

THE EFFORTS OF THE CAHAYA PEREMPUAN WCC NGO IN ADDRESSING CASES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN DATING RELATIONSHIPS

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ABSTRACT

Based on Komnas Perempuan's annual records in 2023, from the types of personal violence reported to service institutions, the level of dating violence cases is in the first place with 3,528 cases. According to data obtained from Cahaya Perempuan NGO during 2018-2023, victims of dating violence cases totaled 29 cases. The research aims to describe Cahaya Perempuan's efforts in handling women victims of violence in dating relationships. This research also explores the causes of violence and the reasons why victims report their cases. The research method used is a qualitative method approach with descriptive analysis type. Data collection techniques are in-depth interviews with semi-structured types and documentation studies in the form of statistical data, as well as other supporting data. The selection of informants was carried out by purposive sampling with five informants, namely two active activists of Cahaya Perempuan NGO and three informants of victims of dating violence. Data analysis techniques were carried out with data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing. The results showed that the efforts made by Cahaya Perempuan NGO in handling victims of violence against women in dating, namely information services, counseling, and legal consultation through advocates. This form of handling is adjusted to the needs of victims to be legally processed or only counseling or consulting assistance. Cahaya Perempuan NGO provides more handling of dating violence cases in the form of counseling or consulting assistance and information services to victims. Meanwhile, legal consultation efforts through advocates are carried out when victims need legal assistance.

KEYWORDS Non-Governmental Organization, Violence Against Women in Dating Relationship, Women's Crisis Center



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INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Law Number 7 of 1984, the Indonesian government has entered into an international agreement through CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women) regarding women's human rights and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. However, in reality, cases of violence against women continue to attract public attention. Women often become victims and are vulnerable to male violence, frequently trapped in a cycle of violence that is difficult for them to escape. This is due to a patriarchal culture that positions men as more dominant over women.

Concerning statistical data obtained from Komnas Perempuan's annual records in 2023, of the 9,906 cases handled by service agencies, 8,172 of the most common cases were violence in the personal sphere, including 3,528 cases of dating violence. Violence in dating relationship falls into the category of violence that occurs in the personal sphere. Specifically, violence that happened in the personal sphere was categorized into violence in dating (422 cases), violence by ex-boyfriends (713 cases), violence against girls (140 cases), violence against wives (622 cases), domestic violence, such as violence against in-laws, brothers/sisters-in-law, cousins or other relatives (111 cases) and violence against ex-husbands (90 cases) (Komnas Perempuan, 2023). The focus of attention from these data shows that from problems related to violence, especially against women, the reality is that not a few of female victims have dared to disclose and report cases of violence experienced by them. This is supported by a statement from Bintang Puspayoga, the Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, explaining that many survivors of violence against women are now afraid to reveal the violence they have experienced. It can be seen that the reported cases are lower than the actual number of cases, which is already common knowledge. Therefore, women continue to be influenced by the patriarchal culture in society, resulting in their position being placed below that of men. This inequality makes women vulnerable to violence, discrimination, and other detrimental actions (Purnamasari, 2021).

PKBI (Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association) defines violence as any intentional use of physical or mental force that causes physical injury, psychological disturbance, mental retardation, or any form of deprivation, even leading to death, intentionally inflicted on an individual or specific group. Sexual violence is any act that exploits physical or mental weakness, social inequality based on gender or social status, attacking or degrading the body, sexual desires, or reproductive functions, causing physical, psychological, and sexual suffering (PKBI, 2021). According to psychology.binus.ac.id, dating violence (KDP) is any form of violence or threat in a dating relationship aimed at hurting or excessively controlling the partner (Binus, 2017).

Data from Komnas Perempuan's 2021 annual report on violence against women (Komnas Perempuan, 2021) shows that WCC is the institution with the highest response rate to data collection questionnaires at 71%. According to Kompasiana.com, WCC (Women's Crisis Center) is a social institution aimed at helping women in vulnerable conditions from the violence they experience. In the

early 1970s, this institution was initiated by British feminists as a safe house for women victims of domestic violence (Murtakhamah, 2015). Over time, WCC has spread across several provinces in Indonesia under different names. Women's Crisis Center, is a non-governmental organization focused on women's issues. One WCC institution in Bengkulu Province is Cahaya Perempuan. Cahaya Perempuan is a non-governmental organization providing assistance to female victims of violence. This institution serves as a safe house for victims who feel threatened.

