

# Strategies for Preventing Sexual Harassment in Islamic Universities

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ABSTRACT	CONTACT
<p>To address the increasing cases of sexual harassment on campus, especially among students, Ar-Raniry State Islamic University took strategic action by issuing Chancellor's Decree Number 2 of 2021 concerning Prevention of Handling Sexual Violence in Higher Education at Ar-Raniry State Islamic University Banda Aceh, based on Permendikbud Ristek No. 30 of 2021 concerning Prevention of Handling Sexual Violence in Higher Education as a powerful strategy. This policy is expected to be an effective strategy in combating sexual harassment on campus. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with interview, observation, and documentation techniques to collect data, which is then analyzed through data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results show that UIN Ar-Raniry has implemented prevention strategies by issuing policies involving various university parties and the establishment of a handling body, but is still faced with challenges such as incomplete operational procedures, lack of participation from faculty and students, and fear of victims in reporting cases. This study highlights the need to strengthen reporting mechanisms and increase awareness and involvement in the prevention of sexual violence on campus.</p>	<p><a href="mailto:200802032@student.ar-raniry.ac.id">200802032@student.ar-raniry.ac.id</a></p>
ABSTRAK	KEYWORDS
<p>Dalam menghadapi peningkatan kasus pelecehan seksual di kampus, khususnya di kalangan mahasiswa, Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry mengambil tindakan strategis dengan mengeluarkan Keputusan Rektor Nomor 2 Tahun 2021 Tentang Pencegahan Penanganan Kekerasan Seksual di Perguruan Tinggi Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, berlandaskan Permendikbud Ristek No 30 Tahun 2021 Tentang Pencegahan Penanganan Kekerasan Seksual di Perguruan Tinggi sebagai starategi yang ampuh. Kebijakan ini diharapkan menjadi strategi efektif dalam memerangi pelecehan seksual di kampus. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi untuk mengumpulkan data, yang kemudian dianalisis melalui pengumpulan data, reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa UIN Ar-Raniry telah menerapkan strategi pencegahan dengan mengeluarkan kebijakan yang melibatkan berbagai pihak universitas dan pembentukan badan penanganan, tetapi masih dihadapkan pada tantangan seperti prosedur operasional yang belum lengkap, minimnya partisipasi dari fakultas dan mahasiswa, serta rasa takut korban dalam melaporkan kasus. Studi ini menyoroti kebutuhan untuk memperkuat mekanisme pelaporan dan meningkatkan kesadaran serta keterlibatan dalam pencegahan kekerasan seksual di lingkungan kampus.</p>	<p>Strategy, Sexual Harassment, Higher Education, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh</p> <p>Received: 06/04/2024 Revised: 18/04/2024 Accepted: 25/04/2024 Online: 30/04/2024 Published: 30/04/2024</p>
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## INTRODUCTION

Sexual harassment in higher education has gained significant attention as an issue that disrupts the safety and integrity of educational institutions. Data from the Indonesian Women's National Commission shows that there were 96 reported cases of sexual harassment in the college environment in 2020, with 85 cases involving students and 11 involving lecturers or staff. More broadly, during the period 2015 to 2023, universities showed alarming figures with 35% of the 67 reports of sexual violence that came to Komnas Perempuan coming from higher education institutions. This condition shows that universities are no longer a safe space for students, universities need strategies to improve safety and academic integrity.

The government has responded to this problem through various regulations, including Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology Number 30 of 2021, which specifically regulates the prevention and handling of sexual violence in higher education. This regulation was followed by the issuance of Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 73 of 2022, which strengthens similar efforts in educational units under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Despite these regulations, implementation on the ground is often ineffective, as seen from data

and reports that show that only a small percentage of victims are brave enough to report their incidents. Specifically in Aceh, with the consequent implementation of Islamic law, there is a special Qanun, namely Aceh Qanun No. 6/2014 on Qanun Jinayat which also plays a role in regulating sexual violence. Despite the existence of this regulation, the Aceh Office of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (DP3A) recorded 575 cases of sexual harassment and violence in Aceh as of June 2023, showing serious challenges in prevention, enforcement and victim protection.

