



The Personality Profile of Sexual Offenders

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Abstract:

Introduction: Sexual violence is a growing concern in Indonesia, particularly in the Riau province. While previous studies have primarily focused on victims, limited research explores the psychological and social traits of offenders. This study aimed to examine maladaptive personality traits that contribute to sexual violence, emphasizing the interaction between individual psychology and cultural-social dynamics.

Methods: A qualitative descriptive approach was used to explore the behaviours and traits of five individuals suspected of committing sexual violence. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and psychological assessments, focusing on personality profiles, social contexts, and cultural influences.

Results: Participants exhibited high levels of neuroticism and low levels of agreeableness and conscientiousness. Common traits included egocentrism, manipulation, and antisocial behavior. Offenses typically involved exploiting trust within familial or close social relationships and occurred in private settings. Key contributing factors were low self-control, elevated sexual drive, and opportunistic decision-making.

Discussion: The findings indicated a strong association between maladaptive personality traits and the perpetration of sexual violence. These traits, combined with patriarchal cultural norms and weak social deterrents, foster environments conducive to abuse. Offenders often manipulated communal trust, revealing the complex interplay between individual dispositions and socio-cultural structures in Indonesia.

Conclusion: Understanding sexual violence offenders requires an integrated perspective that includes psychological, social, and cultural dimensions. Identifying consistent traits and contextual behaviors provides valuable insights for targeted prevention and rehabilitation strategies within the Indonesian setting.

Keywords: Personality, Criminal, Violence, Trait, Psychology, Sexual violence.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Sexual violence is a form of crime that continues to increase globally, including in Indonesia [1-4], particularly in Riau Province [5]. According to data from Komnas Perempuan, the number of reported cases of sexual violence has shown a concerning upward trend each year. This phenomenon not only has a profound impact on victims [6] but also raises critical concerns about the various factors underlying perpetrators' actions. Sexual violence is often regarded solely as a legal offense, overlooking the psychological characteristics that may influence such behavior.

To date, the majority of research on sexual violence has focused primarily on victims [7-9]. These studies delve into the psychological, social, and physical impacts experienced by victims, as well as recovery strategies that can be implemented [10, 11]. Conversely, studies on perpetrators of sexual violence remain limited [12], particularly those examining the personality traits of offenders. Most existing studies emphasize legal aspects, such as law enforcement and judicial processes, while exploration of psychological profiles or personality traits of perpetrators remains under-explored. This indicates a significant research gap that warrants further investigation.

Acts of sexual violence are often associated with certain characteristics, such as psychopathy, narcissism, or antisocial personality disorder [13, 14]. However, most of these findings stem from research conducted in Western countries, and their relevance to the Indonesian cultural context remains untested. Indonesia is characterized by its cultural diversity, distinct social norms, and unique religious values, all of which can influence individual thought patterns and behaviors, including those of sexual offenders. For instance, patriarchal social norms or permissive attitudes toward gender-based violence may serve as differentiating factors from other countries [15].

This social and cultural context in Indonesia raises fundamental questions about whether the personality profiles of sexual offenders in Indonesia align with findings from other countries or whether there are unique factors that can only be understood within the framework of local culture. Research on sexual offenders considering Indonesian culture is still rarely conducted. However, such research is necessary given the high number of sexual violence cases occurring in several areas in Indonesia.

This study aimed to address this gap by exploring the personality profiles of sexual offenders through a qualitative approach. It is hoped that this research will contribute to the understanding of the psychological and social factors underlying offenders' actions. Such knowledge is crucial not only for developing policies to prevent sexual violence but also for designing more effective rehabilitation programs tailored to the conditions of Indonesian society.

Sexual violence is a complex issue with significant consequences for both victims and society as a whole. In recent years, researchers and experts have made substantial progress in understanding the profiles of individuals who commit sexual violence. The Big Five Personality Theory is particularly relevant as a theoretical framework for this study due to its strength in analyzing the personality traits

of sexual offenders. Additionally, previous research on sexual violence has frequently employed the Big Five framework to explain this phenomenon [12, 16-18]. With its five core dimensions, such as neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and openness, the Big Five provides a framework for analyzing personality traits. These dimensions enable the identification of personality characteristics that may contribute to criminal behavior and are applicable across various contexts, including deviant behaviors [19]. Furthermore, findings from the ASEAN Youth Development Index 2022 underscore the significant influence of psychosocial and cultural norms on sexual deviance within Southeast Asia [20]. The report highlights key contributing factors, such as low religiosity, weak family attachment, diminished self-esteem, and cultural permissiveness as prominent risk factors driving high-risk sexual behaviors among youth in ASEAN countries. These insights resonate with the sociocultural framework adopted in the present study, reinforcing the notion that sexual violence is deeply embedded within broader cultural and environmental contexts, particularly in collectivist societies like Indonesia.

