

Exploring the Prevalence and Impact of Sexual Violence among Junior and Senior High School Students in Java, Indonesia: A Study on Meaning in Life

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ABSTRACT

Sexual violence is a pressing global concern, particularly among junior and senior high school students in Indonesia, necessitating a deeper understanding of its impacts on adolescents. This study aims to explore the prevalence of sexual violence among these students in Java, Indonesia, and its implications for "meaning in life". 839 adolescent survivors of sexual violence, aged 12-19, from junior and senior high schools across Java, Indonesia, participated in this study. They completed the Indonesian version of the Meaning in Life questionnaire, encompassing demographics, sexual violence, and meaning in life sections. Analytical methods included descriptive statistics, chi-square tests to explore associations between various factors and "meaning in life", and Spearman correlation analysis to assess the impact of sexual violence on the level of "Meaning in Life". SPSS version 26 was used for analysis, with a significance level set at $p < 0.05$. The study reveals sexual violence prevalence among 839 adolescents in Java, Indonesia, with a majority being female (66.3%), aged 13-15 years (76.5%), and middle school students (63.4%). Verbal harassment (72.9%) emerges as the most prevalent form. Significant associations are found between school level and violence types ($p = 0.001$), as well as child status and violence types ($p = 0.000$). Despite trauma, most survivors report high meaning in life (60.7%), with rape exhibiting the strongest negative correlation ($r = -0.620, p = 0.030$). These findings offer valuable insights into sexual violence prevalence, characteristics, and impacts among Java's adolescent population, emphasizing the urgent need for more effective interventions to protect adolescents from sexual violence and bolster their psychological well-being.

KEYWORDS: Sexual violence, Adolescents, Meaning in life, Java, Indonesia

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sexual violence is a global public health issue and severe violation of human rights, affecting emotional, physical, sexual, and reproductive health, as well as societal finances. It includes offenses such as sexual assault, rape, and childhood sexual abuse (CSA). Research shows CSA's prevalence and long-term consequences, with one in four girls and one in thirteen boys experiencing sexual abuse during childhood (CDC, 2022), and 47,124 incidents recorded in the U.S. in 2018 (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2020). Girls face higher risks, especially during adolescence, with prevalence estimates ranging from 13.5% to 26.6% (Finkelhor et al., 2014; Scoglio et al., 2021; RAINN, 2022). The issue is underreported but extensively studied in psychiatric literature for its impacts and implications (Berthelot et

al., 2015; Espeleta et al., 2017). In India, 2019 saw 3,486 rapes of Dalit women and girls and 1,110 cases against Adivasi women and girls (Le Moli, 2021).

In Indonesia, the Online Information System for the Protection of Women and Children (2022) reported 21,259 cases of violence against women and children from January to November 2022, with 9,106 of these cases being sexual violence. The provinces with the highest number of cases were West Java, East Java, Central Java, the Special Region of Jakarta, North Sumatra, and the Special Region of Yogyakarta. Sexual violence significantly impacts victims' mental, physical, and emotional well-being, often leading to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), with prevalence among adolescent survivors ranging from 25% to 60% (Kaltiala-Heino et al., 2018; Koss et al., 2015). Additionally, 50% of these survivors experience depression and 30% experience anxiety (Langeland et al., 2015; Kaltiala-Heino et al., 2018; Jankowski et al., 2020; Flack et al., 2018). Other psychological effects include low self-esteem, poor body image, and substance abuse, with survivors more likely to engage in risky behaviors and report suicidal thoughts (Noll et al., 2017; Jankowski et al., 2020; Starzynski et al., 2019).

Sexual violence leaves a profound impact on survivors, extending beyond immediate psychological distress to affect their sense of meaning in life. This aspect is crucial for understanding the broader implications of trauma and informing interventions aimed at promoting recovery and well-being. Central to this discussion are the concepts of the "presence of meaning" and the "search for meaning." The presence of meaning refers to an individual's perception that life holds purpose, coherence, and significance, while the search for meaning involves an active pursuit to find or create meaning in life, particularly in the aftermath of challenging or traumatic experiences (Frankl, 1963; Reker & Chamberlain, 2000). These constructs play a vital role in shaping how individuals navigate adversity and find resilience amidst hardship.

