

Media and Sexual Violence in Islamic Boarding Schools: Sara Mills'  
Discourse Study on Detik.com News

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**Abstract:** This study explores the media's role in shaping public perception of sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) in Indonesia. Using Sara Mills' discourse analysis, this research examines how the positions of the subject (perpetrator) and object (victim) are constructed in news narratives, with a focus on Detik.com's reporting. The findings indicate that media narratives significantly influence public attitudes by framing the kyai (Islamic scholar) as a figure of authority within a patriarchal structure, while victims—often students—are placed in a vulnerable position. The study highlights how power dynamics and gender relations affect the reporting of sexual violence, influencing social responses and policy discussions. Furthermore, this research underscores the importance of integrating gender education into the pesantren curriculum to foster awareness and prevent future occurrences. By deconstructing media narratives, this study contributes to a broader understanding of how discourse shapes societal views on sexual violence in religious institutions.

**Keywords:** Media discourse, sexual violence, Islamic boarding schools, Sara Mills, gender, power relations

**Abstrak:** Studi ini mengeksplorasi peran media dalam membentuk persepsi publik terhadap kekerasan seksual di pesantren di Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan analisis wacana Sara Mills, penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana posisi subjek (pelaku) dan objek (korban) dikonstruksi dalam narasi berita, dengan fokus pada pemberitaan Detik.com. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa narasi media secara signifikan memengaruhi sikap publik dengan membingkai kyai sebagai sosok otoritas dalam struktur patriarkal, sementara korban—yang sering kali merupakan santri—ditempatkan dalam posisi rentan. Studi ini menyoroti bagaimana dinamika kekuasaan dan relasi gender memengaruhi peliputan kekerasan seksual, yang pada akhirnya berdampak pada respons sosial dan diskusi kebijakan. Lebih lanjut, penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya mengintegrasikan pendidikan gender ke dalam kurikulum pesantren guna meningkatkan kesadaran dan mencegah kejadian serupa di masa depan. Dengan mendekonstruksi narasi media, studi ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman yang lebih luas tentang bagaimana wacana membentuk pandangan masyarakat terhadap kekerasan seksual di lembaga keagamaan.

**Kata kunci:** Wacana Media, Kekerasan Seksual, Pesantren, Sara Mills, Gender, Relasi Kuasa.

INTRODUCTION

Sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools is a serious problem that has received increasing attention in recent years. This religious institution not only functions as a center for religious education, but also for moral development so that it can be expected to provide a safe and supportive environment for students. However, reports and evidence show that sexual violence can occur in Islamic boarding schools. In fact, data records that sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools ranks second after universities.<sup>1</sup> This phenomenon raises great concerns about the safety and well-being of students and shows the need for comprehensive examination and intervention.

In some cases of sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools, it does not only involve a <sup>2</sup>male

<sup>1</sup> (<https://databoks.katadata.co.id/> accessed at 9 August 2024)

<sup>2</sup>A person is considered a kiai by the community because he has advantages, such as religious knowledge, descent, and wealth. These advantages are used for good and social loyalty. Kiayi, who is considered or considered to have significant authority in society. Kiai are respected in Islamic boarding schools and the Indonesian Muslim community, where their role as important figures in Indonesian society. Kiai are considered as the successors of the Prophet Muhammad SAW and as formal leaders for the general public, especially Muslims. See Ichsan, Construction of Education Relations between

and female ustadz. However, what often happens is a case involving the head of the Islamic boarding school or commonly called kyai or gus with the victim, the student (male and female), both those who have reached adulthood and those who have not, with both male and female victims. Take for example the recent case of sexual violence that occurred in the Bukittinggi Islamic boarding school. This alleged case of sexual violence was revealed when the police in Bukittinggi received a report from one of the guardians who revealed that a male student had been molested. In the latest developments, the number of victims of alleged molestation of male students has increased to 43 from the previous 40 people . Interestingly, this case also did not escape the embellishment of religion, namely the victim was asked to swear in the name of Allah not to report the incident to anyone.<sup>3</sup>

The same thing also happened in Lombok. There were three cases of sexual abuse and rape in Islamic boarding schools. A head of an Islamic boarding school in Praya Timur District, Central Lombok, with the initials HD, is suspected of molesting his students. Meanwhile, in West Lombok, four female students were victims of sexual abuse and rape by the head of the NQW Islamic boarding school in Sekotong District. In addition to the two, a case of sexual abuse of students by the head of an Islamic boarding school also occurred in NTB, namely in Sumbawa. The head of an Islamic boarding school in Lunyuk District, Sumbawa Regency, was reported to the Sumbawa Police for molesting his students who were still minors at the time of the incident and were attending a junior high school.<sup>4</sup> Even a case of sexual violence that attracted a lot of attention was the Jombang case in 2022 where a gus with the authority as the son of a great kyai with very adequate economic capabilities because of his cigarette factory and sprawling business, claimed that he had metafactual abilities, so he committed sexual violence against female students and alumni on the grounds of transferring the knowledge he had.<sup>5</sup>