The Big Five framework is particularly effective for identifying maladaptive personality patterns often found in sexual offenders, such as impulsivity, lack of empathy, and manipulative tendencies. For instance, the dimensions of neuroticism and agreeableness are highly relevant for explaining these traits, while conscientiousness and openness offer insights into impulsive decision-making, poor planning, and disregard for social norms [12, 21]. These dimensions enable an in-depth analysis of offenders' behaviors as manifestations of their core personality traits rather than mere reactions to specific situations. The ease of measurement offered by this framework is another advantage. Even in qualitative studies, the Big Five dimensions can serve as guides for thematic analysis or categorization of offender behaviors.

From a theoretical perspective, employing the Big Five framework enriches the literature on the relationship between personality and criminal behavior, particularly sexual violence. Practically, findings based on this theory can support the development of psychological interventions or rehabilitation programs tailored to the personality profiles of offenders. Therefore, the Big Five framework serves as a comprehensive, empirically grounded, and practical foundation for this research.

Previous studies have demonstrated specific personality patterns commonly associated with sexual offenders and the characteristics of related crimes. These studies have highlighted traits such as low levels of empathy, high impulsivity, and antisocial tendencies [22-26]. A better understanding of these traits can inform the development of intervention strategies for managing sexual violence cases effectively.

2. MATERIALS & METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, chosen for its ability to provide an understanding of complex phenomena that are difficult to measure quantitatively [27, 28], such as the personality profiles of sexual

offenders. This approach aligns with the study's objective to thoroughly explore the experiences and characteristics of the subjects. The qualitative method allows the researcher to delve into the thoughts, experiences, and perceptions of the participants [27]. Because all participants are suspects of sexual violence currently in police custody, the interviews are conducted in the psychologist's office. These interviews take place alongside psychological examinations. The police have requested the assistance of a forensic psychology expert with the necessary competence as a forensic psychologist to conduct psychological assessments related to the perpetrators' mental state. The data collection process for this research is carried out voluntarily by the suspects.

The informants are selected using purposive sampling, where participants are chosen based on specific criteria relevant to the study's objectives, such as their experiences as suspects of sexual offenses. The study involves five individuals who have been identified as suspects in sexual violence cases. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their relevance to the research objectives, specifically adult male perpetrators of sexual violence. This method allowed for the selection of information-rich cases that provided in-depth insights into offender characteristics, motives, and contextual backgrounds. The sample size was determined based on the principle of data saturation, a commonly accepted standard in qualitative research, where no new themes or relevant information emerged during the final interviews [27]. Although the number of participants was limited to five, the depth and consistency of recurring themes across the interviews indicated that thematic saturation had been achieved. Data collection methods include interviews and observations [27, 29]. Interviews allow for an in-depth exploration of the participants' views and experiences, while observations provide insights into their context and behaviour in real-time [27, 29]. Data collection methods included interviews and observations, conducted over a period from June to August 2024.

The collected data will be analyzed using the interactive analysis model by Huberman and Miles, which involves data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification. Additionally, thematic analysis will be applied to identify significant themes and patterns from the interview and observation data. This analytical approach is selected for its effectiveness in organizing qualitative data into meaningful categories, thereby addressing the research objectives.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis revealed consistent personality and behavioral patterns among the offenders. This section organizes the findings according to emerging themes. Five major themes were identified, including personality traits, victim-offender relationships, modus operandi, driving factors, and socio-cultural context.

3.1.1. Theme 1

3.1.1.1. Personality Traits

The majority of offenders demonstrated high levels of neuroticism, characterized by impulsivity, emotional instability, and an inability to regulate sexual urges. Low agreeableness was evident in their lack of empathy, manipulative behavior, and disregard for victims' well-being. Low conscientiousness was characterized by poor planning, opportunism, and impulsive decision-making.

3.1.2. Theme 2

Victim-Offender Relationships Offenders exploited their close and trusted relationships with victims. These included stepfathers, biological fathers, foster siblings, and neighbors. The emotional and physical proximity facilitated sustained grooming, secrecy, and control.

3.1.3. Theme 3

3.1.3.1. Modus Operandi

Most offenders committed their acts in carefully selected times and locations, such as nighttime or isolated spaces. Tactics included persuasion, secrecy ('this is our secret'), and in some cases, threats. These strategies ensured silence and prevented disclosure.

3.1.4. Theme 4

3.1.4.1. Driving Factors

Uncontrollable sexual urges and low self-control were key internal motivators. External enablers included a lack of supervision, economic dependency, and poor living conditions, which provided opportunities and justification for the acts.

3.1.5. Theme 5

3.1.5.1. Socio-cultural Context

Patriarchal norms and gender role expectations reinforced offenders' dominance, while cultural taboos and fear of dishonor contributed to underreporting and victim silence. These cultural dynamics provided a fertile ground for offenders to act without immediate consequences.

This thematic structuring provides insight into cross-case patterns and enhances the interpretability and relevance of the findings.