Understanding the interplay between sexual violence and meaning making is essential for designing effective interventions that address the holistic needs of survivors. Adolescents who have experienced sexual violence may grapple with profound existential questions, influencing their overall recovery trajectory. By examining how survivors navigate the process of meaning making, we can gain valuable insights into their coping mechanisms and resilience. This paper aims to explore the impact of sexual violence on the meaning in life of survivors, shedding light on the nuanced ways in which trauma shapes individuals' perceptions of themselves, others, and the world around them (Frazier, Nguyen-Feng, & Baker, 2017). Through an in-depth examination of these themes, we hope to contribute to the development of trauma-informed interventions that promote healing and empowerment among survivors of sexual violence.

Research on the presence of meaning and the search for meaning has primarily focused on adult populations, with limited studies examining these constructs among adolescents, particularly those who have experienced sexual violence. This gap in the literature highlights the need for research that explores how adolescents understand and find meaning in their lives following traumatic experiences. This study aims to address this gap by investigating the prevalence and impact of sexual violence among junior and senior high school students in Java, Indonesia, through the lens of meaning in life. By understanding how the presence of meaning and the search for meaning relate to the well-being of adolescents who have experienced sexual violence, this research seeks to provide insights into potential interventions and support mechanisms that can help survivors cope with their trauma and enhance their overall well-being.

1.1 Sexual violence

Sexual violence, as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO), encompasses a range of behaviors and actions that violate a person's sexual autonomy and consent. It includes any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic or direct coercion against someone's sexuality, regardless of the relationship to the victim and the setting, be it the home or the workplace (World Health Organization, 2011). This broad definition aims to capture the various forms of sexual violence, highlighting the pervasive nature of such acts and their impact on individuals and communities.

The Encyclopedia of Critical Psychology (2014) further elaborates on this definition by describing sexual violence as "a broad spectrum of sexual activities and experiences that are forced, compelled, or inflicted upon a person." This comprehensive approach includes a wide array of actions such as rape,

attempted rape, sexual assault, sexual abuse, and sexual violation. The unifying factor in all instances of sexual violence is the lack of consent from the victim. This violation of consent underscores the fundamental breach of personal autonomy and dignity inherent in acts of sexual violence.

Sexual violence can manifest in various forms and contexts, including but not limited to: (a) Marital or romantic relationships: Sexual assault within these contexts often involves coercion or force by a partner, violating the trust and intimacy that are supposed to be integral to such relationships; (b) Acquaintances and strangers: Sexual assaults can also be committed by individuals who are either known or unknown to the victim, reflecting the unpredictable and pervasive risk of sexual violence in different social settings; (c) Harassment based on sexual orientation: Unwanted sexual advances or harassment, particularly towards individuals based on their sexual orientation, can occur in environments such as schools or workplaces; (d) Vulnerable populations: Individuals who are mentally or physically challenged are particularly susceptible to sexual abuse, often due to their increased vulnerability and dependency; (e) Systematic violence in armed conflicts: In situations of armed conflict, sexual violence can be systematic, involving acts like rape, sexual slavery, and forced impregnation, used as tools of war and oppression; (f) Minors: Sexual assaults against minors, including rape and molestation, represent some of the most heinous forms of sexual violence, often resulting in long-term psychological and emotional trauma, and (g) Traditional practices: Cultural practices such as forced marriages, cohabitation against one's will, and the inheritance of wives are also recognized forms of sexual violence.

Several factors influence the prevalence and impact of sexual violence, with significant variations based on sex, race, age, and socio-economic conditions. Research indicates that certain groups are more vulnerable to sexual violence due to these intersecting factors.

1.1.1 Sex and Race

Studies have shown that female survivors of childhood sexual abuse face higher risks of interpersonal and psychological challenges compared to their male counterparts. Meta-analyses suggest that approximately 18% of girls and 8% of boys in North America experience childhood sexual abuse (Broaddus-Shea et al., 2021). Disparities also exist among different racial and ethnic groups. For instance, Asian/Pacific Islander males are reported to have higher instances of sexual abuse compared to their white peers, with significant variations in other adverse childhood experiences based on sex and ethnicity (Sieben et al., 2021).

1.1.2 Age

The age at which sexual abuse occurs is a crucial factor in understanding its long-term effects. Research indicates that earlier exposure to sexual violence correlates with higher risks of mental illness and adverse sexual behaviors in adulthood. For example, Fergusson et al. (2013) found that increased levels of childhood sexual abuse exposure are associated with heightened mental illness risks by age 18. Similarly, Papalia, Mann, and Ogloff, (2021) reported that The study found that childhood sexual abuse (CSA) victims are significantly more likely to experience various forms of interpersonal revictimization later in life, including physical assault and threats of violence, with this risk influenced by demographic factors and specific psychiatric disorders.