Looking at cases of sexual violence that occur in Islamic boarding schools, namely religious institutions. An institution that is highly expected by society as an institution that is able to protect their sons and daughters as the golden generation. However, the relationship between power and religion often plays an important role in the context of sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools. This structure often places significant authority in the hands of religious leaders and educators as the highest rulers. This concentration of power can create an environment where violations are more likely to occur and less likely to be reported. In addition, religious authority can be used to justify or hide cases of sexual violence, which complicates efforts to address and resolve the problem. In this case, the media as the main source of information dissemination needs to play an important role in shaping public perception of the problem. Sexual harassment in Islamic boarding schools often causes conflict in the narrative, where the roles of perpetrators and victims and moral interpretations are contested.

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Kiai and Santri at the Lintang Songo Piyungan Islamic Boarding School, Yogyakarta. Darussalam Journal: Journal of Education, Communication and Islamic Legal Thought, 11(1), 199– 221.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/articles/c0xjx7nd4vx0> diakses pada tanggal 9 Agustus 2024 accessed at 9 August 2024

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.detik.com/bali/hukum-dan-kriminal/d-7386841/gunung-es-kekerasan-seksual-di-pondok-pesantren-ntb> accessed at 9 Agustus 2024

<sup>5</sup> <https://surabaya.kompas.com/read/2022/11/18/080800378/kontroversi-mas-bechi-anak-kiai-jombang-pelaku-pencabulan-santriwati-dan?page=all> accessed at 9 Agustus 2024.

In this case, cases that are hidden, whether intentionally or not, need to be studied further. One of the online websites that provides information about news that occurs around us is Detik.com, one of the largest news sites in Indonesia and a media that often reports on sexual violence that occurs around us. Using Sara Mills' discourse analysis, this study examines how the positions of the subject (perpetrator) and object (victim) are formed in the news narrative, as well as how power and gender structures play a role in this construction. This approach allows researchers to dismantle the narrative constructed by the media in understanding its impact on public perception. By focusing on Detik.com's reporting, this study seeks to uncover how the media shapes, directs, and perhaps manipulates public understanding of sexual harassment in Islamic boarding schools, which ultimately influences social attitudes and related policies.

## METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

This research is qualitative research by using discourse analysis. Discourse analysis theory is a method used to uncover meaning in texts, both textually and contextually. This approach examines how language is used in oral and written communication to understand the meaning hidden behind words. According to Van Dijk, discourse analysis involves three main structures: macro (the global meaning of the text), superstructure (the framework or scheme of the text), and micro (detailed aspects such as semantics, syntax, and stylistics).<sup>6</sup> In addition, this analysis also considers the social and cognitive contexts that influence the production and interpretation of texts.<sup>7</sup>

Discourse analysis also takes into account various views on the role of language. The positivist-empirical school sees language as a tool for conveying syntactically and semantically correct statements. On the other hand, constructivism emphasizes the role of the subject in shaping the meaning of discourse, while the critical view focuses more on power relations in the production of meaning. Thus, discourse analysis becomes an important tool for understanding not only the structure of language, but also the social and power dynamics that shape communication. Furthermore, Van Dijk said that discourse is a theoretical construct that is still abstract ( *the abstract theoretical construct* ) so that discourse cannot be seen as a physical manifestation of language. The manifestation of discourse is text.<sup>8</sup>

Discourse analysis not only looks at the structure of language, but also at how language is used in social interactions to shape, maintain, or challenge power relations and ideologies. *Critical Discourse Analysis* (CDA), pioneered by figures such as Norman Fairclough and Teun van Dijk, further develops discourse analysis by highlighting how language is used to reproduce power and inequality in society. CDA not only serves to understand texts, but also to reveal the power dynamics hidden behind discourse. This approach is multidisciplinary, combining elements from the social, political, and cultural sciences, to provide a more comprehensive picture of how language reflects and shapes social

<sup>6</sup> Teun Van Dijk, 1997. "Discourse as social interaction: Discourse studies: A multidisciplinary introduction". Sage Publications, vol. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Teun Van Dijk, *Ideology and Discourse*, (Barcelona: Pompeu Fabra University, 2004)

<sup>8</sup> Abdul Rani, *Analisis Wacana Sebuah Kajian*, (Malang: Bayu Media, 2004), hal. 4.