3.2. Description of Offenders

3.2.1. Offender S

Offender S (49 years old) is the head of a household with five biological children. He is a widower who later married a widow with three children. Offender S works as a laborer and, based on observations, was determined to have normal intelligence, as he was able to understand instructions or questions and respond appropriately.

3.2.2. Offender J

Offender J (59 years old) is the head of a household with three biological children. He is a widower who remarried a widow with two children. Offender J works as a contract

worker in a local institution. Observations indicated that he possesses normal intelligence, as evidenced by his ability to understand instructions and questions, and respond accurately.

3.2.3. Offender A

Offender A (55 years old) is the head of a household with six children. He works as a farmer and has no formal education. Observations indicated that Offender A has normal intelligence, as he was able to understand instructions or questions and respond accurately. However, his lack of education hindered him from completing psychological tests due to illiteracy.

3.2.4. Offender K

Offender K (68 years old) is the head of a household who works as a laborer. He has three sons, all of whom also work as laborers. Economically, Offender K's family is underprivileged. Observations indicated that he has normal intelligence, as he could understand instructions or questions and respond appropriately. However, like Offender A, he was unable to complete psychological tests due to illiteracy.

3.2.5. Offender P

Offender P (26 years old) is the second child in his family, with one elder sibling and two younger siblings. His parents are divorced, and his father has remarried. Offender P works as a security guard and takes on additional work as a Quran teacher at a mosque. He has two adopted younger siblings, identified as I and Z. Observations indicated that Offender P has normal intelligence, as he was able to understand instructions or questions and respond appropriately. A summary of the offenders is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic and background mapping of sexual violence offenders.

Description	Offender S	Offender J	Offender A	Offender K	Offender P
Gender	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male
Age	49 years	59 years	55 years	68 years	26 years
Education	-	-	No Schooling	No Schooling	Primary School
Occupation	Laborer	Contract Worker	Farmer	Laborer	Security Guard
Type of Sexual Violence	Indecent Acts	Indecent Acts	Intercourse	Indecent Acts	Indecent Acts
Marital Status	Married	Married	Married	Married	Single
Frequency	More than once	More than once	More than once	More than once	More than once

3.3. Characteristics of Offenders and Victims

The sexual violence offenders were all individuals familiar to their victims, establishing a pattern of abuse within trusted relationships. Their ages ranged from 26 to 68 years, with four out of the five offenders being married and one unmarried. All offenders were male. The victims, aged

between 6 and 18 years, were all school-aged children. Among them, four were female and one was male.

3.4. Relationship Between Offenders and Victims

All offenders had close familial or social ties to their victims, which enabled them to maintain ongoing access and control. These relationships, based on trust and proximity, contributed significantly to the sustained nature of abuse.

As shown in Table 2, these connections include stepfathers, biological fathers, neighbors, and foster brothers, highlighting how offenders exploited existing relationships to gain access and maintain control over their victims.

Table 2. Victim-offender relationship based on familial and social proximity.

Offender	Relationship to Victim
Offender S	Stepfather
Offender J	Stepfather
Offender A	Biological Father
Offender K	Neighbour
Offender P	Foster Brother

3.5. Sequence of Criminal Acts

In the sequence of crimes, sexual violence committed by perpetrators S, J, A, K, and P exhibit differences. Firstly, perpetrator S committed the act of molestation at night when he felt that the victim was asleep, and covered her face with a pillow.

Perpetrator S committed the act while his wife was asleep, ensuring it was done quietly, and within the duration of 3-5 minutes. Perpetrator S explained that sexual intercourse with his wife was smooth and there were no difficulties, and attributed his actions to the lack of self-control over his lust and the presence of opportunities and situations that enabled him to commit this act of violence.

The sequence of sexual violence crimes committed by Perpetrator J involved the deliberate selection of the location and time to molest the victim. When his wife, the victim's mother, had gone to work. Perpetrator J perceived the lack of resistance as an indication of consent. The perpetrator also explained that his sexual relationship with his wife had no issues, suggesting that the act was purely because of a lack of self-control over lust and the existence of opportunities and situations that allowed the perpetrator to do so.

The sequence of sexual violence committed by Perpetrator A involved him having intercourse with his biological child in a private space and a field when his wife was not present. Unlike other perpetrators, Perpetrator A had intercourse until his biological child was pregnant and was finally caught by his wife. However, the perpetrator threatened to kill her if she reported his crime to the authorities. In this crime of sexual violence, Perpetrator A lacked self-control over his sexual desires and took advantage of the opportunity.

The sequence of sexual violence crimes committed by Subject K involved him committing indecent acts against children who approached him, namely, the children of the neighbors. Subject K also explained that he liked children and did this because of the favourable situation and low self-control.

The sequence of sexual violence crimes committed by Perpetrator P included the perpetrator kissing his own adopted sister, who lived with him for 9 months. Perpetrator P explained that he liked children because he had a high sense of empathy. The act of sexual abuse was purely due to the favourable situation and conditions, as well as the perpetrator's low self-control.