1.1.3 Individual and Relationship Factors

The risk of committing sexual violence is influenced by several individual and relationship factors, including gang membership, antisocial personality traits, substance abuse, exposure to parental violence, limited education, and a history of physical or sexual abuse. Gender-inequitable views and the acceptance of violence further exacerbate the risk, underscoring the importance of addressing these attitudes and behaviors through targeted interventions.

1.1.4 Community and Societal Factors

From a public health perspective, community and societal norms play a significant role in perpetuating sexual violence. Societal norms that uphold male supremacy and condone violence against women contribute to a culture where sexual violence is normalized. Insufficient community and legal sanctions

against perpetrators further perpetuate the cycle of violence, emphasizing the need for robust legal frameworks and community-based interventions to prevent and address sexual violence effectively.

1.2 Meaning in Life

The search for meaning in life is a fundamental psychological need, driven by the human desire to identify and fulfill significant goals. According to Viktor Frankl (1963), humans inherently seek meaning in their lives, which is a central motivation influencing behavior and well-being. Despite differing opinions on how meaning is achieved, experts agree that this search is crucial to human existence (Reker & Chamberlain, 2000).

As the primary subject, humans gain a deeper understanding of human nature and how humans create and sustain meaning through an evolutionary approach emphasizing the concept of the human niche and the extended evolutionary synthesis. (Fuentes, 2017)). Baumeister and Vohs (2020) argue that humans uniquely strive to comprehend life events and develop belief systems, imposing stability on a constantly changing life. This involves connecting ideas and experiences into a coherent whole, which helps in remembering and understanding life events (Beike & Crone, 2012).

The search for meaning is an ongoing process. Individuals continually reassess their understanding of life as they encounter new experiences, leading to a dynamic and evolving sense of meaning (Delle Fave & Fava, 2011). Despite the personal and subjective nature of this search, it is also influenced by external circumstances and societal factors (Wong, 2017; Adams, 2018).

Theories of meaning in life are diverse, and no single theory dominates the field (Arslan, 2020; Steger, 2012a). Existential psychologists, like Frankl, emphasize the desire to seek and achieve meaning as central to human life. According to Frankl, failure to find meaning can lead to mental and physical illness, which can be mitigated through creative values, experiences, and attitudes (Munoz et al., 2020).

Frankl posits that meaning exists outside the individual and must be discovered, while Yalom (2020) suggests that meaning is created by the individual. Reker (2000) proposes a middle path, asserting that meaning is both discovered and created. This dual perspective highlights the importance of both the search for and the presence of meaning as essential life goals.

Steger et al. (2006) differentiate between the search for meaning and the presence of meaning, arguing that the search is often overlooked in well-being theories. Extraordinary and tragic life experiences shaped the concept of the search for meaning as the primary driver of human behavior. In facing suffering and uncertainty, individuals can endure through efforts to find meaning and purpose in life (Bushkin, Niekerk, and Stroud, 2021). The presence of meaning, on the other hand, is associated with a sense of order, coherence, and purpose in life, contributing to well-being (Reker, 2000; Steger, 2012a).

The relationship between the search for and the presence of meaning is complex. Steger et al. (2008) examined whether a lack of meaning prompts the search for meaning and found evidence supporting a compensatory strategy. This suggests that individuals seek meaning when it is depleted and that a greater desire for meaning can enhance its presence.

Age influences the search for and presence of meaning. Adolescents often grapple with questions about purpose, building a sense of self, and forming future ambitions (Krok & Telka, 2019). For older adults, the search for meaning continues but may be more challenging due to changes in social roles and the proximity of death (Duppen Rn et al., 2019). Despite these challenges, older individuals often have a more consolidated sense of meaning, reflecting a focus on inner life and achieved goals (Nelson et al., 2021).

Overall, the pursuit of meaning is a lifelong endeavor, influenced by personal experiences and societal contexts. As individuals age, their systems of meaning evolve, reflecting a deeper understanding and fulfillment of life's purpose (Reker & Wong, 1988). However, significant life events can prompt a reevaluation of meaning, highlighting the dynamic and ongoing nature of this search.

2.0 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the Ethics Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects at Universiti Putra Malaysia (Reference Number: JKEUPM-2023-1290). Participants provided verbal informed consent prior to data collection and were free to decline participation or withdraw at any time. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, the questionnaires did not include names or other identifying information. The questionnaires were completed privately and securely stored by the research assistants. These assistants were trained on the importance of maintaining strict confidentiality of all responses and on referring students who required further care.