structures. Therefore, CDA is often used as a tool to dismantle dominant ideologies and give voice to marginalized groups, as well as challenge narratives that reinforce social injustice.<sup>9</sup>

Sara Mills' discourse analysis theory is part of a critical approach in discourse studies that focuses on a feminist perspective. Discourse analysis itself is a study of the function of language.<sup>10</sup> However, discourse analysis is intended to find social and ideological dimensions.<sup>11</sup> In this case, Mills emphasizes the importance of seeing how subjects and objects are presented in a text, as well as how the position of the reader or listener is formed through the text. In feminist discourse, it is important to reveal the ways in which women are represented, both as subjects who have the power to define themselves, and as objects defined by others. This approach aims to understand the dynamics of power and ideology that work in gender representation in the mass media.

The position of the subject and object in the text is the center of attention in Sara Mills' discourse analysis. The subject is the actor who has control over the discourse and is able to provide interpretation, while the object is the party that is the center of attention but has no control over its representation. Sara Mills also highlights the role of the writer and the reader or listener in the construction of discourse. According to Mills, the text is not a result that is completely controlled by the writer or broadcaster, but rather the result of negotiation between the writer and the audience. The reader or listener has an active role in interpreting and shaping the meaning in the text. In the radio program analyzed, the reader or listener is placed in a position to identify with the source, creating a more personal and empowering understanding of the role of women.

In this case, mass media often becomes a powerful tool in shaping public opinion and gender representation. According to Sara Mills, the representation given by the media can reflect and reinforce the dominant ideology in society. In the context of feminist discourse analysis, the representation of women in the media is often colored by gender bias that places women as marginal objects. However, through the application of discourse analysis, the media can be transformed into a more empowering tool by presenting women as active subjects in various aspects of public and domestic life. In conclusion, Sara Mills' discourse analysis theory provides a strong framework for understanding how gender and power interact in media texts. By focusing on subject-object positions and the role of the reader, this theory helps reveal how women are represented and how these representations can be improved to reflect a more just and empowering view. The implementation of this theory in various case studies shows the potential of the media to become an agent of positive social change through more balanced gender representation<sup>12</sup>

So Sara Mills' focus is on Subject-Object Position and Writer-Reader Position. Here is an explanation of Sara Mills' theory:

### Subject-Object Position

Analysis of the actor's position in the text (program) reveals how dominant ideologies and

<sup>9</sup> Teun van Dijk, *Discourse Ideology and Context*. (London, 2000)

<sup>10</sup> Guntur Henry Tarigan, *Pengajaran Wacana*, (Bandung: Angkasa, 1993), hal. 24

<sup>11</sup> Potter W. James, *Kodrat, Harkat dan Martabat Wanita* dalam Lugina Setyawati dan Anastasia Endang (Ed), *Media Massa dan Wanita*, (Jakarta: FISIP UI dan Unifem, 1996), hal. 137

<sup>12</sup> Eriyanto, *Analisis Wacana: Pengantar Analisis Teks Media*, (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2001), hal. 36

widespread beliefs influence the text. The position as a subject or object in this representation has a certain ideological meaning. First, this position indicates certain boundaries in the narrative perspective. For example, in the storytelling process, the subject's position as a narrator explains certain events or issues. Thus, the meaning received by the audience is very dependent on the narrator as the bearer of truth.

Second, the narrator as a subject in the representation not only has the freedom to talk about an event, but also to interpret the various actions that shape the event. Third, the definition process is subjective, so the perspective used will affect how an event is defined. In feminist discourse, the position of the subject in the discourse also affects how women are placed when presented in the discourse. Sara Mills emphasizes the importance of seeing the position of the text from the perspective of the reader and the writer (Ibid, 36).

### Position of Writer and Reader

In this model, the text is considered entirely as the work of the author without taking into account the involvement of the reader, where the reader only plays a role as a passive consumer (Ibid, 36). What is interesting about Sara Mills' approach is the way she highlights the importance of the reader's position in the text. According to Mills, the reader's position in the text is very important and must be taken into account in the process of writing the text. Sara Mills rejects the views of many experts who tend to only focus on the author's perspective, without considering the reader's point of view.