3.6. Motives of Sexual Violence Perpetrators

Among the five perpetrators of sexual violence, all committed their acts primarily due to sexual urges, the desire to satisfy their lust, low self-control over their sexual impulses, and the availability of favorable situations and opportunities. These behaviors were driven by a combination of internal factors, such as low self-control, strong desires, and enthusiasm, as well as external factors, including the environment and situational opportunities that facilitated the offenses. These combined influences enabled the perpetrators to engage in acts of sexual violence.

3.7. Modus Operandi

The common tactic among most offenders was the use of persuasion and the establishment of a 'secret' to ensure the victim's silence. These methods reveal a pattern of manipulation designed to control the victim while evading detection. However, the degree of coercion and threats varied among the perpetrators.

The modus operandi of offenders S, J, A, K, and P revealed both similarities and differences in their approaches to committing sexual violence. Offender S committed his acts alone without using any specific tools or involving others. Offender J employed persuasion and introduced a 'secret phase,' using phrases like "Don't tell anyone" or "This is just our little secret," and would give the victim money as a form of reward after the act. Similarly, Offender A used persuasion and the secret phase but escalated his tactics by threatening to kill anyone who disclosed his actions, ensuring the silence of both the victim and others. Offender K also relied on persuasion and the secret phase, using manipulative phrases such as "Don't tell anyone" or "This is just our little secret." In contrast, Offender P did not use persuasion or threats. Instead, they committed the act without engaging in specific manipulation or coercion. These patterns are summarized in Table 3, which presents each offender's modus operandi, including timing, location, and particular tactics used.

3.8. "Acted Alone" Indicates the Absence of Accomplices

3.8.1. Subject's Personality Profile

Perpetrator S (49 years old) showed low self-control in controlling his sexual urges, although he stated that sexual intercourse with his wife went smoothly. His desire to satisfy his lust ignored the psychological impact on the

victim, who was his stepdaughter. Perpetrator S also tended to be manipulative, choosing the nighttime when the victim was asleep and the house was quiet to carry out his actions without being easily detected. His egocentric attitude was visible from his actions, which prioritized his personal needs over the victim's welfare. Additionally, he acted opportunistically by taking advantage of the situation when his wife was unaware of his actions. Perpetrator J (59 years old) had a very low level of empathy, as seen from his belief that his stepdaughter "didn't have a problem" with his actions because the victim did not show explicit rejection. The inability to understand the victim's feelings showed the perpetrator's weak emotional awareness. In addition, perpetrator J was manipulative by taking advantage of the time when his wife was at work to approach the victim and carry out his actions. His egocentricity is evident from his focus on fulfilling personal sexual needs, without considering his moral responsibility as a stepparent who should protect the victim.

Table 3. Modus operandi of sexual offenders: location, timing, and tactics.

Offender	Modus Operandi
Offender S	-Planned
	-Committed at night
	-Conducted in the bedroom
	-Acted alone without involving others
	-Did not issue threats
	-The secret phase was used
Offender J	-Planned
	-Committed at home while his wife was away at work
	-Acted alone without involving others
	-Did not issue threats
	-Gave money to the victim after the act
	-The secret phase was used
Offender A	-Planned
	-Committed in the bedroom and secluded plantation areas
	-
	-Acted alone without involving others
	-Issued threats to maintain silence
	-The secret phase was used
Offender K	-Planned
	-Committed in secluded locations
	-Acted alone without involving others
	-Did not issue threats
	-The secret phase was used
Offender P	-Planned
	-Committed at home
	-Acted alone without involving others
	-Did not issue threats
	-The secret phase was used

Note: "Secret phase" refers to offenders persuading victims to keep the incident confidential (e.g., "Don't tell anyone"). "Planned" means the act was premeditated with a chosen time/place.

Perpetrator A (55 years old) had antisocial tendencies characterized by serious, intimidating behavior towards his wife, including threats of murder, to keep his actions a

secret. Low self-control is the main factor that allowed the perpetrator to exploit secluded times and places, such as rooms or fields, to commit sexual violence against his biological child. This egocentric and impulsive action even resulted in the victim's pregnancy. Furthermore, the perpetrator was also manipulative, using his power and status as a biological father to intimidate and control not only the victim but also her family, so that they would not report the crime.

Perpetrator K (68 years old) lacked empathy, though he described himself as someone who 'likes children,' he exploited the trust of the neighbors' children to fulfill his sexual desires. The perpetrator exhibits opportunistic tendencies by taking advantage of close and neighborly relationships to approach the victim without arousing suspicion. Low self-control made the perpetrator unable to control his sexual urges, even without a pressing situation that triggered the act. His manipulation was increasingly visible from the way he took advantage of his closeness to children without the victim's parents knowing.

