

Culture of Shame and Handling Violence Against Women

Abitha Arya Guna

Sociology Study Program, Gadjah Mada University
Bulaksumur, Caturtunggal, Kec. Depok, Kabupaten Sleman, Daerah Istimewa

Email: abithaaryag@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT:

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Violence against women is an act that can occur in everyday life and can be experienced by anyone, especially women. One of the difficulties in handling violence against women is that victims of violence tend to have coping mechanisms, being reluctant to open up. Self-disclosure can be the key to dealing with violence. Victims and their families tend to cover up what they experienced because they feel ashamed and consider this violence to be a taboo subject to talk about. This research raises the issue of how a culture of shame influences the handling of violence against women. The research was conducted in Yogyakarta, which is still full of cultural values and social norms. The research approach is a case study with interview and documentation data collection methods. From the research results, it was found that the politics of shame hinders the handling of violence against women.

Introduction

Various efforts are being made to eradicate various practices that harm or corner women, but the rate of sexual violence against women is still high. Why is the issue of sexual violence against women and violence against women significant to pay attention to and find a solution for? There are several reasons why this issue is critical. First, the state protects all its citizens, including women. The country's success in realizing protection for women and realizing gender equality is one of the indicators of development success set out in the SDGs. Third, the presence of women has a significant influence on the success of development, especially human resource development policies and the realization of an inclusive economy, and fourth, the increasing public awareness of human rights makes people aware of the importance of equality between men and women (Astuti, Widhiastuti, and Lestari 2020). Currently, violence against women is still high, as can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. National Commission on Violence Against Women Annual Records

2013	279,220 cases
2014	293,220 cases
2015	321,752 cases
2016	259,150 cases
2017	348,446 cases
2018	406,178 cases
2019	431,471 cases
2020	299,911 cases

Source: National Commission on Violence Against Women Annual Records, 2021

In the case of Yogyakarta City, many cases of violence occur within the family or personal sphere. This can be seen in the table below:

Table 2. National Commission on Violence Against Women Annual Records

Number of Violence in the Domain of Domestic Violence/RP in 2020						
Types of Violence	Violence against wife	Violence in dating	Violence against girls	Violence committed by ex-husband	Ex-girlfriend violence	Other violence
Number of cases	3221 cases	1309 cases	954 cases	127 cases	401 cases	468 cases

Source: National Commission on Violence Against Women Annual Records, 2021

In reality, three factors greatly influence the legal resolution of cases of sexual violence against women and efforts to protect women namely substance, structure, and culture. The substance related to legal products is currently inadequate for women to fight for justice. Structure related to conditions where law enforcement officials and society do not have a gender-sensitive perspective (gender perspective) and culture, namely patriarchal culture (Rochaety Nur 2019).

Finding a solution to the problem of violence against women is not an easy endeavor. Some parties believe that another reason why the rate of sexual violence against women in Indonesia is still high is closely related to social construction issues in society. Many cases of sexual violence occur due to gender inequality, power relations, and patriarchal culture. Pulih, 2020). Efforts to fight for the protection of women are not an easy matter; they cannot be solved only by regulation but also by deconstruction, namely deconstructing society's perspective on the relationship

between men and women because sexual violence against women cannot be separated from the cultural construction and values understood by society itself.

Patriarchy is one of the reasons why victims and their families do not want to open up. This has led to a culture in Indonesian society of blaming women as victims of violence. In cases of violence against women in Indonesia, there are still many people who tend to blame the victims of violence. This culture of blaming the victim often places responsibility and blame on women as victims rather than on the perpetrators. This causes women as victims to be blamed (Rukman, Huriani, and Shamsu, 2023).

Patriarchy is one of the causes of the emergence of a culture of shame in Indonesian society. Patriarchy is also one of the leading causes of violence against women. Like various countries in the North Asian region, there is a strong patriarchal culture. However, Indonesia also has a culture that is sensitive to individuals and status; this and patriarchy are the leading causes of the strong culture of shame in Indonesia (Achmad et al., 2023).