To build a positive image of women in discourse, Sara Mills' discourse analysis theory is applied by paying attention to how women are positioned in a program. The position of the reader (or listener) in the program text is also analyzed to see what strategies are displayed in the discourse, as can be seen on the [kompas.com](http://kompas.com) website. The development of mass media as an unlimited source of information makes choosing the right information increasingly difficult. Along with the rapid development of mass media, especially the internet, which has positive and negative impacts, many parties question the role of the media in conveying information about violence against women in Indonesia.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Result

Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia are Islamic educational institutions that are deeply rooted in the history and culture of society. Unlike the formal education system which is more structured and based on the state curriculum, Islamic boarding schools have developed with a flexible educational model and are more focused on religious learning. Islamic boarding schools have become centers of Islamic religious learning, where santri—the term for students at Islamic boarding schools—study various religious sciences, such as fiqh, tafsir, hadith, and tasawuf. In addition, Islamic boarding schools are also known as places for character formation that prioritize the values of simplicity, discipline, and respect for teachers or kyai.



Islam, with its agrarian cultural background, is reflected in traditional educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools. In Indonesia, Islamic boarding schools are known as the oldest Islamic educational institutions, predating formal education or schools. The history of Islamic boarding schools is inseparable from the history of the spread of Islam in the archipelago. According to Jaelani's (1994:12), Islam entered Indonesia through Aceh in the first century of Hijriah, and the education system through mosques and madrasas had developed in the Middle East and was later adopted by Muslims in Indonesia. One form of such educational institution in Indonesia developed into Islamic boarding schools.

Islamic boarding schools are spread throughout Indonesia, from rural to urban areas, each with different characteristics and learning approaches. However, Islamic boarding schools generally have several main components: kyai, students, pondok, mosque or prayer room, and classical books. Kyai is the leader of the Islamic boarding school who is the center of attention and the main driver in teaching and moral development. As a central figure, the kyai has a highly respected role, not only as a teacher but also as a charismatic spiritual leader. Kyai is often considered a figure who has a close relationship with God and is seen as a role model to follow.

In daily life, Islamic boarding schools teach discipline through various routine activities, such as congregational prayer, reciting the Koran, and studying the yellow book—a classic Arabic book that is the basis of learning in many traditional Islamic boarding schools. The students live in simple dormitories or cottages, which are not only a place to live, but also a means to learn to live independently, share, and develop solidarity among them. In addition to religious knowledge, many Islamic boarding schools also introduce life skills and vocational training that are relevant to the needs of the local community, such as agriculture, technical skills, and entrepreneurship.

Pesantren, in terms of its components, is an educational institution and development of Islamic teachings in Indonesia consisting of a residence for the caretaker or kyai, a mosque or prayer room, and a dormitory for students. Dhofier classifies pesantren into two types: traditional pesantren (salaf) and modern pesantren (khalaf).<sup>13</sup> Salaf pesantren maintain the teaching of classical Arabic books as the main curriculum without including general education. In contrast, khalaf pesantren are institutions that have integrated formal education or general knowledge into their curriculum (Dhofier, 1982: 41). It is further stated that pesantren consists of several main elements, namely pondok, mosque, students, and study of books. The community often only repeats what is conveyed by the kyai or ulama. The dominant role of the kyai in the process of conveying, inheriting, and transmitting knowledge makes the kyai a central figure in the pesantren. The kyai can be seen as a patron in the structure of the pesantren, while the students who follow the direction and guidance of the kyai act as clients.

<sup>13</sup> Wahjoetomo, *Perguruan Tinggi Pesantren Pendidikan Alternatif Masa Depan*. (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1997), hal. 65

## Discussion

### 1. Detik.com News Discourse in Sara Mills' Perspective

The following are two news discourses broadcast by detik.com regarding sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools as seen from Sara Mills' discourse analysis.

News 1 From the title "6 Facts about the Evil Actions of the Head of the Islamic Boarding School in Karawang Who Molested a Female Student"

#### 1. Subject-Object Position



In the discourse published by detik.com dated August 9, 2024 with the title "6 Fakta Ulah Durjana Pimpinan Ponpes di Karawang Cabuli Santriwati " it shows that the author presents the perpetrator as the subject who raped the victim who was a female student. The title implies that the subject here is alone or one person. What is interesting about the title above is the label "durjana" attached to the figure of the Islamic boarding school leader or what is commonly called a kyai. Of course, these two labels are very opposite, namely between a charismatic and respected figure and a very despicable figure. Even according to Abdullah ibn Abbas, kyai are people who know that Allah SWT is the One who has power over all things (Rasyid, 2007: 18).