Perpetrator P (26 years old) showed egocentric traits by prioritizing the fulfillment of his desires without considering the impact on the victim, who was his adopted sister. The claim that he had 'high empathy for children' contradicts his actions, which showed low empathy for the victim. Low self-control was reflected in his admission that his sexual violence occurred because of "favourable situations and conditions." In addition, he tended to be impulsive because he did not use threats or coaxing; instead, he took advantage of the emotional closeness to the victim to carry out his actions. Overall, consistent personality patterns among the perpetrators included low self-control, manipulativeness, egocentrism, antisocial tendencies, and opportunistic attitudes. Their low self-control was seen from their inability to control sexual urges, even though they had partners or other social options. Manipulative traits were evident in the way perpetrators used their social status, such as stepfather, biological father, neighbor, or adopted brother, to approach victims. Egocentricity was prominent in all perpetrators, who prioritized personal needs without considering the long-term impact on victims or social consequences. Antisocial tendencies were seen in perpetrators who used threats and intimidation to cover up their actions, especially in Perpetrator A. All perpetrators also exhibited opportunistic traits, taking advantage of vulnerable and situations and environments to carry out their actions. This profile reflects a combination of internal and external factors that encourage deviant behavior. The modus operandi employed by the offenders often involved secrecy, including threats or persuasion, taking advantage of quiet times at night or isolated settings, and careful planning. The driving factors behind the offenders' actions included uncontrollable sexual urges, environmental opportunities, and low levels of education. These findings provided a basis for further analysis to uncover key patterns and themes in the offenders' behaviors.

3.8.2. The Data Analysis

The data analysis, conducted using the interactive model by Huberman and Miles [27], included steps such as data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions

or verification. In the data reduction stage, raw data from interviews and observations were summarized to identify relevant information related to the research focus on the personality profiles of sexual violence offenders. This process involved initial coding, which resulted in four main categories, namely personality traits, relationships with victims, modus operandi, and driving factors.

The offenders were found to exhibit high impulsivity, lack of empathy, manipulative tendencies toward victims, low self-control, and egocentrism. Their relationships with victims were characterized by closeness, such as stepfathers, neighbors, or foster siblings, with long durations ranging from over six months to several years, fostering trust from the victims toward the offenders.

The modus operandi used by the offenders included secrecy phases, threats or persuasion, exploiting quiet or isolated situations at home, or at night, and careful planning of their actions. The driving factors for these acts of sexual violence included uncontrollable sexual urges, opportunities arising from the environment, and the offenders' low levels of education. These findings formed the basis for further analysis to uncover key patterns and themes in the offenders' behaviors.

3.9. Data Presentation

The summarized data were presented in the form of thematic tables and narratives to facilitate interpretation. The thematic tables categorized data into key areas, including personality traits, relationships with victims, modus operandi, and driving factors, effectively highlighting patterns and differences among offenders. As presented in Table 4, these themes are supported by direct quotes from interviews that illustrate recurring behavioral patterns and offenders' justifications. This format enables more precise comparison and pattern recognition across cases. Meanwhile, the narrative summaries offered detailed descriptions of the offenders' behaviors, methods, and the circumstances surrounding their actions.

These narratives provided insights into the interplay between personality traits, relationships, and environmental opportunities, enriching the understanding of the offenders' actions within their specific contexts. This structured presentation of data aimed to simplify the analysis process and enable a clearer understanding of the findings in relation to the study's objectives.

3.10. Thematic Diagram: Interrelation of Themes

The thematic diagram illustrates that personality traits, close relationships with victims, and situational opportunities interact to create conditions that facilitate sexual violence.

3.11. Conclusion and Verification

Based on the reduced and presented data, several key conclusions were drawn. The offenders exhibited high neuroticism, low agreeableness, and weak self-control, which contributed to impulsive and manipulative behaviors. Their egocentric tendencies were evident in their focus on fulfilling personal needs without considering the impact on the victims.

Table 4. Thematic categories derived from offender interviews and observations.

Main Themes	Subthemes	Example Quotes from Interviews
Personality Traits	High impulsivity	"I didn't think much, it just happened." (Offender A)
	Lack of empathy	"She didn't resist, so I thought it was okay." (Offender J)
	Manipulation of the victim	"I told her this is our secret." (Offender S)
Relationship with Victims	Close relationship	"She was just like family to me." (Offender P)
	Long-term relationship duration	"I've known her since she was little." (Offender K)
Modus Operandi	Secret phase	"I told her, don't tell anyone." (Offender J)
	Exploiting situations	"When everyone was asleep, I knew it was time." (Offender S)
Driving Factors	Uncontrollable sexual urges	"I couldn't control my feelings at the time." (Offender A)
	Environmental opportunities	"I saw she was alone at home, so I did it." (Offender K)

Note: Quotations are direct statements from offenders during interviews. Subthemes represent recurring behavioral patterns coded during thematic analysis.

Close relationships between offenders and victims played a significant role, as the victims' trust in the offenders enabled exploitation. The long duration of these relationships further reinforced the offenders' emotional dominance, making it challenging for victims to resist or report the abuse.