Additionally, the significant increase in cases of violence against women from year to year, based on the types and levels of violence, is marked by the growing awareness of female survivors to report the violence they experience (Elvira & Putra, 2023). This indicates a positive hope that women are becoming more aware and brave to disclose the violence they endure. Particularly in dating violence, women often do not realize they are in an unhealthy relationship due to the perpetrator's violence. The widespread violence against women is partly due to weak law enforcement against perpetrators of dating violence. Meanwhile, discussions on handling cases of violence against women in dating relationships still lack specific legal policies for protecting female victims in such cases.

According to research findings by Annisa Martha Kesaulia, legal protection rules for female victims of dating violence should be based on the victim's age. If the victim is under 18 years old, the applicable law is based on Law Number 35 of 2014, amending Law Number 23 of 2002 on Child Protection. Generally, the Criminal Code used in dating violence cases can only be applied if the victim is over 18 years old (Kesaulia, 2020). Non-governmental service institutions also assist female victims of dating violence through complaint services. These institutions aim to help victims address each case, whether through legal or non-legal means, or amicably.

Previous relevant research includes Hanifah's study titled "Counseling for Female Adolescents Victims of Dating Violence." This research shows that Rifka Annisa WCC Yogyakarta's efforts to resolve female adolescent dating violence include individual counseling, psychological empowerment, and legal counseling through non-litigation (Hanifah, 2014). Another study by Risha Samsuarni titled "Handling Cases of Violence Against Women in Dating Relationships" found that the Banda Aceh Police conduct initial investigations, collect evidence, and pursue mediation if agreed upon by both parties (Samsuarni, 2022). Additionally, research by Wahyuni Elvira and Eka Vidya Putra titled "The Role of Nurani Perempuan NGO in Handling Cases of Violence Against Women" indicates that the NGO focuses on handling, prevention, and policy advocacy, but primarily on case handling (Elvira & Putra, 2023).

In contrast, this research focuses on the efforts made by Cahaya Perempuan Women's Crisis Center NGO in handling cases of violence against women in dating relationships. It also delves into the causes of violence and the reasons behind victims reporting their cases. Therefore, it is important to discuss the handling efforts of non-governmental organizations, especially Cahaya Perempuan. As an independent institution, Cahaya Perempuan focuses on handling cases of violence against women and child, including dating violence.

The purpose of the research is to describe and analyze in depth the causes of violence against women in dating relationships, the reasons why victims report the cases experienced, and the forms of efforts made by NGO Cahaya Perempuan in handling cases of violence against women in dating relationships. By exploring these matters, it is hoped that this research can be utilized as one of the academic papers for the government and stakeholders to be able to make laws or legal rules that discuss the handling of victims of violence in dating relationships, and can collaborate with NGOs or communities engaged in handling cases of violence against women. In addition, this research can also be used as an additional reference in the academic world, especially those focusing on the sociology of gender.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted using a qualitative approach and descriptive analysis. The case study was carried out at Cahaya Perempuan WCC in Bengkulu. Qualitative research essentially focuses on the process of extracting data, observing the research object from social reality, and delving deeply to uncover the meaning behind the actions and social phenomena being studied. Meanwhile, Sugiyono explains that in qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument. Therefore, to be an effective instrument, the researcher must have extensive knowledge and a sufficient theoretical background. This enables the researcher to ask the right questions, analyze deeply, and clearly and meaningfully construct the research object (Sugiyono, 2017).

This research focuses on digging deeper into the efforts of Cahaya Perempuan NGO in handling women victims of violence in dating relationships. These efforts were explored with interview data collection techniques as primary data. Interviews were conducted in-depth with semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews aim to find broader problems from the social phenomena under study. Semi-structured interviews begin by preparing a list of questions to be asked to informants. During the interview, the researcher digs deeper into the answers given by the informant with additional questions that are not listed in the interview guidelines. This aims to explore information related to the research to answer research problems. This interview was conducted with five informants, namely two activists of Cahaya Perempuan WCC and three victims of violence against women in dating relationships handled by Cahaya Perempuan WCC. In doing so, the victims personal information was kept confidential, such as name, address and occupation. For research purposes in classifying each informant, researchers only need the initials of the informant's name and age while maintaining the principle of confidentiality of the informant. Thus, informants can express their opinions according to their personal experiences as victims of dating violence.