The molestation was carried out by the subject after the religious study. This is based on the quote " Setelah pelecehan terjadi saat proses pengajian berlangsung, kemudian para korban juga diajak untuk menonton video dewasa oleh oknum pimpinan ponpes tersebut". From the text, it can be said that the kyai in this case violated one of the kyai's duties, namely to form a moral and noble orientation of community life. So, this is part of the violation or deviation of the duties that should be carried out by the kyai.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup>The duties of a kyai are 1) Carrying out tabligh and da'wah to guide the people, 2) Carrying out *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* , 3) Providing good examples and role models to the community, 4) Providing explanations to the community regarding various kinds of Islamic teachings originating from the Koran and Sunnah. 5) Providing solutions to the problems of the people, 6) Forming a moral and virtuous orientation in society's life, 7) Becoming a blessing for all of nature, especially during critical times. See Hamdan Rasyid, p. 22.

Based on the title above, the object of news discourse 1 is a female student. It is not stated exactly how many students were the objects of this molestation. However, when entering the discourse, the first sentence found is " sejumlah santriwati di salah satu pondok pesantren (ponpes) di Kecamatan Majalaya, Kabupaten Karawang ". This means that the object is not just one person but there are many. So, the objects in the news that are shown to be victims of molestation are several female students. In another text, it is stated that the number of students who are indicated to be the objects of molestation is 20, but only 6 female students have reported it.

"Based on our investigation, there are 20 female students in junior high school who have become victims. However, currently we are assisting only 6 people to report the alleged case.

The victims' statements regarding the molestation by the head of the Islamic boarding school were only discovered after the female student who was the victim told her parents.

"The cruel actions of the Islamic boarding school leader towards his female students were revealed after a victim told her parents

Kalau berdasarkan penelusuran kami, ada 20 santriwati di usia SMP menjadi korban. Namun yang saat ini kami dampingi untuk melaporkan dugaan kasus tersebut, baru hanya 6 orang.

Keterangan para korban terkait pencabulan pimpinan ponpes ini baru diketahui setelah santriwati korban ini bercerita kepada orang tuanya.

"Ulah durjana yang dilakukan pimpinan Ponpes terhadap santriwatinya itu terungkap setelah seorang korban bercerita kepada orang tuanya."

## 2. Writer-Reader Position

In relation to the author's position in this news, it shows that the author describes in detail and briefly the violence that befell the woman, and clearly reveals the chronology of the incident from the beginning of the incident to the police report. The chronology of the incident clearly written by the author was obtained from the results of an investigation by the Head of the Legal Counsel Team of the Sanggabuana Karawang Legal Aid Foundation (LBH), Saepul Rohman as the representative of the victim. So in this case, the author wants to voice the victim's rejection of the case that befell them through the statement of the victim's legal counsel and really hopes for an appropriate punishment for the perpetrator of the molestation. In this case, the author still plays the role of an observer and reporter who conveys information about the sexual harassment case at the Islamic boarding school in detail and chronologically and maintains an emotional distance and does not show strong bias in presenting information objectively and formally. However, on the other hand, the author positions himself as an authoritative position, where the information provided is considered accurate and



trustworthy.

While the reader is positioned as a passive observer who receives the facts and is left to form their own opinion. However, the text presents comprehensive information, allowing the reader to understand the situation without being encouraged to take action or think in a certain way. The reader is left to process the information and form their own opinion. Through quotes and narratives that focus on the suffering of the victims and the importance of trauma management, the reader is positioned to sympathize with the victims. The reader is encouraged to see this case as a serious problem that requires immediate attention and action from the authorities.

"We hope that this report can receive serious attention from the authorities, so that the alleged perpetrator can be arrested as soon as possible to prevent other victims, and we hope that the alleged perpetrator will receive a punishment commensurate with his actions," he said.

Kami harap pelaporan ini bisa menjadi atensi serius oleh pihak berwajib, agar terduga pelaku dapat sesegera mungkin ditangkap untuk mencegah timbul korban lain, dan kami harap terduga pelaku mendapat hukuman yang setimpal atas perbuatannya," ucapnya.

The power and gender structures in this text play an important role in shaping the narrative of sexual harassment in Islamic boarding schools. The power held by the leaders of Islamic boarding schools allows for abuse to occur, while gender inequality places female students in a vulnerable position. However, families, LBH, and the police, including women in law enforcement structures, function as a balance of power and aim to fight against this injustice. This reflects the complexity of power and gender relations in a social and legal context that seeks to protect victims and uphold justice.

## News 2 “ Bikin Nyesek! Korban Pencabulan Dititipkan ke Ponpes Malah Dilecehkan Kiai”



### 1. Subject-Object Position

In this text, Kiai AM plays the role of a subject who has power, both in the literal sense as the caretaker of the Islamic boarding school and in the narrative discourse. He is positioned as the perpetrator of the action, even though the action is negative (alleged harassment). Meanwhile, the teenager with the initials CS, although a victim, is also positioned as a subject in the narrative sense, because his action of reporting the incident becomes the driving force of the story. CS is a figure who experiences and reports the act of harassment, but his position tends to be passive in terms of power because he is a victim who is under the authority of the perpetrator.