3.0 METHODS

In this research methodology, a cross-sectional study design was employed to examine the prevalence and impact of sexual violence on the meaning of life among junior and senior high school students in Java, Indonesia. A survey was conducted involving 2,500 students from middle and high schools in Java, revealing that 839 students were survivors of sexual violence. To ensure the sample's representativeness of the population, the researchers used a simple random sampling technique. The final study included 839 male and female students. The sample size was determined based on Cohen's *d*, a measure of effect size developed by Jacob Cohen (Cohen, 1988), to ensure sufficient statistical power. Specifically, the calculation incorporated a medium effect size (Cohen's *d* = 0.5), a 95% confidence level, and a statistical power of 0.80 (Cohen, 1992). This power level is considered standard and acceptable in research, balancing the likelihood of detecting true effects while maintaining practical feasibility. This approach ensured that the sample size was adequate to detect significant differences and relationships within the data, achieving a $\pm 3.2\%$ precision level for the population of 2,500 students.

Data collection for this study was conducted using self-report questionnaires specifically designed to address the research objectives. The questionnaires incorporated sections covering demographics, experiences of sexual violence, and assessments of meaning in life. The primary instrument utilized was the Indonesian version of the Meaning in Life questionnaire, which underwent validation with a reliability coefficient of 0.853. To measure experiences of sexual violence, a set of five items developed by the researchers was employed. For the assessment of meaning in life, the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ), developed by Steger et al. (2006), was utilized. The MLQ comprises 10 questions examining various facets of life's meaning and includes two subscales: the Presence of Meaning subscale, which gauges individuals' perceptions of the significance of their lives, and the Search for Meaning subscale, which assesses individuals' motivation to explore or enhance their understanding of life's meaning. These questionnaires were developed based on relevant literature and underwent rigorous validity testing before implementation in the study.

The researchers employed three analytical approaches: descriptive analysis to characterize the sample in terms of age, gender, school level, family status, child status, living arrangements, siblings, types of sexual violence, event time of sexual violence, and perpetrators of sexual violence; cross-sectional analysis using Chi-Square tests to examine the prevalence of sexual violence across demographic groups including gender, age, school level, family status, child status, living arrangements, and siblings; and Spearman correlation analysis to assess the impact of sexual violence on "Meaning in Life." In the Spearman analysis, "Meaning in Life" was the dependent variable measured on an ordinal scale, while the types of sexual violence experienced were the independent variables. The significance level was set at $\alpha = 0.05$, with *p*-values determining whether to reject the null hypothesis. A *p*-value below 0.05 indicated significant relationships. The results provide insights into the prevalence and impact of sexual violence among adolescents and its influence on their sense of meaning in life.

4.0 RESULT

4.1 Demographical and sexual violence type of study participants

An analysis was conducted on data involving 839 samples. Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for the sample, indicating that 66.3% are female, 76.5% are aged 13-15 years, and 63.4% are middle school students. Furthermore, 82.4% of the sample comes from complete and harmonious families, 97.5% are biological children, 78.8% live in homes with nuclear families, and 41.5% have one sibling. In addition to the demographic characteristics, the study also identified the types of sexual violence experienced by the sample. The most common type of sexual violence reported is verbal sexual harassment (72.9%), followed by non-verbal harassment such as touching or grabbing private parts (21.2%), sexual exploitation (1.9%), attempted rape (1.8%), sexual torture (1.3%), rape (0.6%), and traditions with sexual overtones (0.2%). Moreover, 54.5% of the experienced sample sexual violence less than one year ago, and 51.6% of the perpetrators were friends.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics and types of sexual violence experienced by study participants

Variables	N (%)
Sex	
Male	283 (33.7)
Female	556 (66.3)
Age	
10-12 years	8 (1.0)
13-15 years	642 (76.5)
16-18 years	189 (22.5)
Study Level	
Junior High School	532 (63.4)
Senior High School	307 (36.6)
Family Status	
Complete and harmonious	691 (82.4)
Divorce	148 (17.6)
Status of the Child	
Biological child	818 (97.5)
Stepchildren	8 (1.0)
Orphans	11 (1.3)
Adopted child	2 (0.2)
Living status	
Home (with nuclear family)	661 (78.8)
Home (with family/relatives)	116 (13.8)
Dormitories	48 (5.7)
Boarding House	14 (1.7)
Siblings	
Only child	86 (10.3)
2 siblings	348 (41.5)
3 siblings	247 (29.4)
More than 3 siblings	158 (18.8)
Types of sexual violence	
Verbal sexual harassment/harassed with words	612 (72.9)
Non-verbal harassment: touching or grabbing the private parts.	178 (21.2)
Rape Attempt	15 (1.8)
Rape	5 (0.6)
Sexual torture	11 (1.3)
Traditions with sexual overtones	2 (0.2)
Sexual exploitation	16 (1.9)