Ar-Raniry State Islamic University responded strategically through the issuance of Chancellor's Decree No. 2 of 2021 on the Prevention of Sexual Violence Handling (Keputusan Rektor Nomor 2 Tahun 2021 Tentang Pencegahan Penanganan Kekerasan Seksual (KR PPKS)) in Higher Education as a form of support for the Minister of Education and Culture Research and Technology<sup>21</sup>. despite the issuance of Chancellor's Decree No. 2 of 2021 on the Prevention of Sexual Violence Handling in Higher Education, there are still many students who are unaware of this policy. This shows a lack of socialization and education regarding the rights and protections available to victims. The effectiveness of this policy and similar policies adopted by other universities needs to be reviewed, to ensure that all parties involved have adequate knowledge and support to fight sexual violence.

This study was designed to assess the impact of existing KR PPKS regulations and to identify challenges that affect the effectiveness of implementing these policies in higher education. Through a holistic and participatory approach, this study aims to develop more effective and inclusive prevention strategies, ensuring that higher education can be a safe and supportive environment for all students, especially at Ar-Raniry State Islamic University, which plays an important role in protecting the dignity of academics and students.

## METHODS

This research is a descriptive qualitative study that aims to explore and understand the phenomenon of sexual violence in higher education, with a focus on revealing the 'what', 'who', 'where', and 'how' aspects of the phenomenon. The study was designed to detect patterns and identify factors that contribute to its persistence, as well as propose effective solutions. Data were collected from various sources including books, regulations, academic journals, theses, and related news. Data analysis used a conflict mapping technique, where information was systematized to reveal how existing regulations and practices interact with social and individual dynamics on campus. This technique integrates the research findings to build strategic recommendations, including policy development and educational initiatives that can be implemented by educational institutions to address and prevent sexual harassment. In addition, this research also involved a thematic analysis strategy to further elaborate on how sexual harassment is understood and addressed in various college contexts. This strategy allows the researcher to formulate solutions that are contextualized and grounded in empirical evidence as well as relevant policies. This will strengthen the research methodology and ensure that readers understand how the research contributes to practical solutions to the problem of sexual harassment in higher education.

The initial step involved extensive collection of various written sources relevant to the topic of sexual violence in higher education. This included identification, selection, and synthesis of information from academic literature, legislation, theses, and relevant articles and news. Then reading the literature materials, and making research notes. During the interview process, reading, research notes were made to collect important information, findings, or new ideas. These notes are very useful in detailing and organizing the data, which facilitates subsequent analysis. Finally, processing research notes. This step involves analyzing, classifying and systematically organizing the information that has been recorded during the interviews. This process is crucial for identifying patterns and causal relationships, as well as facilitating the preparation of conclusions and the final research report.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

IAIN Ar-Raniry, founded in Banda Aceh and later known as UIN Ar-Raniry has played an important role in the development of Islamic education in Aceh. Named after the influential scholar and jurist, Sheikh Nuruddin Ar-Raniry, the establishment and growth of the institute reflected a broader trend in Islamic education reform in Southeast Asia. The establishment of IAIN Ar-Raniry was preceded by the establishment of the Faculty of Shari'ah in 1960 and the Faculty of Tarbiyah in 1962, initially as a branch of IAIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. In the same year, the Faculty of Ushuluddin was also established as a private faculty in Banda Aceh. These faculties eventually consolidated under the auspices of IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta for a period of six months before the official inauguration of IAIN Ar-Raniry on October 5, 1963, as per the decree of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs (Decree No. 89 of 1963). Alongside its academic achievements and social contributions, the university also faced challenges in addressing the issue of sexual harassment among students. In response, UIN Ar-Raniry issued and implemented the Rector's Policy stipulated in the KR PPKS UIN Ar-Raniry, which refers to the Permendikbud Ristek Number 30 of 2021 concerning Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence in Higher Education. These strategic steps are expected to minimize the incidence of crime on campus and support the creation of a safe and inclusive academic environment.