The culture of shame is a culture resulting from patriarchy and Asian culture. The culture of shame is a habit of Indonesian people to maintain personal status and dignity by avoiding actions that risk embarrassing themselves. In shame cultures, we must avoid embarrassing actions and situations rather than face them. This culture of shame then forces women to maintain their dignity and self-respect. In the context of Indonesia, which is 80% Muslim, the culture of shame is also the result of Islamic religious teachings, where it is recommended to maintain personal dignity and faith (Achmad et al., 2023). Victims of violence are often embarrassed and afraid to open up and report to the authorities because they are embarrassed that they will become a household disgrace and are afraid of threats or further violence from the perpetrator (Sulaiman et al., 2022).

Victims are expected to have resilience in facing violence so they can open up so that cases can be handled quickly and appropriately. However, on the other hand, victims tend to receive various discrimination and stigma, so they are often blamed (Wahyuni et al. 2022). Victim resilience can have a significant influence in handling cases because victims can tell stories about the violence they experienced and can overcome fear and shame (Soetikno and Anjani 2022). Faced with the problem of economic dependence on the perpetrator, shame and fear of facing the law make most women reluctant to tell or directly report the violence they experience (Muhammad Jadi 2021). Feelings of shame do not only occur at the stage of reporting or disclosing sexual violence that has been experienced. Victims of violence will also feel shame, even after the case

has been resolved. From the start, when someone experiences sexual violence, from that moment on their self-esteem is hurt, and they feel ashamed. So shame is an essential aspect in handling cases of sexual violence because it is felt even long after the case occurs (McElvaney et al. 2022). Yogyakarta is a city that is still full of cultural and social norms. With such a context, how does the culture of shame hinder the handling of violence against women in the city of Yogyakarta?

Method

This research uses a case study approach. The data collection methods used in this research are documentation and interviews. The research location is the city of Yogyakarta. The informants for this research were volunteers from the SIGRAK UPTD PPA Task Force in Yogyakarta. The task force is tasked with dealing with cases of violence against women at the level closest to the community, namely the sub-district level. Documentation is used to view documents on the process of violence occurring and the handling strategies that have been implemented. The interview method was used to obtain data about the process of violence that occurred, definitions/limits of violence against women, handling strategies, and obstacles faced in handling violence against women (Creswell 2007).

Results and Discussion

Culture of Shame in Handling the Problem of Violence against Women in Yogyakarta

Violence against women still often occurs in Indonesia, especially in the city of Yogyakarta. The increase in violence against women in the City of Yogyakarta has become a concern for the government. Hence, the Yogyakarta City Government formed the SIGRAK Task Force through the Decree of the Head of the Department of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection and Population Control and Family Planning for the City of Yogyakarta Number 017/KPTS/DP3AP2KB/1/2022 concerning the Establishment of a Ready Task Force Movement to Overcome Violence (SIGRAK Task Force) (Rizky and Puspitasari 2023). The SIGRAK Task Force is a volunteer organization that is at the forefront of dealing directly with cases of violence against women in the City of Yogyakarta, tasked with preventing and handling cases of violence under the coordination of the Yogyakarta City PPA UPT.

From the various cases handled by the SIGRAK Task Force, it was found that many victims of violence tended to close themselves off and refused to tell stories and open themselves up to SIGRAK volunteers. Victims and their families who tend to cover up cases and not open up are

one of the coping mechanisms for the impact of a culture of shame. Coping mechanisms are reactions or habits victims carry when experiencing discrimination, especially violence (Stephanie, Psychology, and Tarumanagara, 2022). The culture of shame causes victims and their families to close themselves off and are reluctant to open up. The obstacles faced by the SIGRAK Task Force in carrying out its duties, including those related to victims, victims' families, and society in general, are as follows:

Table 3. Obstacles in Handling Violence Against Women by Volunteers

Victims of Violence	Victim's Family	Public
Many victims of violence are afraid to report it. This fear of reporting is related to shame with society and other people. It is still firmly embedded in society's construction that violence that occurs in the domestic realm is a "disgrace" so they tend not to open up.	Closed families, families that hinder investigations. Families also tend to cover up cases of violence against family members. This attitude also arises due to being "embarrassed" and feeling like a "disgrace".	Society still does not understand the potential for violence against women and does not know the limits of violence against women.
Don't know how to report the acts of violence they experience.	family complexities that must be handled. Every family has a different way of handling it. This is usually related to social status, economic level, education level and cultural context in each family.	The view of society which still considers that violence against women that occurs in the family is a "disgrace", this condition causes the victim or the victim's family to tend to cover it up.