Variables	N (%)
Event time of sexual violence	
Less than one year ago	457 (54.5)
1-5 years ago	188 (22.4)
6-10 years ago	88 (10.5)
11-15 years ago	106 (12.6)
Perpetrators of sexual violence	
Family members (parents, siblings)	39 (4.6)
Relative/close family	23 (2.7)
Neighbors	17 (2.0)
Friends	433 (51.6)
Girlfriend/Boyfriend	5 (0.6)
Other adults (teachers, chaperones, seniors, etc.)	26 (3.1)
Strangers	102 (12.2)
Not willing to mention	194 (23.1)

4.2 Prevalence and types of sexual violence

The following presents the Chi-Square analysis data to explore the prevalence of sexual violence among groups based on categorical variables such as gender, age, school level, family status, child status, living arrangements, and number of siblings.

Table 2. Prevalence and types of sexual violence across demographic characteristics of study participants

Variables	Types of sexual violence N (%)							p-value
	Verbal sexual harassment	Non-verbal harassment	Rape Attempt	Rape	Sexual torture	Traditions with sexual overtones	Sexual exploitation	
Gender								
Male	207 (73.1)	59 (20.8)	5 (1.8)	0 (0.0)	4 (1.4)	0 (0.0)	8 (2.8)	0.398
Female	405 (72.8)	120 (21.6)	13 (2.3)	5 (0.9)	4 (0.7)	1 (0.2)	8 (1.4)	
Age								
10-12 years old	5 (62.5)	3 (37.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0.535
13-15 years old	484 (75.4)	125 (19.5)	12 (1.9)	3 (0.5)	5 (0.8)	1 (0.2)	12 (1.9)	
16-18 years old	123 (65.1)	51 (27.0)	6 (3.2)	2 (1.1)	3 (1.6)	0 (0.0)	4 (2.1)	
School level								
Junior High School	413 (77.6)	99 (18.6)	6 (1.1)	1 (0.2)	3 (0.6)	1 (0.2)	9 (1.7)	0.001
Senior High School	199 (64.8)	80 (26.1)	12 (3.9)	4 (1.3)	5 (1.6)	0 (0.0)	7 (2.3)	
Family Status								
Complete and harmonious	506 (73.2)	148 (21.4)	15 (2.2)	3 (0.4)	6 (0.9)	1 (0.1)	12 (1.7)	0.822
Divorce	106 (71.6)	31 (20.9)	3 (2.0)	2 (1.4)	2 (1.4)	0 (0.0)	4 (2.7)	
Status of the Child								
Biological child	598 (73.1)	174 (21.3)	18 (2.2)	5 (0.6)	7 (0.9)	0 (0.0)	16 (2.0)	0.000
Stepchildren	6 (75.0)	1 (12.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (12.5)	0 (0.0)	
Orphans	8 (72.7)	2 (18.2)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (9.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	
Adopted child	0 (0.0)	2 (100)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	
Living arrangements								

Variables	Types of sexual violence N (%)							p-value
	Verbal sexual harassment	Non-verbal harassment	Rape Attempt	Rape	Sexual torture	Traditions with sexual overtones	Sexual exploitation	
Home (with nuclear family)	480 (72.6)	140 (21.2)	16 (2.4)	4 (0.6)	6 (0.9)	1 (0.2)	14 (2.1)	0.461
Home (with family/relatives)	82 (70.7)	30 (25.9)	1 (0.9)	0 (0.0)	2 (1.7)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.9)	
Dormitories	42 (87.5)	3 (6.3)	1 (2.1)	1 (2.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.1)	
Boarding House	8 (57.1)	6 (42.9)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	
Number of Siblings								
Only child	65 (75.6)	15 (17.4)	2 (2.3)	0 (0.0)	3 (3.5)	0 (0.0)	1 (1.2)	0.326
2 siblings	264 (75.9)	70 (20.1)	6 (1.7)	2 (0.6)	1 (0.3)	0 (0.0)	5 (1.4)	
3 siblings	177 (71.7)	55 (22.3)	4 (1.6)	2 (0.8)	2 (0.8)	0 (0.0)	7 (2.8)	
More than 3 siblings	106 (67.1)	39 (24.7)	6 (3.8)	1 (0.6)	2 (1.3)	1 (0.6)	3 (1.9)	

