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The Construction of Popular Islamic Media Narratives on The Issues of Sexual Violence in Indonesia

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Abstract
This study examines the construction of media narratives on sexual violence and analyzes how Islamic popular media in Indonesia articulate this issue in cyberspace. The topic is significant because sexual violence is a global concern and a key target of the Sustainable Development Goals, while media coverage often reproduces gender bias, sexism, and misogynistic framing. Using qualitative content analysis and Walter Fisher's narrative paradigm, this study analyzes discourse produced by three Islamic popular media outlets: MuslimahNews.net, BincangMuslimah.com, and Mubadalah.id. The findings show that Islamic popular media position themselves as platforms for education, religious literacy, and the prevention of sexual violence by promoting inclusive and gender-equitable narratives. However, narrative constructions differ according to each outlet's ideological orientation. MuslimahNews.net frames sexual violence as a consequence of secular capitalist systems and proposes the Islamic system as the primary solution. BincangMuslimah.com attributes sexual violence to the erosion of human dignity and value inequality, advocating practical prevention measures, legal responses, and the involvement of religious leaders. Mubadalah.id constructs sexual violence as rooted in patriarchal culture, gender injustice, and biased religious interpretations, emphasizing the deconstruction of such interpretations and the promotion of shared social responsibility. These findings demonstrate that Islamic popular media offer diverse narrative strategies that can function as counter-narratives to gender-biased mainstream media and contribute to more ethical and inclusive public discourse on sexual violence.

Keywords: ***Construction, Narrative Analysis, Popular Islamic Media, Sexual Violence***

Abstrak
Penelitian ini mengkaji konstruksi narasi media tentang kekerasan seksual serta menganalisis bagaimana media Islam populer di Indonesia mengartikulasikan isu tersebut di ruang siber. Topik ini penting karena kekerasan seksual merupakan persoalan global dan menjadi salah satu target utama dalam Tujuan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan (Sustainable Development Goals), sementara pemberitaan media kerap mereproduksi bias gender, seksisme, dan pembingkaian yang bersifat misoginis. Dengan menggunakan analisis isi kualitatif dan paradigma naratif Walter Fisher, penelitian ini menganalisis wacana yang diproduksi oleh tiga media Islam populer, yaitu MuslimahNews.net, BincangMuslimah.com, dan Mubadalah.id. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa media Islam populer memposisikan diri sebagai sarana edukasi, literasi keagamaan, dan pencegahan kekerasan seksual melalui penyusunan narasi yang inklusif dan berperspektif

kesetaraan gender. Namun demikian, konstruksi narasi yang dibangun berbeda sesuai dengan orientasi ideologis masing-masing media. MuslimahNews.net membingkai kekerasan seksual sebagai konsekuensi dari sistem kapitalisme sekuler dan menawarkan sistem Islam sebagai solusi utama. BincangMuslimah.com memaknai kekerasan seksual sebagai akibat dari degradasi nilai dan martabat kemanusiaan, serta mendorong langkah-langkah pencegahan praktis, penanganan hukum, dan keterlibatan tokoh agama. Sementara itu, Mubadalah.id mengonstruksi kekerasan seksual sebagai produk budaya patriarki, ketidakadilan gender, dan penafsiran keagamaan yang bias, dengan menekankan dekonstruksi tafsir serta penguatan tanggung jawab bersama. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa media Islam populer menghadirkan strategi naratif yang beragam dan berpotensi menjadi kontra-narasi terhadap media arus utama yang bias gender, sekaligus berkontribusi pada pembentukan wacana publik yang lebih etis dan inklusif terkait kekerasan seksual.