As for the object position, the victim CS is also positioned as the object of the violent actions carried out by Kiai AM. CS becomes the focus of attention as a victim who experiences suffering and trauma, but in the text narrative, he is described more as someone who is "treated" than someone who "acts". This is different from Kiai AM who occupies the object position because he is positioned as an object that is "investigated" or "reported" by the victim and the police. He becomes the focus of the investigation, which describes a passive position where his actions are being investigated according to the text quote " Iya sudah kita terima laporannya. Saat ini masih penyelidikan," kata Aldhino.

### 2. Writer-Reader Position

The author in this text appears to take the position of a neutral observer who reports events without showing bias or strong emotions. This is evident in the absence of personal opinions in the text. Information is presented factually, with a focus on the chronology of events and official statements from the authorities (the police). The author's neutrality can also be seen from the use of objective and formal language that shows that they are trying to distance themselves from the events being reported and not explicitly taking sides with either party. This places the author in an authoritative position, where readers are expected to accept the information presented as fact. The author also includes details related to the institutions involved, such as the PPA, KBPPPA, and the Social Service, which shows an effort to provide a complete picture of the handling of this case.

The reader is positioned as a passive observer who receives the information presented by the author. There is no direct invitation to the reader to take action or form a certain opinion, which places the reader in a position to receive and process information, so that the reader is left to make their own interpretation based on the facts presented. By including a police statement stating that the investigation is still ongoing, the reader seems to be invited to follow the development of this case further. This can position the reader as a participant who is curious about the continuation of the story, even though they are not actively involved. The reader is positioned to wait for the final results of the investigation, which places them in a position to wait for further clarification, indicating that the information available is still temporary and can develop.

Until now, Aldhino has not revealed the details of the harassment. His party is still investigating the alleged harassment case.

"Still being investigated. We are still completing the statements of the witnesses and psychological examination of the victim," he concluded.

Hingga saat ini, Aldhino belum membeberkan secara rinci pelecehan tersebut. Pihaknya masih mendalami kasus dugaan pelecehan tersebut.

"Masih didalami. Kita masih melengkapi keterangan para saksi dan pemeriksaan psikologi korban," pungkasnya.

In this text, Kiai AM has a very large position of power, both as a religious leader and as a caretaker of the Islamic boarding school. According to Nurhayati Djamas, "Kiai is a term for a religious figure or a figure who leads an Islamic boarding school".<sup>15</sup> His status as a kiai gives him strong moral and social authority, which is traditionally respected in society. However, this power is abused in the form of alleged sexual harassment, which shifts the role of the kiai from protector to perpetrator. Meanwhile, CS, as a victim, is in a weak position in the power structure. He is a teenager who is socially and legally more vulnerable than the kiai. The existing power structure places him in a situation where he relies on institutions and authorities for protection and justice. Kiai AM, as a man and a religious leader, is in a dominant position in the traditional social structure. His gender and authority support each other in strengthening his position in society, which ultimately allows him to abuse this power against the weaker party. If CS is assumed to be a woman, this text reflects how young women are often positioned as objects of male power in a patriarchal social context. Even today, culture to some extent is still regulated by the patriarchal system, the status of women in society will always be in second place.

## 2. The Role of Media Narratives in Constructing Audience Opinions and Perceptions

Public opinion and perception are largely shaped by the stories broadcast by the media. The media do not just spread news; they also shape the way audiences think about certain issues. The media can direct public attention and influence their understanding of events through word choice, framing, and emphasis on certain elements in the news. Whether explicitly or implicitly, the stories constructed by the media can reinforce or shape new understandings in society. Therefore, the media not only conveys information but also shapes the social reality that is accepted by the audience. According to McLuhan, media technology has created a revolution in society because society has become very dependent on technology, and the social order is formed based on society's ability to use technology. He sees the media as playing a role in creating and managing culture.<sup>16</sup>

Some scholars call McLuhan's thinking on the relationship between technology, media and society technological determinism, which is the idea that technology is determinant in shaping

<sup>15</sup> Nurhayati Djamas, *Dinamika Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia Pasca kemerdekaan*, (Jakarta : PT RajaGrafinda Persada, 2008), h. 55.