Meanwhile, documentation studies were obtained from statistical data on the number of cases of dating violence handled by Cahaya Perempuan and archival data on service procedures and efforts made by Cahaya Perempuan in handling cases of dating violence, as well as other supporting data such as reading materials as additional references. Documents, such as statistical data on the number of cases of dating violence during 2018 - 2023, and archival data documentation on service

procedures obtained by researchers are given full rights by Cahaya Perempuan WCC NGO to be used as a need for writing scientific articles.

Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on certain criteria. The criteria included activists from Cahaya Perempuan WCC as primary informants and female victims of dating violence as additional informants. Five informants were selected: two activists from Cahaya Perempuan and three women who were victims of dating violence handled by Cahaya Perempuan.

Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman field model, which involves three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Hardani, 2020). Data reduction was performed by selecting the data obtained from interviews and documentation studies, categorizing them according to the research variables. The aim was to clarify the comparison of data obtained from various sources to be accurately presented. The data related to the efforts of Cahaya Perempuan in handling female victims of dating violence were collected, selected, and abstracted according to data categories. The reduced data were presented descriptively in short descriptions, charts, and relationships between sub-categories. Conclusions were drawn in two stages: initially, the conclusions were tentative; then, final conclusions were drawn after obtaining supporting evidence as a form of verification.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Violence in Dating

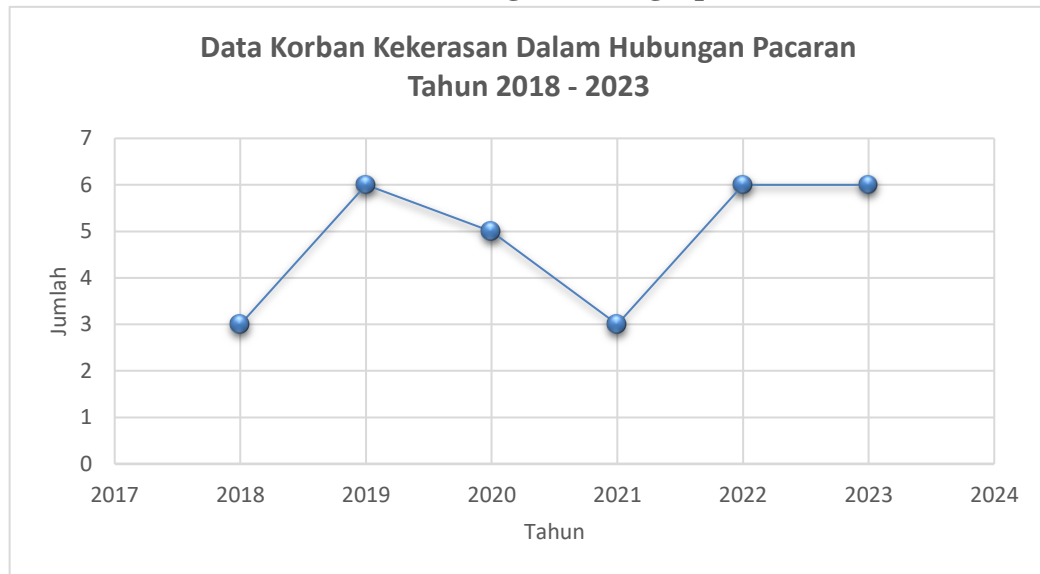
The number of dating violence cases handled by Cahaya Perempuan has shown significant results. Below is the data on the number of victims of dating violence for the period from 2018 to 2023.

Table 1. Data on the Number of Dating Violence Cases Reported to Cahaya Perempuan WCC from 2018-2023

Year	Number of Cases
2018	3
2019	6
2020	5
2021	3
2022	6
2023	6
Total	29

Source: Cahaya Perempuan WCC Data Archive (2023)

Table 2: Victims of dating violence graph 2018 - 2023



Source: Cahaya Perempuan WCC Data Archive (2023)

It can be seen in the data from 2018 - 2023 that the total number of victims of violence in dating relationships over the past five years is 29 people. The data can be analyzed that the line graph shows the trend of cases of violence in dating relationships experiencing fluctuations or changes in numbers every year. There are years with sharp increases, such as from 2018 to 2019 or from 2021 to 2022. Data analysis shows that the amount of data varies significantly from year to year. This can be influenced by factors or causes of the number of victims of violence in dating relationships handled by Cahaya Perempuan WCC to fluctuate over the past five years, including the causes, reporting, and handling of violence in dating relationships. On the other hand, it is not impossible that there are still many victims of dating violence who are not recorded or who do not report their cases.