Kata Kunci: Konstruksi, Analisa Narasi, Media Islamic Populer, Kekerasan Seksual

Introduction

Cases of sexual violence have increasingly come to public attention and become a prominent discourse in digital spaces. The rapid development of online news portals and social media platforms has enabled information about sexual violence to circulate quickly and widely, transforming individual cases into collective public concerns. In Indonesia, several high-profile cases in 2025 such as sexual crimes committed by the former Chief of Police of Ngada in East Nusa Tenggara and the widely discussed "Agus Buntung" case in West Nusa Tenggara have intensified public scrutiny. Moreover, reports indicate that sexual violence frequently occurs within religious communities and educational institutions, including Islamic boarding schools, revealing that such violence transcends social, institutional, and moral boundaries (Komnas-Perempuan 2022).

Despite the growing visibility of sexual violence, media coverage of these cases remains deeply problematic. Mainstream media often frame sexual violence not solely as a social issue requiring education, prevention, and justice, but also as commodified content driven by market logic (Schofield 2016). Sensational headlines, victim exposure, and oversimplified narratives frequently result in secondary victimization, reinforcing stigma rather than fostering empathy. Consequently, the limitations of mainstream media have highlighted the urgency of alternative media spaces that can articulate sexual violence from perspectives that prioritize victims' voices, ethical responsibility, and social justice (Rauch 2015).

Previous studies have extensively examined how mainstream media construct and frame sexual violence. A consistent finding across this body of literature is that sexual violence is often marginalized, sensationalized, or framed through conflict and controversy rather than human rights and gender justice (Kitzinger and Jenny 2004; Tan 2020). Media narratives frequently reproduce gender bias through victim blaming, stereotyping, euphemism, and the normalization of patriarchal assumptions, which further silence victims and legitimize unequal power relations (Lumsden and Morgan 2017; Safira, Herman, and Alatas 2022). These patterns suggest that media framing is not neutral but embedded in broader socio-cultural structures.

At the same time, scholarship on sexual violence has emphasized structural causes such as patriarchal culture, unequal gender power relations, and rape culture (Thacker, Lily K. Day 2017; Gordon 2018). In digital environments, these structures manifest not only through news reporting but also through symbolic and verbal violence, including misogynistic comments, religious moralization, and cyber harassment (Dinanti and Sunesti 2023). While these studies significantly advance understanding of media and sexual violence, they remain largely focused on mainstream mass media or general social media platforms, leaving alternative and religious-based media underexplored.

This study addresses this critical gap by examining Islamic popular media as a form of alternative digital media actively engaging with the issue of sexual violence in Indonesia. Although Islamic digital media have expanded rapidly and play a key role in disseminating religious values and shaping public opinion, their narrative strategies in addressing sexual violence have received little scholarly attention. More importantly, existing studies rarely employ the narrative paradigm to analyze how media narratives function persuasively and ethically in shaping public understanding. By integrating the narrative paradigm with the study of Islamic popular media, this research offers a novel analytical lens to understand how religious discourse in digital media can contribute to anti–sexual violence narratives, gender justice, and victim advocacy.

The remainder of this study is organized as follows. The next section presents the research methodology, including the data collection procedures, the selection of Islamic popular media examined in this study, and the application of Walter Fisher's narrative paradigm. The subsequent section outlines the characteristics of Islamic popular media and

elaborates the theoretical framework, which is then used to analyze media narratives through the lens of the narrative paradigm. This is followed by the findings and discussion section, which examines how Islamic popular media construct narratives of sexual violence and explores the implications of these narratives for public discourse and social awareness. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the main findings and highlights the theoretical and practical contributions of the study.

Method

This study uses qualitative content analysis as the primary approach to understand the themes, meanings, representations, and constructions that emerge in media texts. Qualitative content analysis was chosen because it can reveal the deeper meanings of narratives on Islamic media websites. Qualitative content analysis is a systematic method for interpreting and categorizing text data with the aim of exploring the meaning of the text contextually and objectively. This method is in line with the study objective of analyzing discourse construction in the media, particularly in issues related to ideology, values, and social norms (Schreier 2024).