The delays and delays in handling women's violence by SIGRAK are caused by a culture of shame, which causes victims and their families not to want to open up and even tend to cover up cases. The culture of shame and stigma towards victims of violence is a challenge in handling violence against women in the city of Yogyakarta. Society's stigma against women as victims of violence is the cause of victims closing themselves off and blaming themselves (Berjot and Gillet 2011). The delays and delays in handling women's violence by SIGRAK are caused by a culture of shame, which causes victims and their families not to want to open up or even cover up cases. This culture of shame is the result of the victimization of victims, where victims are blamed for the violence they experience. The victim's shame is a coping mechanism that arises as a result of victimization and poor adaptation of the victim after violence. Objectification of the victim's body,

the victim considering the victim's own body as an object, is the main symptom of a culture of shame (Li and Craig 2020).

Paulo Freire's Critical Education Philosophy as an Approach to Handling the Problem of Violence against Women

Freire's theory of conscientization explains that education can make humans or society aware of the dynamics of social reality and the social construction of society. Education is a crucial actor and has a vital role in making society aware and encouraging society to continue to develop and expand, developing from stage to stage. Education is required to push society from the stage of "naive awareness" to "critical awareness" (Sumitro and Imam Yuliadi 2019).

Freire's ideas or thoughts are considered strategic in overcoming societal problems from social construction. His most famous theory is the theory of consciousness (conscientization) or the theory of consciousness. In this theory, Freire formulated that in order for an educational process to lead people to become humanists and be able to provide solutions to the problems of their lives and ultimately be able to change their lives, it is by making them aware of the social realities and social construction in which they live. Education is the process of transforming human consciousness from magical consciousness to critical consciousness. Freire divides human consciousness or public consciousness into three parts: magical, naive, and critical. The meaning of each of these consciousnesses is:

1. Magical consciousness is a condition of society or man where he cannot identify that he is in trouble. All life problems experienced will usually be related to things that are fateful, supernatural, or transcendent. So, the source of the problem is fate or the supernatural. In this state of awareness, society cannot determine steps to resolve it.
2. Naive awareness is a condition of awareness where people can identify their problems but blame themselves more for their inability to solve or fight back. So, the source of the problem here is himself. People at this level of consciousness can identify problems, but the solutions are still micro namely the personal self.
3. Critical awareness: At this level, people can identify the life problems they face, the scope of the system and structure, and identify the source of problems at the system and structure level. In this awareness, society can identify existing realities and social constructions.

People at this level of awareness can already determine what steps should be taken to overcome their problems (Sumitro and Imam Yuliadi 2019).

Critical awareness is the stage where society or community truly realizes the source of the problems they face within structures and systems such as traditions or culture. With this awareness stage, the community can determine what actions will be taken to resolve the problem. If the source of the problem is tradition, then the construction of that tradition must be changed. Actions to change the situation do not only stop at awareness but are also an empowerment process.

Handling from the legal aspect cannot touch this level of social construction. So, the alternative solution offered is to change the ideological construction of society. To make this change, a process of awareness is needed among the people that the traditions they acknowledge and believe to be reasonably necessary or expected are harmful practices.

This awareness process is, of course, challenging because it is related to the construction of traditions that have been taught and transmitted from generation to generation for a long time. A process of awareness with critical education needs to be carried out so that society is accessible from the pressure of this tradition. It does not just stop there. After society can criticize and realize that they are hegemony in a wrong construction, they must be able to do something to prevent the practice of violence against women and can handle it if it happens.

Conclusion

The culture of shame is still strong in the cases raised in this research. It is proven by many victims of violence who are afraid to report it, families who cover it up, families who hinder SIGRAK's treatment, local people who are reluctant to become witnesses and many more. In this research, most informants agreed to change patriarchal culture, and the perception that men are more powerful than women must be eliminated from society. In research, we can also find that handling domestic violence must be balanced with volunteers and officers competent to carry out their respective duties so that handling can proceed quickly and accurately. SIGRAK can hold training and forums for SIGRAK volunteers and officers so that case handling can be more effective and better. The government can provide outreach and education about patriarchy and feminism.

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