Cahaya Perempuan WCC has criteria for what constitutes violence. A form of violence is defined when one party feels harmed by the actions of another party. Typically, women are often the most disadvantaged due to violence in dating relationships.

"Violence occurs when one party feels they are unwilling participants, such as in dating. Initially, both parties are mutually interested, but eventually, one may disappear. In such cases, it is usually the woman who suffers. All acts of violence are considered violence if one party is harmed."

(Interview with Leksi Oktavia, Program Coordinator for Prevention of Child Marriage at Risk of Stunting and Violence)

Acts of dating violence are highly unusual for a couple without a legal bond as it causes harm and suffering to the partner (Samsuarni, 2022). Dating violence usually includes pressure and coercion of power that aims to be shown in actions that are restrictive, dominating, and hurtful. These actions are usually synonymous with physical violence, as experienced by one victim of dating violence.

"We were in a relationship. What started harmoniously suddenly fell apart due to lies and infidelity, leading to physical violence."

(Interview with RK, age 35)

The forms of violence experienced by victims of dating violence (KDP) vary, depending on the type of violence endured. Additionally, based on findings, female victims of dating violence usually suffer violence for up to four years, although some experience it for only three to four months. The victims handled by Cahaya Perempuan have experienced physical violence, verbal abuse, and sexual violence. In some cases, they also face online violence.

"There were also threats related to security, for instance. In dating, if they have had sexual relations, when the woman doesn't comply, the man threatens her. There were cases where videos and photos were spread. Those cases went through legal processes, and the perpetrator was sentenced to about 10 months."

(Interview with Leksi Oktavia, Program Coordinator for Prevention of Child Marriage at Risk of Stunting and Violence).

"I couldn't endure his behavior anymore, especially when he started physical violence. His words and actions were often harsh."

(Interview with RS, age 23).

"From his words, I could tell he had a temper because he often threatened me."

(Interview with AJ, age 27).

"I no longer wanted to engage with him and didn't want to follow his orders. In my opinion, if a man loves his partner, he wouldn't be harsh at all, including in his words, which I found temperamental because of his frequent threats."

(Interview with AJ, age 23).

Causes of Violent Acts

Behind the cases of dating violence handled by Cahaya Perempuan WCC, there are complex dynamics that often trigger acts of violence. Internal problems in relationships, such as infidelity, often occur especially when accompanied by the unstable temperament of the perpetrator, thus creating an environment full of male domination and creating the potential for violence. As experienced by victim RS:

"Because he was unfaithful. I also couldn't endure his harsh behavior anymore, especially when he started physical violence."

(Interview with RS, age 23)

Perpetrators who commit acts of dating violence are actually trying to control their partners as a form of dominance. Perpetrators who feel threatened or insecure in a relationship, cause perpetrators to use violence as a way to maintain self-esteem or overcome anxiety and insecure situations.

To understand the underlying causes of violent acts, Cahaya Perempuan does not immediately pursue a complaint. Instead, a thorough examination process is required to ascertain the reasons behind the cases they handle. These examination processes ensure the accuracy of the victim's complaints with the facts on the ground. In this way, Cahaya Perempuan WCC can better understand the context

and causal factors accurately, and can conduct more effective, evidence-based interventions that can help victims and prevent further violence.

"Even if someone comes here claiming to be a victim, we don't immediately take action. If you come here saying 'I'm a victim,' we don't act right away. We interview them first, gather information, and if possible, bring both parties together. Sometimes, it turns out the claimant is actually the perpetrator. So, we don't immediately claim someone is a victim. We do accept the complaint initially, but we follow up after a deep investigation. We avoid prematurely labeling someone as a victim only to later find out they are the perpetrator."

(Interview with Leksi Oktavia, Program Coordinator for Prevention of Child Marriage at Risk of Stunting and Violence)

Reasons for Reporting

Based on the data on the number of cases handled by Cahaya Perempuan WCC, it is possible that there are many victims out there who have not dared to disclose their experiences of dating violence. Meanwhile, those who decide to report or reveal their cases have varied reasons but share the courage needed to expose their situation. When a female victim decides to report her case, it signifies she has reached a breaking point where she can no longer endure the violence.