The data collection method uses Walter Fisher's narrative analysis which provides a valuable framework to understand how the narrative in a text (website) shapes human understanding and action. There are two important principles in this analysis: coherence (whether the narrative is reasonable and consistent) and fidelity (whether the narrative aligns with the audience's values and experiences) (West, Richard, and Turner 2014). Narrative analysis is a multidisciplinary approach that examines and interprets the structure, content, and meaning of narratives. Narrative is a powerful instrument of communication, expression and cultural transmission, especially in the digital era.

Furthermore, the data collection of this study was carried out through three stages, namely: first, the selection of Islamic popular media. At this stage of data collection, studyers found 100 popular Islamic digital media in Indonesia based on the release of IB Times. The selection of media was carried out purposively to choose which media was chosen in this study according to certain criteria, namely: the media voiced women's issues, gender justice, actively and consistently discussed sexual violence. As a result, the selected media is MuslimahNews.net; BincangMuslimah.com; and Mubadalah.id. Of the three

media, the data is focused on a number of articles published in the past year (between 2024-2025) that discuss the problem of sexual violence and the solutions offered. Then, six articles were selected for in-depth analysis.

The second stage was to conduct a narrative analysis using Walter Fisher's narrative paradigm on six articles from Muslimahnews.net, Bincangmuslimah.com, and Mubadalah.id. There are three concepts in Walter Fisher's narrative paradigm: narrative, narrative rationality, and the logic of sound consideration. The way to judge whether a narrative is trustworthy is through narrative rationality. Walter Fisher's narrative analysis framework consists of (1) structural coherence: how the narrative is structured logically and consistently internally. (2) material coherence: how the narrative corresponds to social experience or the audience. (3) character coherence in the narrative: who are the central characters in the text and how their morality is portrayed. (4) narrative alignment or truth: analyzing the truth or credibility of the narrative, how the narrative reflects trustworthy values. In the third stage, after analysing each article using Fisher's narrative analysis method, the researcher constructs a narrative pattern. The results of the analysis were then strengthened with secondary data from various sources of literature (library study), namely journals, books, online media and other digital data.

Narrative Construction Patterns of Sexual Violence

The first media outlet is MuslimahNews.net, an online media portal that delivers news and opinions from an Islamic perspective, particularly on women's and family issues. The news is presented and analyzed using the perspective of Muslim women. Muslimah News has a tagline as a media that is educational, inspiring, educating, works for the people, and presents true news and information *(sahih*-in Islam*)*. In addition to its website portal, Muslimahnews.net also publishes content on Instagram @muslimahnewsid and on Facebook (Muslimah News com). Content published on the website is then shared on social media, tailored to the format and characteristics of each medium. Instagram content design emphasizes more on photos, videos, captions, infographics, reels, and stories. The content on Facebook is the same as on the website. The number of Instagram followers is more than 97.7 thousand followers and the number of contents that has been posted is

8.172 contents. Meanwhile, the number of Facebook followers is more than 71,000, and the number of likes is 58,000 (Observation, March 26, 2025).

Furthermore, the second media outlet is BincangMuslimah.com, an Islamic news and media website that delivers news and opinions from an Islamic perspective, serving as a space for women to express themselves. The tagline of BincangMuslimah.com is "Muslim expression space". BincangMuslimah.com is the second news portal after Bincangsyariah.com, which was previously successfully developed by the el-Bukhori Institute, a non-governmental organisation that seeks to introduce the hadiths of the Prophet to the public to campaign for moderate Islam. BincangMuslimah.com was created to fill the void in public space for Islamic content that is friendly to women. BincangMuslimah.com writes about current issues based on the principles of moderate and tolerant Islam. BincangMuslimah.com has a number of interconnected social media accounts, namely Instagram (@bincangmuslimahdotcom) with 15.5 thousand followers and 1,368 posts; Facebook (BincangMuslimah.com) with 606 followers; Spotify (Talk Muslimah); YouTube (@BincangMuslimah) with a total of 12.8 thousand subscribers and 301 videos; and platform X (Binc4ngMuslimah) with a total of 4,106 followers (Observation, March 26, 2025).