Uncontrollable sexual urges and weak self-control were identified as primary driving factors, while situational opportunities, such as secluded homes or quiet times, provided the conditions for offenders to act undetected. Furthermore, the offenders employed manipulation through secretive phases and threats to ensure victims remained silent. Careful planning in selecting specific times and locations demonstrated the intentionality behind their actions, aimed at avoiding detection.

3.12. Data Verification

Data verification is concluded in the table below. These conclusions were verified through triangulation of data, including interviews with offenders and observations. They are also supported by existing literature that describes similar behavioral patterns among offenders.

The analysis reveals several interconnected factors contributing to sexual violence by offenders. Common characteristics among offenders include low levels of education, informal employment, and marital status, which did not deter their actions. Age was also not a limiting factor, with offenders ranging from young adults to seniors. Close and long-term relationships with victims provided the offenders with trust and emotional leverage, making the victims more susceptible to exploitation. Uncontrollable sexual urges, weak self-control, and situational opportunities, such as secluded environments, played significant roles in enabling the offenders' actions. These patterns are systematically synthesized in Table 5, which offers a cross-case analysis of the offenders' personality traits, behavior patterns, and contextual factors. The table highlights the convergence of personal, relational, and environmental variables that facilitated sexual violence. Their modus operandi involved secrecy, manipulation, and careful planning, often employing threats or persuasion to ensure victims remained silent.

The personality profiles of the offenders exhibited maladaptive traits, including high neuroticism, low agreeableness, low conscientiousness, and egocentrism, which manifested in impulsivity, a lack of empathy, and disregard for

social norms. The impact was particularly severe on child victims, who were vulnerable due to their young age and dependence, further compounded by societal normalization of violence, which sometimes justified offenders' actions. These findings emphasized the complexity of factors, spanning personal, relational, and environmental dimensions that facilitate sexual violence and highlight the need for interventions addressing individual behaviors and societal norms.

3.13. Analysis based on Personality Theory

When the research findings on sexual violence offenders are linked to the Big Five Personality Theory, each personality dimension provides insights into their behavior [17]. For the neuroticism dimension, high levels of negative emotions were evident in all offenders. Their inability to control sexual urges, a manifestation of high neuroticism, led to impulsive actions. For example, Offender A committed sexual violence even in open areas like fields, while Offender P acted without clear plans or threats toward the victim [30].

Regarding agreeableness, all offenders exhibited low scores, reflected in their lack of empathy, manipulation, and exploitation of victims. For instance, Offenders J and K used persuasion, saying, 'this is our secret' to silence victims, while Offender A took extreme steps by threatening his wife to keep his actions secret. Offender P exploited emotional closeness with the victim, who was his foster sibling, to execute his acts [31].

In the dimension of conscientiousness, offenders also exhibited low levels, characterized by impulsive actions that failed to consider long-term consequences. They acted spontaneously when opportunities arose, such as Offenders S and J, who chose specific times when the house was quiet. Offenders K and P displayed no strategic thinking or planning, disregarding the risk of victims reporting the incidents [32].

For extraversion, some offenders leveraged social connections or closeness to approach victims, but their manipulation highlighted shallow social skills. For example, Offenders K and P used familiarity with neighbors or foster siblings to create a sense of safety for victims before carrying out their actions. Similarly, Offenders S and J exploited their status as stepfathers to build dominance and trust with the victims [31].

Table 5. Cross-case analysis of personality traits, behavior patterns, and contextual factors.

Main Themes	Subthemes	Description
Characteristics of Offenders	Gender and age	All offenders were male, aged 26–68 years, showing that age did not hinder the commission of violence.
	Education and occupation	Most offenders had low education levels and worked in informal sectors such as labor, farming, or security.
	Marital status	Four of the five offenders were married but still committed acts of sexual violence.
Relationship Patterns	Close relationships	Offenders had close ties with victims, such as stepfathers, biological fathers, neighbors, or foster brothers.
	Duration of relationships	Relationships lasted from months to years, fostering trust and emotional dependency in victims.
Motives and Driving Factors	Uncontrollable urges and low control	Actions were driven by uncontrollable sexual urges and weak self-control.
	Situational and environmental factors	Offenders exploited opportunities, such as nighttime or an empty house, to carry out their actions.
Modus Operandi	Secret phase and persuasion	Most offenders used secrecy and persuasion, such as threats or manipulative statements, to silence victims.
	Threats and violence	Offender A used serious threats, such as death threats, to prevent reporting by victims or witnesses.
	Planned actions	All offenders carefully planned their actions, choosing times and locations to avoid detection.
Personality Profiles	High neuroticism	Exhibited high negative emotions, impulsivity, and weak control over sexual urges.
	Low agreeableness	Lacked empathy, exploiting victims without considering the psychological impacts.
	Low conscientiousness	Acted impulsively, with no consideration for long-term consequences.
	Egocentrism and antisocial tendencies	Focused on personal desires, disregarding moral norms and social responsibilities.
Impact and Social Implications	Vulnerability of child victims	Victims were children aged 6–18, whose young age and dependence heightened their vulnerability.
	Normalization of violence	Some offenders justified their actions due to the victims' lack of explicit resistance, reflecting societal normalization of violence.