"Many of those who report are truly at their breaking point. There are likely many more unreported cases out there. They may feel embarrassed to speak out, but they might not realize many others in their environment are experiencing the same thing but are not reporting."

(Interview with Leksi Oktavia, Program Coordinator for Prevention of Child Marriage at Risk of Stunting and Violence).

This is supported by AJ's statement, who was threatened and experienced psychological distress, prompting her to report her case:

"Because I didn't want to be threatened anymore, my psychological well-being was disturbed. I wanted peace, and I really didn't want my family's reputation to be tarnished."

(Interview with AJ, age 27).

The victim's inability to cope with the threat indicates a significant negative impact on her mental health. Victims also want to achieve the calmness as a the fundamental need to overcome the emotional instability caused by the violence they experienced.

"I felt I needed help from an external party because I couldn't resolve it on my own. I needed guidance and counseling from WCC."

(Interview with RS, age 23).

"The reason I reported to Cahaya Perempuan WCC is because they protect women from all kinds of violence against women. I also used Cahaya Perempuan WCC's services in handling my divorce."

(Interview with RK, age 35).

Thus, each victim has varied reasons and considerations when deciding to report a case of violence or harassment. This decision-making usually goes through a deeply reflective process. This reflective process can be influenced by internal

responsible for the counseling victims of violence against women, stated that the complaint system at Cahaya Perempuan WCC can be done online or offline.

"First, they report here, for example, adults who come directly report through drop-in at the organization. If they don't want to come to WCC, they can use the women's hotline, consult via WhatsApp. We also have Facebook, which can also be followed up. Here every victim's personal information handled by NGO Cahaya Perempuan is safe and confidential".

(Interview with Yuni, Service Staff at Cahaya Perempuan WCC)

1. Information Services

After filing a complaint, either online or offline, victims are provided with information services. These services include detailed information about the procedures and the type of support available. This initial stage aims to inform the client about the next steps and identify their needs.

"When they come here, we automatically provide information services first. We explain what dating violence (KDP) is, its forms, and its definitions. This helps the client understand that they have been experiencing KDP. Although cases may vary, our handling approach remains consistent. The specific needs might differ, whether they require just counseling or support through legal proceedings or mediation. Our services at Cahaya Perempuan include the counseling, information services, legal consultation, and accompaniment, tailored to the client's needs".

(Interview with Yuni, Service Staff at Cahaya Perempuan WCC)

This information service is a preliminary stage before deciding to follow up on a case. While Cahaya Perempuan accepts all complaints, not every case will be pursued due to annual targets that the NGO aims to achieve. When cases exceed these targets, prioritization is based on the urgency of the issue. Some cases may take over a year to handle.

2. Counseling

Following the information service, victims of dating violence undergo the counseling. The approach in counseling includes elements of openness and the confidentiality. Counseling aims to further explore the victim's case. Counseling process typically lasts at least three months, sometimes extending to years, and is adjusted based on the victim's needs and agreements.

"In counseling, we delve deeply into the case to provide support. The counseling process is not just a single session but lasts at least three months, adjusted according to the agreement, such as once a week or every two weeks."

(Interview with Yuni, Service Staff at Cahaya Perempuan WCC)

Counseling involves several stages. During these stages, Cahaya Perempuan assesses the victim's internal condition to ensure their well-being. The counseling process includes eleven thematic sessions, and it continues until the victim no longer needs counseling.

3. Legal Consultation with Advocates

Cahaya Perempuan has a legal consultation service with an advocate as a form of effort to handle cases of dating violence. This legal advocacy provides assistance to victims in handling cases related to legal aspects. However, legal advocacy

services at Cahaya Perempuan WCC are still minimal, although their role is crucial in handling cases that require legal intervention. This limitation of advocates is caused by several factors, such as the lack of human resources who are experts in the field of law and limited funds to be able to fund advocacy services. Nonetheless, efforts to expand the scope of legal advocacy remain a priority, as this advocacy service is crucial to ensure victims receive proper protection and justice before the law.

“The severity of a case is known by the advocate to be reviewed in depth. At Cahaya Perempuan, we have senior advocates like Ayuk Desi Wahyuni, who has been with us since 2014, along with other rotating advocates.”