The third media outlet is Mubadalah.id, a news website and media outlet that actively voices the values of gender equality and justice from an Islamic perspective. The tagline of Mubadalah.id is "inspiration for relational justice". The principle it upholds is *"mubadalah"* or reciprocity. Mubadalah.id positions itself as a popular outlet that discusses the relationship between women and men to strengthen and popularise the values of justice and reciprocity in both family and community life. This outlet was initiated by Kyai Faqihuddin Abdul Qadir, an Indonesian Muslim interpreter and feminist figure who focuses on women's issues and gender justice. Mubadalah.id is very progressive in voicing women's issues and gender justice across all social media platforms to reach all generations, namely Facebook, YouTube, X, and TikTok, using the same account name, Mubadalah.id. The number of followers on each social media platform is Instagram (46 thousand followers with 2.206 pieces of content), Facebook (6.8 thousand followers), TikTok (1.1 thousand followers), platform X (2.540 followers), and YouTube (6.8 thousand followers with a total of 657 videos) (Observation, March 26, 2025).

The following are the results of the analysis of the three Islamic media outlets, Muslimahnews.net, BincangMuslimah.com, and Mubadalah.Id, using Walter Fisher's narrative analysis framework:

Muslimahnews.net	
	Article 1: Sexual Violence in the Campus Environment, Psychologists: Portraits of the Failure of Capitalism's Secular System (January 14, 2025). Article 2: State Sexual Violence Emergency Fails to Protect Children (January 27, 2025)
Element	**Explanations**
Structural Coherence	Sexual violence is constructed as the result of the failure of secular systems and capitalism, which are considered to have destroyed the moral order and weakened religious beliefs. Then, the state has been unable to provide protection and has even exacerbated the situation with policies that are not in line with Islamic values. This narrative consistently blames the state and secular systems as the causes of sexual violence. The narrative tends to be mono-clausal and does not explore other factors.
Material Coherence	The narrative is highly coherent for conservative audiences who see moral degradation as the root of the problem, but less coherent for more pluralistic or feminist audiences who view sexual violence as an issue of power relations or patriarchy.
Character in The Narrative	The perpetrators of violence are not portrayed individually, but rather the "secular-capitalist system" and the "negligent state" are presented as the main antagonists. The victims are symbols of the suffering Muslim community.
Narrative Alignment (Truth)	The narrative voices Islamic moral values based on an ideal social order (sharia). However, the moral alignment does not touch on the complexity of the victims and the roles of individual actors.
Narrative Pattern	MuslimahNews.net builds a narrative that the cause of sexual

	violence is the secular system of capitalism and the solution is the Islamic system. It's a macro-structural and ideological narrative pattern: linking each case to a non-Islamic value system. There is no focus on micro power relations or the experiences of victims.

Bincangmuslimah.com	
	Article 3: Popularity and Power Relations: Triggers for the Emergence of Sexual Violence Predators (October 18, 2024). Article 4: In addition to protection for women, education of boys from an early age before sexual violence occurs (October 16, 2024).
Element	**Explanations**
Structural Coherence	Sexual violence is narrated as the result of unequal power relations and a lack of gender education from an early age, especially for boys. This media outlet presents education and critical awareness as the solution. The narrative has a strong structure and is connected to everyday social experiences (such as the popularity of religious leaders or lecturers who have power relations that exploit their dominant status to commit abuse).
Material Coherence	This narrative resonates strongly with urban, educated, and gender-aware audiences because it links the issue of sexual violence to structural inequality and the importance of values education.
Character in The Narrative	Perpetrators of sexual violence are portrayed as predators hiding behind authority. Victims are shown as human and in need of protection. Boys are also portrayed as a group that needs to be engaged from an early age.
Narrative Alignment (Truth)	The narrative touches on values of justice, responsibility, and gender equality. Its fidelity of text is very strong among urban

	and moderate audiences.
Narrative Pattern	BincangMuslimah.com builds a narrative that the causes of sexual violence are inequality of values and human dignity. Then, the solution is practical prevention, legal handling and the role of religious leaders. It's a the critical-educational pattern encourages audiences to understand the root causes of the problem and promotes social transformation through education and reform of power dynamics.