Note: “Secret phase” indicates the use of persuasion or threats to ensure silence.

“Egocentrism” refers to the prioritization of personal desires over the welfare of victims.

“Planned Actions” denote the intentional choice of time/location to avoid detection.

Finally, in terms of openness to experience, the offenders scored low, as evidenced by their inability to develop complex moral reasoning or consider the social and psychological impact of their actions. For instance, Offender A prioritized silencing his actions with threats, even though his biological child suffered severe consequences, such as pregnancy. Offenders J and K demonstrated a narrow view of morality, disregarding social norms and laws [33].

Based on the Big Five Personality Theory, the personality profiles of sexual violence offenders reflect maladaptive patterns dominated by high neuroticism, low agreeableness, low conscientiousness, manipulative extraversion, and low openness. High neuroticism manifested in impulsivity and poor emotional control, while low agreeableness was evident in their lack of empathy and exploitation of victims. Low conscientiousness indicated a lack of planning and long-term consideration in their actions. Manipulative tendencies in extraversion were used to approach victims, but solely for personal gain socially. Low openness reflected their inability to understand the moral and social repercussions of their actions. This profile indicates that sexual urges do not merely drive deviant behavior among offenders but also reflects an unhealthy personality structure. Environmental factors and prior life experiences likely reinforced these personality dimensions, driving their violent behavior.

4. DISCUSSION

The behaviors of sexual violence offenders in this study can be analyzed through the lens of Indonesian culture, reflecting the influence of social norms, economic conditions, education, and personality traits on their actions [34, 35]. In Indonesian culture, familial relationships and social proximity often establish power hierarchies that provide offenders with access to exploit such relationships [34]. Positions such as stepfather, biological father, neighbor, or foster brother, as identified in this study, place offenders in dominant roles, enabling them to build trust with victims and subsequently abuse that trust. These long-term relationships often reinforce victims' reliance on offenders [36, 37], making it challenging for victims to recognize or report sexual violence.

Low socioeconomic and educational backgrounds are also critical factors in shaping offender behaviors [38, 39]. Most offenders in this study worked as laborers or farmers and had minimal education, with some being illiterate. These conditions affect their understanding of legal norms, morality, and the psychological impact of their actions on victims. Limited education constrains their ability to comprehend legal boundaries and social norms [40]. In the context of Indonesian society, economic constraints often create a high level of dependency on the head of the family, further exacerbating the vulnerability of victims [41].

Moreover, gender norms and perceptions of masculinity amplify offenders' behaviors. In patriarchal cultures, men are often assigned dominant roles within families and society, making it easier for them to exploit power dynamics with victims [42]. Offenders with high levels of neuroticism tend to exhibit negative emotions, difficulty managing stress, and impulsive tendencies [43-45]. These traits were evident among offenders in this study, who displayed low self-control, which is a significant factor in their deviant behaviors. Poor self-control made them susceptible to sexual urges without considering long-term consequences, particularly when supported by enabling situations, such as quiet nighttime settings or secluded homes.

The offenders' *modus operandi*, including persuasion, threats, and secrecy, reflects Indonesia's strong emphasis on maintaining family reputation and illustrates how cultural and social constructs in Indonesia shape behavior and societal expectations [45, 46]. These strategies often align with offenders' antisocial tendencies, characterized by low agreeableness. Individuals with low agreeableness tend to tolerate manipulative and exploitative behaviors, highlighting the significant association of this trait with common patterns in sexual violence, such as manipulation and a lack of empathy for victims [47]. Careful planning in selecting time and location further underscores the intentionality of their actions, as explained by planned criminality theory [48]. In many cases, secrecy phases were used to silence victims, ensuring the abuse went unreported [49].

The majority of victims in this study were children, making them particularly vulnerable due to their young age, dependence, and limited understanding of sexual violence. As noted by Howes [50], children are often targeted because they are easier to manipulate, especially by offenders with close relationships to them. The dominance of male offenders in these cases demonstrates how patriarchal social structures strengthen power dynamics that benefit offenders [51].

The normalization of sexual violence in society is often attributed to offenders' lack of moral awareness [52]. In the context of a patriarchal culture permissive of gender-based violence, this normalization creates an environment that enables sexual violence without moral accountability from offenders [53]. These findings emphasize the need for interventions targeting moral awareness, value-based sexual education, and social norm transformation to prevent similar behaviors in the future.