(Interview with Leksi Oktavia, Program Coordinator for Prevention of Child Marriage at Risk of Stunting and Violence)

In addition, Cahaya Perempuan WCC also collaborates with city and village governments to address various issues faced by women, including efforts to prevent early marriage. One example is Cahaya Perempuan WCC's collaboration with the Talang Tinggi Village Government in issuing a circular letter from the village head urging its residents to prevent early marriage.

4. Preventive Measures

Cahaya Perempuan WCC also makes efforts to prevent dating violence through group counseling activities. The group sessions, which began in 2015, involve the participation of young women to discuss issues faced by women in the community. Each group is formed based on their respective regions and given different names according to their location to create a unique identity and strengthen the sense of togetherness among group members.

"Group counseling with youth involves discussions about what is happening in their environment or group, like sharing personal experiences. These discussions increase knowledge and address local phenomena. For instance, at SMK 3, we provide active support."

(Interview with Leksi Oktavia, Program Coordinator for Prevention of Child Marriage at Risk of Stunting and Violence).

Based on the results of the research conducted, Talcott Parsons' structural functional theory is relevant to the findings of this study. The basic assumption of this theory is the concept of social order, which essentially integrates society through social consensus on certain values to be achieved (Jannah, 2018). These values are integrated into a balance, forming a social force to address various the societal issues viewed as a functional system. Parsons focuses more on the social structure of society and the interrelated social relationships, for tending towards a dynamic equilibrium. The maintenance of social order among various societal the elements is the emphasis of structural functional theory (Ritzer, 2012).

Parsons assumes that individual actions are formed voluntarily. This means that the actions are based on the individual's inner will, influenced by ideas, values, and social norms previously agreed upon. Parsons believes these actions occur if there is a definite social situation. Meanwhile, other elements serve as tools to achieve goals. These individual actions are seen as the fundamental social reality of an individual or group, encompassing values and norms, tools, and objectives.

An action is influenced by conditions that help choose goals based on social tools like values and norms to achieve objectives in a certain way (Turama, 2020).

Regarding Cahaya Perempuan WCC as an independent organization not under government authority, the active participants of the organization operate based on the willingness to help women experiencing violence and a strong the commitment to fighting for women's rights. The establishment of NGO Cahaya Perempuan was driven by the activists' concerns about the social problems faced by women, such as gender inequality, gender discrimination, and violence against women. Cahaya Perempuan is also organized voluntarily to achieve its goals.

In relation to structural functional theory by Talcott, Cahaya Perempuan as a non-governmental organization has structures that play specific roles in handling cases related to women's issues. In terms of handling cases of violence, particularly efforts to address cases of dating violence, there are systematic procedures in place. Thus, Talcott Parsons' structural functional theory highlights the interconnectedness between individuals and other individuals or groups, creating a balance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the research, it can be concluded that dating violence is understood as an act within a relationship where one party feels harmed. The forms of violence experienced by victims of dating violence handled by Cahaya Perempuan include physical violence, verbal violence, and sexual violence. Additionally, there are also cases of online dating violence. The causes of dating violence as experienced by the victims are usually triggered by infidelity. Furthermore, some perpetrators have a temperamental background, leading them to commit acts of violence against their partners. Victims report dating violence cases because they feel threatened, which disrupts their psychological well-being. When victims report the violence they experience, it means they have reached a point where they can no longer endure the abusive actions.

The efforts made by Cahaya Perempuan in handling dating violence cases include providing information services, counseling or support consultation, and legal consultation through advocates. Information services are efforts by Cahaya Perempuan to provide information related to the case before conducting counseling and to explain in detail the procedures that must be followed for the next steps, as well as to understand the type of service the client desires. Counseling aims to gather further information related to the case experienced by the victim. The duration of counseling is usually a minimum of three months and can even last for years. The routine implementation of counseling is also adjusted to the counseling needs and agreements with the victim. Legal consultation through advocates aims to assist dating violence victims with legal issues. In this regard, victims can seek legal consultation through these legal advocates. Additionally, Cahaya Perempuan WCC also engages in preventive efforts by forming support groups located in various places and regions, such as schools and certain villages.

Although this research has explained Cahaya Perempuan's efforts in handling cases of dating violence against women, there remain opportunities for further

research to continue this study or to discover new findings related to handling violence against women, thus complementing the data or information from previous studies.

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