Mubadalah.id	
	Article 5: When Men Are Also Victims of Sexual Violence: Biased Sexist and Misogynistic Comments (January 18, 2025). Article 6: Religion vs Morality: Why Can a Religiously Observant Person Become a Perpetrator of Sexual Violence? (August 8, 2024)
Element	**Explanations**
Structural Coherence	The text dismantles the dominant narrative that victims of sexual violence are not only women but also men and criticizes the imbalance between religion and morality. The text emphasizes that formal adherence to religion does not guarantee gender-equitable morality. Then, one of the causes of sexual violence is patriarchal bias.
Material Coherence	The narrative includes the experiences of victims across genders and targets aspects of religious internalization. Many real cases show that perpetrators of violence are "devout" figures. The narrative also authentically reflects the experiences of victims. The narrative has high coherence for progressive circles and audiences who are sensitive to gender issues.
Character in The	Perpetrators of sexual violence are religious figures who have

Narrative	failed morally. Victims can be anyone, boy or girl, women or men. There is courage in debunking the illusion of formal morality.
Narrative Alignment (Truth)	Fidelity is very strong because it touches on universal values of justice, empathy, and critical religious reflection. Readers are invited to explore the meaning of justice and morality in a spiritual context.
Narrative Pattern	Mubadalah.id builds a narrative that the causes of sexual violence are patriarchal culture, gender injustice, and biased religious interpretations. Then, the solution is deconstruction of interpretations and this case is a shared responsibility. It's a reflective-deconstructive pattern, dismantling old narratives and building a new understanding that is more just and humane toward both victims and perpetrators.

Through Walter Fisher's lens, each media outlet (MuslimahNews.com, BincangMuslimah.com, and Mubadalah.id) shapes narratives of sexual violence according to its own values, perspectives, and ideologies. Based on the analysis in the table above, a comparison of the narratives across the three media outlets is as follows: First, MuslimahNews.com. Two texts on MuslimahNews.com emphasise the central narrative of the state's failure to prevent sexual violence, attributed to the secular-liberal system and culture. MuslimahNews.com presents a macro-structural narrative grounded in Islamic ideology. It constructs a collective moral narrative centred on an ideal Islamic system, or "Islam Kaffah", a concept in Islam that emphasises the comprehensive and perfect application of all Islamic teaching in the life of a state. MuslimahNews.com demonstrates strong coherence and maintains high loyalty to conservative groups. The solutions offered are more structural religious transformations rather than social transformations based on gender equality. There is almost no criticism of the structure or dynamics of patriarchal power, and no effort to empathetically voice the experiences of victims. It can be said that these texts implicitly contain misogynistic content by neglecting the structure or dynamics of patriarchal power and by shifting responsibility to the secular ideological system rather

than to individual perpetrators or gender-biased culture. According to Unger (1992), moral rhetoric that blames modernity often hinders progress towards gender equality, whereas gender equality is an issue that all countries are fighting for.

Second, BincangMuslimah.com. Based on two texts that have been analyzed, it explicitly discusses power relations, the authority of religious figures and men, and the need to protect victims. BincangMuslimah.com constructs a central narrative about power relations and the importance of education, focusing on individual actors and structures, with high coherence and high fidelity, namely a gender-aware public. The narrative's BincangMuslimah.com is inclusive in encouraging the audience to educate boys from an early age so they do not become perpetrators of sexual violence. BincangMuslimah.com does not contain misogynistic content but upholds gender inclusivity and equality in social and educational roles. BincangMuslimah.com approaches mainstream media, particularly in moderate and educational Islamic discourse, with a broad, neutral, and ethical focus. BincangMuslimah.com presents an educational narrative rooted in gender and structural justice. It focuses on social structure and education with an inclusive and solution-oriented narrative.