### Strategies to Prevent Harassment among Students of UIN Ar-Raniry

The strategy to prevent sexual harassment among students emerged as a response to universities' concerns regarding the problem of harassment that occurs on campus. Various efforts have been made by each university, including UIN Ar-Raniry, to address this issue. One of the concrete steps taken is the issuance of the rector's policy stipulated in the KR PPKS UIN Ar-Raniry as an effort to minimize incidents of violence on campus. UIN Ar-Raniry's KR PPKS refers to Permendikbud Ristek Number 30 of 2021 concerning Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence in the Higher Education Environment, which is the basis for universities to implement prevention and handling strategies. This policy is an important first step in UIN Ar-Raniry's efforts to address the problem of sexual harassment among students.

The strategies and efforts made are in the form of strengthening community governance. Based on interviews with several informants and observations, on strengthening community governance, this study shows the commitment of universities in overcoming sexual harassment through strengthening governance which is realized in legal policies. The Rector's Decree No. 2 of 2021 on the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence (PPKS) at UIN Ar-Raniry has become an important initiative that targets students as the main group. The implementation of the Integrated Service Unit in charge of handling and the existence of Gender Ambassadors who introduce this policy to students and involve all parties to play a role in prevention indicate the university's seriousness in creating a safe and inclusive campus environment. These initiatives significantly emphasize the importance of responsive and effective governance in dealing with the issue of sexual harassment in the academic environment.

In an effort to create a safe campus environment, clear communication policies between students, staff, and lecturers are important to implement, including restrictions on communication outside of class hours and on social media. Rules that ensure meetings between students and lecturers or staff must be held in official and open places, such as classrooms and libraries, have been passed through Permendikbud Ristek 21 and reinforced by KR PPKS. Based on interviews with the head of PSGA, the Dean of Psychology, and the Gender Ambassador, there was consensus that meeting restrictions are necessary and respected rules in an academic environment, even though many of these rules are unwritten. Information from the interviews suggests that the entire academic community should have a clear communication contract, including limits on communication time inside and outside of operational hours, to reduce the risk of sexual harassment.

Guidelines for handling sexual harassment cases at UIN Ar-Raniry are a crucial aspect of creating a safe and inclusive campus environment, involving zero tolerance policies, easily accessible reporting

mechanisms, and comprehensive support for victims. Interviews with various informants including the Head of the Center for Gender and Child Studies (PSGA), the Head of the Integrated Service Unit (ULT), and the Dean of the Faculty of Psychology, revealed that despite formal guidelines, many harassment cases are still handled on a familial basis under the auspices of the faculty, often without significant intervention from PSGA or ULT. Observations show that although stakeholders have begun to play a role in promoting the policy and their roles, there are still significant shortcomings in the execution of the guidelines, as well as victims' distrust of the existing processes, indicating an urgent need for improvement and enhancement in the handling of sexual harassment cases on campus.

Socialization as a strategy to prevent sexual harassment among students at UIN Ar-Raniry plays an important role in raising awareness and understanding throughout the campus community, including students, lecturers, administrative staff, and education personnel. Based on interviews with various informants such as the Head of the Integrated Service Unit (ULT), the Dean of the Faculty of Tarbiyah, and the Head of the Center for Gender and Child Studies (PSGA), various forms of socialization have been held ranging from joint viewing discussions, training, to active advocacy through social media. However, there are still challenges in inter-faculty and inter-unit coordination and participation in effectively implementing the KR PPKS policy. Observations show that socialization activities still need to be improved to involve more campus elements and ensure a more inclusive and equitable approach, which does not only focus on the student level but also extends to the entire academic community, following the mandate of KR PPKS No. 2 of 2021 which emphasizes the involvement of all parties in efforts to prevent sexual harassment in the campus environment.

### **Challenges in the Implementation of Sexual Violence Prevention and Handling Policy at UIN Ar-Raniry**

In the effort to implement the Rector's Decree No. 2 of 2021 on the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence at UIN Ar-Raniry, various significant challenges have been identified, especially related to the dissemination of understanding of KR PPKS among students. These challenges include students' lack of awareness and sensitivity to the importance of KR PPKS as a legal umbrella that protects them in the academic environment. In addition, the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) also poses difficulties, affecting the performance of the handling body, leading to the effectiveness of complaints and the responses provided. These difficulties indicate an urgent need for more effective strategies in communicating policies and increasing student participation in sexual violence prevention efforts on campus.