In addition to describing the prevalence of sexual violence experienced by adolescents in Java, Indonesia, this study explores the prevalence of sexual violence among groups based on categorical variables such as gender, age, school level, family status, status of the child, living arrangements, and number of siblings. Table 2 shows a significant association between school level (junior and senior high school) and types of sexual violence ($p = 0.001$), as well as between the status of the child and types of sexual violence ($p = 0.000$). Meanwhile, there is no significant association between gender, age, school level, family status, living arrangements, and the number of siblings with types of sexual violence.

4.3 Meaning in Life Levels and Correlation with Types of Sexual Violence

The study also conducted an analysis of the mean and standard deviation, revealing that the mean value of "meaning in life" levels among adolescent survivors of sexual violence, the sample of this study, was 52.33 with a standard deviation of 10.060. In this analysis, it was found that the majority of survivors reported high levels of meaning in life (60.7%), although a subset experienced low (3.7%) and moderate (35.6%) levels. This statistical examination provides insight into the distribution and variability of "meaning in life" scores within the studied sample of adolescent survivors of sexual violence. (See Table 3.)

Table 3. The Level of Meaning in life of study participants

Level	Frequency (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation
Low	31 (3.7)		
Moderate	299 (35.6)	52.32	10.060
High	509 (60.7)		

Table 4. Correlation between types of sexual violence and meaning in life (N=839)

		Meaning in Life	
Spearman's rho	Verbal sexual harassment	Correlation Coefficient	-.059
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.089
	Non-verbal harassment	Correlation Coefficient	-.450*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.049
	Rape Attempt	Correlation Coefficient	-.557*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.045
	Rape	Correlation Coefficient	-.620*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.030
	Sexual torture	Correlation Coefficient	-.551*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.046
	Traditions with sexual overtones	Correlation Coefficient	.480*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.050
	Sexual exploitation	Correlation Coefficient	-.555*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.042

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on Table 4, it is evident that all types of sexual violence, except verbal sexual harassment, are correlated with the meaning in life of the research sample. The type of sexual violence that exhibits the strongest correlation with meaning in life is rape, with a correlation coefficient of -0.620 and a p-value of 0.030 ($p < 0.05$). This correlation coefficient indicates a strong relationship. In contrast, the correlation coefficients for the other types of sexual violence, excluding verbal sexual harassment, are of moderate strength.

5.0 DISCUSSION

The discussion on the prevalence of sexual violence among a sample of 839 students in Java, Indonesia, reveals significant findings regarding the demographic and contextual characteristics of the victims. The data indicates that the majority of the victims are female (66.3%), aged between 13 and 15 years old (76.5%), and mostly attend junior high school (63.4%). Additionally, most of the victims come from intact and harmonious families (82.4%), are biological children (97.5%), live in nuclear family households (78.8%), and have one sibling (41.5%). These findings support existing research indicating the vulnerability of adolescent girls to sexual violence (SAMHSA, 2022), thus enhancing understanding of the contextual circumstances surrounding victims of violence.

The importance of understanding various forms of sexual violence is reinforced by the data, which shows that sexual violence in this sample primarily involves verbal harassment (72.9%). This finding is consistent with previous research (Ngo et al., 1918) and highlights the common occurrence of this form of sexual violence among adolescents. However, it is important to note that other studies have documented significant incidents of physical or non-verbal harassment, indicating variation in the forms of sexual violence experienced (Ngo et al., 1918). Additionally, the data indicates that 54.5% of victims reported experiencing sexual violence in the past year, highlighting its persistent and often unreported nature (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2020).

Furthermore, findings from a recent study by Syukriani et al. (2022) suggest that 19% of students have experienced at least one incident of sexual violence since being on campus. These findings underscore the need for a more in-depth approach to examining experiences of sexual violence among college students. Thus, these findings support the urgency of stronger interventions to protect adolescents from such harmful experiences, aligning with research conducted in Java, Indonesia.