Third, Mubadalah.id. Both articles on Mubadalah.id challenge the status quo of religious masculinity, give voice to victims across genders, and emphasise the importance of substantive morality, not just symbolic morality. Mubadalah.id's narrative consistently challenges patriarchy and inequity within religious institutions. It also challenges conventional religious discourse with an ethical approach and a more empathetic, reflective perspective on victims' experiences. Mubadalah.id constructs narratives that critique formal religious morality and gender bias, focusing on actors within religious institutions, with high coherence and very high fidelity for progressive audiences. Mubadalah.id is strongest narratively in evocative, reflective, and critical narratives of religious actors. Its coherence and fidelity are united in the defence of values of justice and humanity. Mubadalah.id is an open media outlet that promotes the principle of gender reciprocity *(mubadalah)* in Islam. Thus, Mubadalah.id strongly supports gender equality and inclusivity through a progressive theological approach. This media is crucial for deconstructing bias or patriarchal interpretations of Islamic texts. Mubadalah.id serves as a transformative alternative media outlet and a representative voice for victims and gender justice.

These three media outlets have made sexual violence a central issue to convey to their audiences. They begin their narrative by presenting empirical data and facts showing that sexual violence in Indonesia is an emergency that requires collective action. Each outlet offers alternatives and solutions to the causes of sexual violence. MuslimahNews.net proposes changes to the state system, from policies to punishment for perpetrators of sexual violence, using the Islamic sharia system. Bincangmuslimah.com and Mubadalah.id emphasise education and literacy-based approaches, awareness-raising, and the strengthening of gender-sensitive values within religious and public discourse.

Islam Gender Equality Perspective in the Digital Space

Muslimahnews.net, Bincangmuslimah.com, and Mubadalah.id are Islamic media actively discussing women's issues and sexual violence in the digital public sphere. The Internet as a public sphere is not merely a communication tool but also a new ideological arena where religious interpretations are constructed, distributed, and contested, including sensitive issues such as gender and sexual violence. The digital space has become a new arena for ijtihad (cyber ijtihad) that can be undertaken by all sectors of society, including women, men, activists, Muslim intellectuals, and others (Bunt 2004). In the digital era, religious authority is held not only by clerics and official institutions but also by anyone capable of producing and disseminating religious discourse.

The digital space is not a neutral place, but an arena of contestation between various authorities and ideologies (Bunt 2022). Conservative groups use the internet and alternative media to reinforce patriarchal norms and traditional gender roles. Meanwhile, moderate and progressive groups utilize it to offer alternative interpretations that are more inclusive and gender-equitable. Bunt uses the term cyber-Islamic environment to describe various Islamic-based religious activities that take place in the digital space, including websites and social media.

The media has different ideologies and missions. Media ideology refers to the set of values and beliefs that underlie how the media presents information and shapes public perceptions of sexual violence. The ideological orientation of each media outlet shapes the narrative it constructs. A media narrative is the way the media presents information about sexual violence to the audience. Muslimahnews.net reflects Salafi-Wahhabi views,

identifying the state's failure to implement a secular system and liberal culture as the root of moral and social damage. This outlet promotes the idea of an Islamic system *(syariah kaffah)* as the solution. According to recent analyses, the site is reportedly managed by former affiliates of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (Niam and Khairun 2023; Khoiri and Ahmad 2023).

MuslimahNews.com is part of the conservative cyber-Islamic environment. This media outlet was established by ideological actors who use the internet as a space for preaching and shaping political opinion grounded in conservative Islamic values. MuslimahNews.com uses digital platforms to criticise the secular system and promote political solutions based on Islamic law. Its authority is grounded in the classical Islamic model of authority, namely religious ideology rather than victims' experiences. In this context, cyber-Islam can be manipulated as a tool for shaping opinions about an exclusive religion.