<sup>16</sup> Morissan, *Teori Komunikasi Individu Hingga Massa*, (Kencana Prenadamedia Group, Jakarta, 2014), hal. 486.

human life. In addition, narratives broadcast by the media can also instill bias and stereotypes in public perception. For example, if the media consistently presents a certain point of view in a story, the audience may internalize the story as the truth without realizing the possibility of error. The mass media has various roles, one of which is in influencing the attitudes and behavior of an individual or a group of people or society.<sup>17</sup> The following are responses from some people regarding sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools:

"It also needs to be the concern of all parties, to maintain the sincerity, purity of educational institutions, and so that similar incidents do not happen again in the future. As part of society, we need to be involved in saving the future of children who have become victims of this despicable act, stop spreading this bad news, and even cover up the shame of this bad act [MUI Bandung]

"Educational institutions should be institutions to shape children's character. Moreover, religious teachers should be able to strengthen their students' morals, not destroy them [Mayor of Bandung]

"I ask students and Islamic boarding schools under the auspices of NU to be vigilant and carry out strict supervision of all networks. RMI and non-RMI must act firmly. Supervision of madrasas and Islamic boarding schools must be strengthened [PKB chairman Cak Imin]

Perlu pula menjadi perhatian semua pihak, untuk menjaga ketulusan, kemurnian lembaga pendidikan, dan agar tidak terjadi kembali peristiwa serupa di masa yang akan datang. Selaku bagian dari warga masyarakat, kita perlu ikut terlibat menyelamatkan masa depan anak-anak yang telah menjadi korban perbuatan bejat itu, stop menyebarkan berita buruk ini, dan bahkan kita tutup aib perbuatan buruk ini [MUI Bandung]

"Seharusnya institusi pendidikan adalah lembaga untuk menempa karakter anak. Apalagi guru agama, seharusnya mampu untuk menguatkan moral muridnya bukan malah merusaknya [walikota Bandung]

"Saya minta santri dan pesantren di dalam naungan NU harus waspada dan melakukan pengawasan ketat ke semua jaringan. RMI dan non RMI harus bertindak tegas. Pengawasan bagi madrasah dan pesantren lebih diperkuat [ketua PKB cak imin].<sup>18</sup>

From the public response to sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools, it can be said that the media influences public opinion in the process of forming opinions or points of view. Mass media can be said to be a powerful weapon for the struggle for image.<sup>19</sup> After all, the media has become the main

<sup>17</sup> Kun Wazis, *Media Massa dan Konstruksi Realitas*, (Malang: Aditya Media Publishing, 2012), hal. 12

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.liputan6.com/news/read/4734994/8-tanggapan-berbagai-pihak-usai-terungkapnya-kasus-pesantren-herry-wirawan?page=2> accessed at 5 September 2024

<sup>19</sup> Burhan Bungin, *Imaji Media Massa*, (Yogyakarta: Jendela, 2001), hal. 31

source for individual understanding of social reality, as well as for understanding society and groups as a whole. In addition, the media also promotes normative values and judgments that are spread through news and entertainment. However, the influence of media narratives on public opinion is not always bad. The media can also be a powerful educational tool and a driver of positive social change. For example, when the media raises issues such as social justice, human rights, or climate change with constructive and fact-based narratives, they can raise public awareness and encourage beneficial collective action. Thus, media narratives can influence public opinion.

### 3. The Importance of Gender Education in the Islamic Boarding School Curriculum

Gender education in the pesantren curriculum is very important to form a fair and inclusive understanding among students. Pesantren, as an Islamic educational institution that plays a significant role in forming the values and character of the younger generation, has a responsibility to teach the principles of gender equality in accordance with Islamic teachings. Gender education can help students understand the roles and rights of men and women proportionally, thereby preventing gender-based stereotypes and discrimination. By instilling the concept of equality from an early age, pesantren can produce graduates who are more open, tolerant, and able to appreciate differences in community life.

However, the reality shows that education on sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools is very minimal. This can be seen in one survey that almost all participants have heard the term sexual violence, as many as 171 participants (97.7 percent). When asked whether participants had ever seen or heard of incidents of sexual violence occurring in the Islamic boarding school environment and affecting friends/other people around them? As many as 103 participants answered that they had known (58.9 percent) while the remaining 72 participants (41.1 percent) answered never. The fact of sexual violence that occurs could certainly be greater because of the limited understanding of sexual violence. Society usually understands sexual violence only as rape. Meanwhile, the forms of sexual violence that most often occur in Islamic boarding schools are *cat calling* (37.7 percent), holding/groping sensitive body parts (29.7 percent), sexual harassment (15.4 percent), forced sexual intercourse (7.4 percent), forced marriage (4 percent), forced abortion (2.3 percent), forced pregnancy (1.7 percent), and other forms of sexual violence (13.1 percent).<sup>20</sup>

In a broader context, understanding women's rights in Islam is important. It should be a reflection of the current social situation and should be part of religious education. Many societies continue to ignore women's rights contained in Islam because they believe that this religion limits women's rights. Looking further, it turns out that Islam gives women ample room to develop and contribute.