Factors influencing the prevalence of sexual violence, such as social, economic, demographic, and psychological variables, are also a primary focus of this discussion. Previous research findings indicate that age, especially during adolescence, is a significant factor in sexual violence, with early exposure correlating

with increased risks of detrimental mental health outcomes and risky sexual behaviors in adulthood (Fergusson et al., 2013). These findings are reinforced by the findings of the study by Syukriani et al. (2022), which highlight that characteristics of adolescents still attending junior high school and living with only their mothers have a higher likelihood of experiencing violence.

Additionally, the importance of targeted interventions to change attitudes and behaviors toward sexual violence is reinforced by these findings (Ajayi et al., 2021), while also emphasizing the need for adequate social and legal sanctions against perpetrators to break the cycle of violence (Ajayi et al., 2021). By gaining a deeper understanding of the factors influencing sexual violence and global trends, more effective preventive measures and interventions can be formulated to protect adolescents from these harmful experiences (Cordova-Pozo et al., 2023).

Moreover, a study by Selengia, Thuy, and Mushi (2020) highlighted the prevalence of child sexual abuse (CSA) in Africa and Asia, indicating rates ranging from 2.1% to 68.7% for females in Tanzania and Ethiopia, and 4.1% to 60% for males in South Africa. In Asia, the prevalence ranges from 3.3% to 42.7% for females in China and India, and 4.3% to 58% for males in Hong Kong and Sri Lanka. These findings suggest a high risk of victimization in both regions, particularly among pre-pubertal and late adolescent individuals. The study also identified common perpetrators and high-risk places for abuse in each region, emphasizing the need for comprehensive strategies to address sexual violence globally (Selengia, et al., 2020). The findings of this study shed light on the prevalence of sexual violence among adolescents in Java, Indonesia, while also delving into the variations across different demographic groups. The analysis revealed significant associations between school level and types of sexual violence, as well as between the status of the child and types of sexual violence (SAMHSA, 2022; Ajayi et al., 2021). The observed correlation between school level and types of sexual violence suggests that vulnerabilities to specific forms of sexual violence differ between junior and senior high school students. This underscores the importance of tailoring prevention and intervention strategies to address the unique needs of students at different educational levels (Ajayi et al., 2021).

Additionally, the significant association between child status and types of sexual violence highlights the influence of biological or non-biological status on the experiences of sexual violence among adolescents (SAMHSA, 2022). These findings imply the necessity of considering familial dynamics and relationships in understanding and addressing sexual violence risks among adolescents (Ajayi et al., 2021). Interestingly, other demographic factors such as gender, age, family status, living arrangements, and number of siblings did not show significant associations with types of sexual violence. This suggests that while these factors may influence overall vulnerability to sexual violence, they might not directly dictate the specific types experienced (SAMHSA, 2022). These insights underscore the importance of targeted prevention and intervention efforts, focusing on more vulnerable groups based on school level and child status, to effectively combat sexual violence among adolescents in Java, Indonesia (Ajayi et al., 2021; SAMHSA, 2022).

The study found that the level of "meaning in life" among adolescent survivors of sexual violence varied, with the majority reporting high levels of meaning in life (60.7%), while a smaller proportion reported low (3.7%) and moderate (35.6%) levels. This finding indicates that despite experiencing severe trauma, many adolescents are still able to find or maintain a sense of meaning in their lives. According to Viktor Frankl (1963), the search for meaning in life is a fundamental psychological need that motivates individuals to identify and achieve significant goals. This creation of meaning is supported by coping mechanisms and social support, which help survivors rebuild their sense of meaning after trauma (Halama, 2014; Park, 2023).

However, not all adolescent survivors of sexual violence are able to maintain high levels of meaning in life. A small proportion reported low or moderate levels, reflecting the negative impact of trauma on their psychological well-being. The failure to find meaning in life can lead to mental health issues such as depression and anxiety (Munoz et al., 2020; Feldman & Snyder, 2005). Additionally, the distinction between the search for meaning and the presence of meaning is crucial. Steger et al. (2006) differentiate between the search for meaning, which involves efforts to understand life events, and the presence of meaning, which is associated with a sense of order and purpose in life. Adolescents who report high levels

of meaning in life likely have either found or created meaning despite their trauma, while those reporting low or moderate levels may still be in the process of searching.

The correlation between sexual violence and meaning in life is supported by research indicating that multiple parts of the victim, including their mental, physical, and emotional capacities, are significantly impacted by sexual abuse (Mendez, 2022). One of the most frequent and critical psychological impacts of sexual violence on adolescents is post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). According to a study by DeCou et al. (2014), PTSD is the most commonly diagnosed mental health disorder among adolescents who have experienced sexual violence, with prevalence ranging from 25% to 60% (Griesel et al., 2016; Kaltiala-Heino et al., 2018). Similarly, a study by Koss et al. (2015) found that sexual violence was associated with a higher risk of PTSD in adolescents.