In contrast, Bincangmuslimah.com and Mubadalah.id promote moderate and inclusive interpretations of Islam, grounded in principles such as tolerance, gender equality, and human rights. These sites use references to the Qur'an and Hadith for contextual religious understanding. Both are managed by scholars committed to moderate ideology. BincangMuslimah.com is part of a moderate cyber-Islamic environment where Islamic interpretations are presented through educational content, advocacy for victims of sexual violence, and social reform. Digital media serves as an educational and responsive space that addresses social realities and gender-based violence. Its narrative builds awareness of power relations and structural justice. Its authority is distributed horizontally rather than top-down. Mubadalah.id is part of the progressive cyber-Islam environment. Mubadalah creates a space for discourse in which Islamic interpretations are re-examined in an ethical and gender-fair manner.

Furthermore, Muslimahnews.net tends to be gender-exclusive, as evidenced by its conservative narrative that blames the secular-liberal system as the root of the problem. This shifts responsibility from the perpetrators to an abstract system and minimizes the voices of victims or gender experiences, thereby reinforcing patriarchal structures. Meanwhile, Bincangmuslimah.com adopts a victim-centered perspective, emphasizing public education and the importance of social awareness. Although it is not overly critical of religious interpretations, its narrative seeks to highlight the Islamic values of "Rahmatan

lil alamin" and humanity. Then, Mubadalah.id is the most gender-inclusive platform, as it has a clear mission to dismantle gender-based injustice in society and within religious interpretations. Three popular media outlets in this study show how each media outlet constructs different narratives on the same issue, namely sexual violence.

One of the media's principles is to adopt an inclusive and gender-equality perspective. The media's principles emphasise diversity, equality, and the creation of a space where all voices matter. As alternative media, Bincangmuslimah.com and Mubadalah.id provide a space to amplify the voices of community groups, both structurally and traditionally, which are often ignored in mainstream media coverage (Rupar 2017). An inclusive and gender-equality perspective is important to present in order to unravel the problems of news coverage in mass media, which tends to be biased and unfair to gender. The media is a strategic space for the mainstreaming of gender equality. In this case, the media has the power to construct certain messages (Ummah 2021).

Media that adopts an inclusive and gender-equality perspective does exist, but there are not many, so the media's work to frame this perspective across all content is very important. The results of the Inclusive Media Index (IMI) by Remotivi (the centre for Media and Communication studies) in 2020 show that the media has not presented the voices of marginalised groups that are reported. This index is a report card that measures the journalistic work of online media portals on the issue of inclusivity, as well as how the media reports on marginalised groups related to women in violence, disability, gender diversity and sexuality. A number of media outlets tend to raise heartbreaking stories, often accompanied by cries of misery, to attract public sympathy, even though the news contains the formation and strengthening of stereotypes in society.

Most media texts contain dominant and populist views. In general, men are often portrayed as tough, active, competitive, aggressive and unemotional, while women are described as weak, inactive, obedient, sensitive and emotional. This depiction occurs not only in the social life of the community but also in the media. According to the Global Media Monitoring Project, 76% of the news is about men and 24% of the news is about women (Macharia 2020). When women are the source of news, the media tends to present the experiences of individual women (38%) rather than women's expertise or expertise on a particular topic (19%) (Geertsema-Sligh 2019).

An inclusive media will voice the issue of sexual violence in a fair manner. Not only will it voice the issue, but it will also advocate and disseminate practices that uphold rights and prevent violations, while avoiding discrimination. In the concept of Multiple Jeopardy, various identity factors possessed by a person can lead to discrimination or oppression because of their gender, class, race or ethnicity, so that they have a layered impact on the person. Ideally, the media has a function to strengthen mainstream perspectives by using public expression so that the claim that the media is a space to voice public opinion is stronger (Chan-Meetoo 2013).

This study found four variables that must be met to realise an inclusive and gender-equal media, namely: first, the media presents stories and sources that are balanced between women and men. Second, the media portrays women and men fairly by eliminating stereotypes or stigma. Third, the media uses language that is not discriminatory, not gender-biased, or open to misinterpretation. Fourth, the media builds gender justice in the management of media organisations.

