024). The program engaged community members to take action in situations of possible sexual violence. Evaluations showed increases in positive attitudes and pro-social behaviors related to sexual violence (Suarez et al., 2024).

Community-based intervention projects focus on building coalitions and mobilizing communities to change social norms that underlie sexual violence (Bonar et al., 2022). Evaluations show that these projects are successful in shifting institutional norms toward addressing the root causes of sexual violence. Active engagement of community members in identifying problems and solutions is critical to the success of interventions (Neherta et al., 2015). Programs that consider cultural norms and traditional masculinities have shown better outcomes in reducing sexual violence. Community-based intervention programs require close collaboration between researchers and community partners, and adequate resource allocation is critical to program sustainability (Exner-Cortens & Cummings, 2021). Community-based interventions have shown significant improvements in knowledge and attitudes about sexual violence for students.

Conclusion

This study confirms that technology-based transformational leadership operationalized through the four core components of Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration has a significant and positive impact on lecturer performance at STP Dian Mandala Gunungsitoli. The consistent application of these elements has enhanced lecturers' motivation, creativity, accountability, and engagement in the Tri Dharma of Higher Education, while also fostering a collaborative and trust-based academic environment.

The findings can be generalized to higher education institutions, particularly those integrating character formation and spiritual values into their mission, as the principles of transformational leadership are adaptable across cultural and institutional contexts. Institutions that embrace technology-supported transformational leadership are more likely to achieve sustained improvements in academic quality, staff performance, and organizational resilience.

From a practical standpoint, the results imply that higher education leaders should: (1) actively

communicate and model institutional values, (2) leverage digital tools to enhance transparency, collaboration, and innovation, (3) invest in continuous professional development for academic staff, and (4) create supportive policies that balance institutional goals with individual staff needs. By doing so, institutions can strengthen their competitive advantage while maintaining a strong commitment to holistic education.

Conflicts of Interest
The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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