Depression and anxiety are also common psychological impacts of sexual violence among adolescents. A study by Langeland et al. (2015) found that 50% of adolescent survivors of sexual violence experienced symptoms of depression, while 30% experienced symptoms of anxiety. Kaltiala-Heino et al. (2018) found that adolescent survivors of sexual violence were more likely to experience depression and anxiety than non-abused peers. Jankowski et al. (2020) also found a significant association between sexual violence and adolescent depression, indicating a higher likelihood of depression among those who experienced sexual violence. Flack et al. (2018) reported higher rates of anxiety disorders in adolescents who had experienced sexual violence.

Other common psychological impacts of sexual violence on adolescents include low self-esteem, poor body image, and substance abuse. Adolescents who have experienced sexual violence are more likely to engage in risky behaviors, such as drug and alcohol use, as a coping mechanism (Noll et al., 2017). Additionally, these adolescents are more likely to report suicidal thoughts and behaviors than those who did not experience sexual violence (Jankowski et al., 2020). Sexual violence can also significantly impact the social and emotional development of adolescents. Starzynski et al. (2019) found that adolescents who experienced sexual violence were more likely to have lower levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy, as well as poorer relationships with their peers.

The influence of social and contextual factors, such as family support and social environment, is also important in helping adolescent survivors rediscover their meaning in life (Wong, 2017; Kenyon, 2000). Adequate support can improve their psychological well-being and aid in the recovery process. These findings highlight the need for intensive interventions and ongoing support to help all survivors build and maintain their meaning in life. Understanding how these adolescents create and sustain meaning is essential for designing effective intervention programs.

The correlation analysis reveals that different forms of sexual violence impact individuals' perception of meaning in life to varying degrees. While all forms, except verbal sexual harassment, are associated with measurable changes in existential perspectives, the severity of the impact differs (Ajayi et al., 2021). Notably, cases of rape exhibit a significant negative correlation with meaning in life, indicating a substantial decrease in existential well-being among survivors (Ajayi et al., 2021). This underscores the urgent need for tailored support and interventions to address the profound psychological trauma experienced by rape survivors and facilitate their journey towards existential recovery (Feldman & Snyder, 2005; Muñoz et al., 2020).

Moreover, while other forms of sexual violence, such as physical sexual violence and unwanted sexual contact, also exhibit correlations with meaning in life, their impact may be less pronounced compared to rape (Ajayi et al., 2021). Nevertheless, these findings underscore the enduring psychological toll of sexual violence across different manifestations, necessitating comprehensive support mechanisms to address survivors' diverse needs (Steger et al., 2006). Conversely, the absence of a significant correlation between verbal sexual harassment and meaning in life suggests that this form of violence may have a comparatively lesser immediate impact on existential well-being (Ajayi et al., 2021). However, this does not diminish the seriousness of verbal sexual harassment or its potential long-term effects on survivors' psychological health (Steger et al., 2006).

6.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings highlight the intricate relationship between experiences of sexual violence and individuals' existential well-being. By recognizing the differential impact of various forms of sexual violence on meaning in life, interventions can be tailored to address survivors' unique needs, fostering existential recovery and promoting holistic healing (Frankl, 1963; Reker & Wong, 1988). This underscores the importance of integrating existential perspectives into trauma-informed care practices, thereby enhancing the effectiveness and relevance of support services for survivors of sexual violence.

In this study, we highlighted the complexity and prevalence of sexual violence among adolescents in Java, Indonesia. Findings indicate that sexual violence affects a significant portion of adolescents, particularly females, with various factors such as age, family status, and socio-economic factors playing pivotal roles in determining vulnerability levels. The analysis also revealed that different forms of sexual violence have varying impacts on individuals' sense of meaning in life, with rape showing a strong negative correlation. This conclusion underscores the need for a holistic approach encompassing education, victim support, policy changes, and the strengthening of child protection systems to protect and support victims, as well as to prevent sexual violence in the future.

With a deeper understanding of sexual violence and its impact on individuals' sense of meaning in life, further steps can be directed towards addressing this issue. Integrating existential perspectives into support services is also crucial to aid victims in their holistic recovery. Thus, a better understanding of the complexity of sexual violence among adolescents and appropriate prevention and intervention efforts can help create safer and more supportive environments for the younger generation.

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