Media holds core values that underpin how it conveys information. First is the value of freedom of expression, where media should not spread falsehoods, slander, espionage, harmful speech, or discrimination, especially stigmatization and stereotyping of victims of sexual violence (Kamali and Rasool 2016). Second is the value of universal justice. In Islam, this is expressed through the concept of *al-adl*, which emphasizes unbiased narration of subjects or objects regardless of religion, ethnicity, or status. Third is the value of moderation, known as *washatiyyah* in Islam, representing a balanced approach that avoids excess. The aim of moderation is to uphold human dignity and promote benefits (Hamada 2016).

Meanwhile, the principles of Islamic popular media are: (1) The principle of accuracy. Information that is not verified, from the perspective of the Qur'an, can lead to disasters in human life (QS. Al-Hujuraat, 49:6). (2) The principle of justice. The dissemination of information must be fair, balanced, and comprehensive (covering both sides). Providing information that deviates from the truth is not in accordance with the teachings of Islam (QS. An-Nisaa, 4:35). (3) The principle of non-discrimination. The information conveyed is not based on rumours or judgmental opinions, as looking for the faults of others is prohibited in the teachings of Islam (QS. Al-Hujurat, 49:112). (4) The

principle of polite and argumentative speech. This principle in the Qur'an is called *bil-hikmah* (QS. An-Nahl, 16:125). This principle means that the media provides information to the public as well as serving as an educational medium, not as a provocation. (5) The principle of honesty. Information sourced from false or fabricated news is very contrary to the principles and instructions in the Qur'an (QS. Al-Hajj, 22:30).

The media's portrayal of sexual violence has the potential to shape public perception. Public literacy and education are crucial for fostering theological and moral awareness that sexual violence violates human and religious values. This discourse must be present in popular media spaces. The content or narrative of the media depends on the values, principles and ideology it holds. These can be drawn from an understanding of religious teachings, as well as traditions and cultures that have been internalised over a long time. Therefore, the media needs to ensure that the news does not perpetuate gender stereotypes or disseminate misogynistic messages that reinforce abusive power relations. The media has an important role in building an inclusive, gender-equal narrative about sexual violence by respecting victims' rights and providing a deterrent effect for perpetrators of sexual violence.

Conclusion

Sexual violence is a high-news-value issue; however, not all media demonstrate adequate awareness of the need to construct inclusive and gender-equitable narratives. Rather than positioning sexual violence as a priority social issue, some media treat it as a commodified event to be exploited for commercial gain. This is problematic, given the media's crucial role in agenda-setting, framing, and the social construction of reality. In this context, Islamic popular media have the potential to strengthen their role as sources of information, education, and literacy, as well as platforms for articulating public aspirations grounded in Islamic values. As such, they can serve as counter-narratives to misogynistic and victim-blaming media discourses.

The findings indicate that ideological orientations significantly shape how sexual violence is narrated in Islamic popular media. MuslimahNews.net, reflecting a Salafi (conservative) ideological stance, frames sexual violence primarily as a consequence of state failure rooted in secular, capitalist, and liberal systems, and subsequently proposes the

implementation of an Islamic system as an alternative solution. In contrast, BincangMuslimah.com and Mubadalah.id, which adopt moderate and progressive orientations, construct narratives that emphasise gender equality by incorporating both male and female perspectives. These media highlight structural cultural factors such as patriarchy, sexist norms, and unequal power relations as key contributors to sexual violence.

This study contributes to efforts to prevent sexual violence by offering insights from Islamic popular media. Practically, it provides both academic and applied references for constructing media narratives on sexual violence that integrate inclusive and gender-equitable religious values. However, this study does not examine audience reception, indicating the need for future research into how these narratives are interpreted and negotiated by media consumers. Moreover, given the persistence of gender-biased reporting across many media platforms, greater audience engagement and critical media literacy are essential to encourage more responsible and equitable media practices.

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