The role of personality traits in influencing deviant behaviors, as highlighted in studies on cyber victimization [54], such as sensation seeking and psychopathy, aligns with findings on sexual offenders. Similar psychological mechanisms, such as low self-control and impulsive tendencies, may also contribute to both contexts. Future research might explore the interplay between personality dimensions and environmental enablers in broader criminal behaviors.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that sexual violence perpetration is shaped by a confluence of maladaptive personality traits—particularly high neuroticism, low agreeableness, and low conscientiousness—situational opportunities, and socio-

cultural factors, notably patriarchal norms. The offenders typically held close social relationships with their victims (stepfathers, biological fathers, or neighbors), enabling them to exploit trust and emotional dependency. Most perpetrators lacked formal education and held informal employment, reinforcing a socio-economic backdrop that limited their awareness of psychological and moral consequences.

Furthermore, the offenders displayed egocentrism and low self-control, manifesting as impulsive behaviors during moments of opportunity. These cultural and social dynamics not only enable deviant behavior but also obstruct efforts toward victim protection and offender accountability.

The study also underscores the role of patriarchal culture in shaping attitudes toward sexual violence and potentially diminishing offenders' moral accountability. Furthermore, children emerged as the most vulnerable group, as their dependency and trust in offenders made them susceptible to manipulation. This highlights the urgent need for protective mechanisms and culturally responsive preventive education, particularly for families and communities where power imbalances are reinforced by traditional norms.

These findings underscored the need for culturally sensitive interventions focusing not only on individual rehabilitation but also on societal transformation. Educational initiatives on gender equality, community vigilance, and early intervention programs targeting at-risk individuals could contribute to breaking the cycle of abuse. Psychological rehabilitation for offenders must also be tailored to their personality profiles, addressing traits such as lack of empathy, impulsivity, and manipulative tendencies.

Finally, although this study is limited in scope, its in-depth qualitative analysis provides critical insight into the personality mechanisms and social dynamics that underlie sexual violence in Indonesia. Future research is recommended to expand on these findings through mixed-methods approaches and broader samples, integrating both psychological and sociocultural frameworks to inform more effective policies and interventions.

LIMITATIONS

This study has several limitations that must be acknowledged. Firstly, the small sample size—limited to five sexual offenders—restricts the generalizability of the findings. Participants were selected through purposive sampling due to the sensitive nature of the topic and ethical constraints in accessing individuals with a history of sexual violence. As a result, the findings are context-specific and may not represent the broader population of sexual offenders with different backgrounds or in other geographic or cultural settings. Therefore, the interpretation of these findings should be approached with caution, as they reflect only a narrow and localized subset of offender experiences.

Secondly, the data were based solely on self-reports from the offenders. While this provides valuable insight into their internal motivations and behavioral patterns, it also introduces potential bias, such as self-justification or selective memory. The absence of triangulation with other sources—such as victim accounts, psychological evalua-

tions, or legal records—limits the depth, balance, and objectivity of the analysis, which may affect the accuracy and completeness of interpretation.

Thirdly, the cultural context in which the study was conducted—within a specific region of Indonesia—plays a significant role in shaping both the offenders' behavior and societal responses to sexual violence. These cultural dynamics, including patriarchal norms, stigma, and fear of public shame, may not be present in the same way in other societies, thereby reducing the transferability of the findings. Caution must be taken when applying these insights to different legal, social, or cultural environments.

Despite these limitations, this study offers an in-depth, contextually grounded exploration of offender psychology and social dynamics. While the findings are not intended to be generalized, they provide meaningful insights that may inform localized intervention strategies, policy considerations, and future research involving larger and more diverse populations.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research should expand the sample size to include more offenders from diverse social, educational, and cultural backgrounds, enhancing the generalizability of findings. Including victims' perspectives is also crucial to provide a point of view of the impacts of sexual violence and the dynamics between offenders and victims. Future studies should adopt a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods. For instance, personality assessments using psychometric tests could improve the validity and reliability of data while complementing in-depth analyses from interviews and observations. Integrating these approaches would give meaningful findings.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The authors confirm their contribution to the paper as follows: Y.A.: Study conception and design; S.N.: Investigation; L.N., N.N.Q.: Draft manuscript. All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of the manuscript.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ERC	=	Ethics Review Committee
PCL-R	=	Psychopathy Checklist-Revised
WHO	=	World Health Organization

ETHICS APPROVAL AND CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

This study has received ethical approval from the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Psychology, under approval number ERC-2024/A-40.

HUMAN AND ANIMAL RIGHTS

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or research committee and with the 1975 Declaration of Helsinki, as revised in 2013.

CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION

The individual data provided in this study were obtained through questionnaires completed by participants. Although some personal information was included, confidentiality has been strictly maintained. This was clearly stated and assured in the informed consent form obtained prior to data collection.

STANDARDS OF REPORTING

COREQ guidelines were followed.

AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIALS

The data supporting the findings of the article will be available from the corresponding author [Y.A.] upon reasonable request.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest, financial or otherwise.

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Declared none.

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