There are many ways to provide education on sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools, whether included in the curriculum or not. One way is to organize discussions or halaqah on gender

<sup>20</sup> <https://umahramah.org/ringkasan-hasil-survei-dan-riset-media-kekerasan-seksual-di-pesantren/> accessed at 5 September 2024



equality to help female students understand the role of women in religion and society. However, such conversations need to be accompanied by experienced facilitators and relevant materials. In addition, collaboration with women's organizations or organizations that focus on gender issues also needs to be strengthened. Unfortunately, many Islamic boarding schools are reluctant to open themselves up and collaborate with external parties, on the grounds of maintaining their teaching traditions. In fact, such collaboration can enrich perspectives and provide new insights for Islamic boarding schools in implementing their empowerment programs. In this case, education for the surrounding community regarding women's rights and gender equality is also very important. Islamic boarding schools have the advantage of being in the midst of society, so they have a great opportunity to become agents of change.<sup>21</sup> One of the remarks of the PKB chairman as a member of NU,

"There is only (the) Permendikbud Number 82/2015, but there is none for madrasahs and Islamic boarding schools. So I think it is very necessary to draft it as soon as possible so that there are no more cases of sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools," Cak Imin emphasized.

Cuma (ada) Permendikbud Nomor 82/2015, tapi kalau untuk madrasah dan pesantren belum ada. Jadi saya kira sudah sangat perlu disusun secepatnya agar tidak ada lagi kasus-kasus kekerasan seksual di pesantren," tegas Cak Imin.

So in this case to realize this, Islamic Boarding Schools must make strict regulations/rules on the prevention and handling of sexual violence in Islamic Boarding Schools, including having SOPs and Anti-Sexual Violence Task Forces. In addition to strict regulations, there also needs to be continuous education for all ustadz and santri about sexual violence, its dangers, impacts, and mitigation.

Sexual violence must not only be part of violations of social ethics, religious ethics, and Islamic boarding school ethics, but also needs to be included in the curriculum of the Islamic boarding school education system.

No one should do it in any form. If anyone does it, they must be punished according to the applicable law. We already have a Law on Sexual Violence that must be respected and enforced by all components of the nation.<sup>22</sup>

In addition, including gender education in the pesantren curriculum also means preparing students to become agents of change in society. A deep understanding of gender issues can strengthen the role of students as fair and ethical leaders in various fields, both in the family, community, and public sphere. Through comprehensive gender education, pesantren can become a place where scholars and intellectuals who support the values of equality and social justice are born. Thus, gender education in pesantren is not only about gender awareness, but also an effort to create a more just and harmonious society, in line with Islamic values.

<sup>21</sup> [https://psga.uin-malang.ac.id/psga\\_admin/tajuk-rencana/pesantren-sebagai-garda-terdepan-pemberdayaan-perempuan/](https://psga.uin-malang.ac.id/psga_admin/tajuk-rencana/pesantren-sebagai-garda-terdepan-pemberdayaan-perempuan/) accessed 5 September 2024

<sup>22</sup> <https://isif.ac.id/refleksi-atas-kekerasan-seksual-di-pesantren/> accessed at 5 September 2024

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, it can be said that the media, especially detik.com, as the data in this study, forms a narrative about sexual harassment in Islamic boarding schools. In this study, the kiai as the perpetrator is placed in a position of power supported by a patriarchal social structure, while the victim, who is assumed to be a woman, is in a weak and vulnerable position. Even the victims who are students do not dare to reveal the facts because of the authority of the label of a "kyai", so that it is not uncommon for cases of sexual violence to only be revealed after months or even years. In this case, the media not only reports objectively, clearly and transparently, but also influences public perception of the role of the perpetrator and victim, as well as the public's view of sexual harassment in religious institutions. In the end, the author tries to influence readers to continue to highlight cases of sexual violence until the perpetrator receives appropriate sanctions according to the actions they have committed.

Narratives created by the media play a significant role in influencing public opinion and perception on various social issues. The media not only convey information, but also actively shape social reality by directing public attention through the choice of words, framing, and emphasis in the news they present. This often results in unconscious bias in people's views, which can then influence their attitudes and behaviors towards certain topics. However, media narratives also have great potential to be educational tools that encourage positive social change when used in a constructive way. Likewise, the importance of gender education in Islamic boarding schools is becoming increasingly apparent as an effort to broaden understanding and awareness of equality and social justice among students. By integrating gender education into the curriculum, Islamic boarding schools can create an inclusive learning environment and prepare students to become agents of change who support equality in society.

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