Student learning and training at UIN Ar-Raniry is a crucial element in the implementation of the Rector's Decree No. 2 of 2021 on the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence, which aims to increase awareness and sensitivity to the issue of sexual harassment and strengthen knowledge about reporting mechanisms and victim support. Based on interviews with various stakeholders such as the Head of the Center for Gender and Child Studies (PSGA), the Dean of the Faculty of Psychology, and the Head of the Integrated Service Unit (ULT), significant challenges were found in low student participation, lack of information about training, and sensitivity to issues that affect themselves or others. This information confirms that despite socialization and education efforts, there are still many students who do not fully understand the related procedures and policies. This indicates the need for more innovative and engaging learning and training strategies, targeting not only students but also faculty, to ensure that all members of the campus community gain a uniform and in-depth understanding of the KR PPKS, as well as challenge patriarchal norms that have the potential to exacerbate conditions of sexual violence and harassment on campus.

The development of effective Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) at UIN Ar-Raniry remains a challenge in implementing the Rector's Decree No. 2 of 2021 on the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence. The head of the Center for Gender and Child Studies (PSGA), the head of the integrated service unit, and deans from various faculties admitted that structured and clear SOPs do not yet exist, often because faculties have not yet faced cases that require SOPs or because SOPs are still in the process



of being established. As a result, the existence of these immature SOPs affects the effectiveness of KR PPKS in providing safety and justice for victims, as they often lack clear guidance on how to report cases or get support. This indicates an urgent need to accelerate the establishment of comprehensive SOPs in all faculties in order to provide clear and effective procedures in handling cases of sexual violence on campus.

Furthermore, complaints in the context of the Sexual Violence Prevention and Handling Policy (KR PPKS) at UIN Ar-Raniry face a number of significant challenges in ensuring its effectiveness, mainly due to the low level of trust victims have in the university's handling system. Many victims prefer to file complaints privately and are reluctant to report officially for fear of the potential negative impacts of reporting, such as stigmatization or retribution by perpetrators who often have positions of power on campus. Information from interviews with gender ambassadors, deans, and heads of integrated service units showed that despite mechanisms such as complaint links and encouragement to report, many complaints do not lead to formal reporting. This is compounded by the lack of clarity and the ongoing establishment of SOPs, which leaves many cases undocumented or handled informally. Therefore, the development of clear structures and procedures as well as a more supportive and victim-protective approach is necessary to improve the effectiveness of KR PPKS in addressing sexual harassment on campus.

This plays an important role in complaints of sexual violence or harassment at UIN Ar-Raniry and is an important indicator to measure the effectiveness of the institution's response. This response includes the initial response, initial support for victims, and perceptions of fairness in handling cases that involve all parties, including victims, complainants, and alleged perpetrators. Interviews with various stakeholders such as gender ambassadors, the Head of the Center for Gender and Child Studies (PSGA), and deans show that there are still major challenges in ensuring an effective and empathetic response. Many victims feel that the responses received are less supportive or even just a formality that does not have a deterrent effect on the perpetrator. In addition, there is hesitation in imposing strict sanctions for fear of tarnishing the good name of the institution. This information confirms the urgent need for increased sensitivity and capacity of faculty and handling bodies in managing complaints, so as to provide a sense of security and justice for victims, as well as increase the effectiveness of KR PPKS policies in dealing with issues of sexual violence on campus.

## CONCLUSIONS

This research identifies that sexual harassment prevention strategies at Ar-Raniry State Islamic University have been implemented with reference to Permendikbud Ristek No. 30 of 2021. The university has issued Rector Decree No. 2 of 2021 as the legal basis for implementing various prevention strategies, such as strengthening community governance through the formation of the ULT Task Force, appointing Gender Ambassadors, limiting meetings according to operational hours, and implementing handling guidelines that support victim protection. Socialization of this policy has also been carried out both offline and online, although it needs to be improved so that student understanding is more thorough and consistent.

However, the implementation of this policy faces several challenges. Uneven student training and low levels of student participation and awareness of sexual harassment issues are the main obstacles. In addition, uncertainty in the completion of incomplete Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) hinders effective handling of cases, especially at the faculty level. Victims' complaints are often informal due to fear and lack of trust in the system. Responses from students and faculty to harassment issues are still taboo, and responses are often not proactive enough.

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