




# Model of a pastoral sermon for handling the problem of sexual violence against women in Maluku



## Authors:

Juliana A. Tuasela<sup>1</sup> 

Defi S. Nenkeula<sup>1</sup> 

Jenne J.R. Pieter<sup>1</sup> 

## Affiliations:

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Theology,  
Indonesian Christian  
University in the Moluccas,  
Ambon, Indonesia

## Corresponding author:

Juliana Tuasela,  
tjulianadessy@yahoo.com

## Dates:

Received: 10 Dec. 2023

Accepted: 02 Feb. 2024

Published: 08 Apr. 2024

## How to cite this article:

Tuasela, J.A., Nenkeula, D.S.  
& Pieter, J.J.R., 2024, 'Model  
of a pastoral sermon for  
handling the problem of  
sexual violence against  
women in Maluku', *HTS  
Teologiese Studies/  
Theological Studies* 80(1),  
a9622. [https://doi.org/  
10.4102/hts.v80i1.9622](https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v80i1.9622)

## Copyright:

© 2024. The Authors.  
Licensee: AOSIS. This work  
is licensed under the  
Creative Commons  
Attribution License.

## Read online:



Scan this QR  
code with your  
smart phone or  
mobile device  
to read online.

Sexual violence against women is an issue of urgency that arises in all cultures locally, nationally, globally and transnationally. This problem has broad dimensions in both the public and private domains, both cases that are reported or not reported to law enforcement. Factually, the trend of this problem has been identified as increasing every year in Maluku, Indonesia. Therefore, the church requires serious attention to prevention and systematic treatment to overcome it. This sensitivity and awareness are a manifestation of the church's sense of calling and responsibility for the restoration of human dignity. The pastoral sermon service model is the church's strategic approach to handling this problem. This research aimed to develop a model of pastoral sermons for victims of sexual violence against women in Maluku. This research focused on identifying and exploring the tragic experiences and impacts of sexual violence against women. Furthermore, a cross-cultural pastoral model was created for victims of violence.

**Contribution:** This article provided a new perspective from the post-modern homiletics to approach social issues. This new homiletical approach to dealing with the problem of women's sexual violence is one of the main focuses of 'Women's Theological Studies' in HTS.

**Keywords:** pastoral; sermon; sexual violence; women; culture; Maluku.

## Introduction

The main purpose of this article is the formulation of a model of pastoral sermon for victims of sexual violence against women. Factually, sexual violence is a crime and a serious social issue locally, nationally, globally and transnationally (Salamor & Salamor 2022; Muryati et al. 2023). This is based on the following two reasons: Firstly, the number and forms of violence are increasing every year. Secondly, the impact of sexual violence is getting worse both in quantity and quality for victims.

This issue is also part of the problems of the church as an ethical, moral and spiritual institution. The pastoral sermon is one form of church service to deal with this problem. In the church's perspective, there are several reasons why the number of incidents of sexual violence is increasing. Firstly, the church is very ritualistic and ignores the role of pastoral care for victims of violence, because this problem is considered to be the realm of government work. Secondly, churches tend to implement conventional sermon and pastoral services that do not touch this problem. The model of the pastoral sermon is an alternative model introduced to counter the conventional model. This model elaborates the science of homiletics and pastoral care to overcome this problem. The stories and experiences of victims of sexual violence against women are the main reference for the sermon.

Basically, victims need the pastoral sermon services with their various sufferings such as guilt, shame, anger, depression, sadness, decline, isolation, abandonment and loss. It is indicated that most preachers ignore the role of pastoralism in their sermons. Sermons function to connect victims' stories and experiences with biblical texts. The feelings, responses and attitudes surrounding victims of violence are used as a means of preaching the word. Therefore, this research focuses on formulating a model of pastoral sermon for victims of sexual violence against women in Maluku.

The novelty of this research focuses on two things. Firstly, this research formulates a new approach, namely a model of the pastoral sermon, as an elaborative study between the homiletic approach and the pastoral approach to dealing with the issue of sexual violence against women. Secondly, this research makes a new contribution to the Maluku context which has unique characteristics regarding cases of sexual violence against women. Maluku consists of various

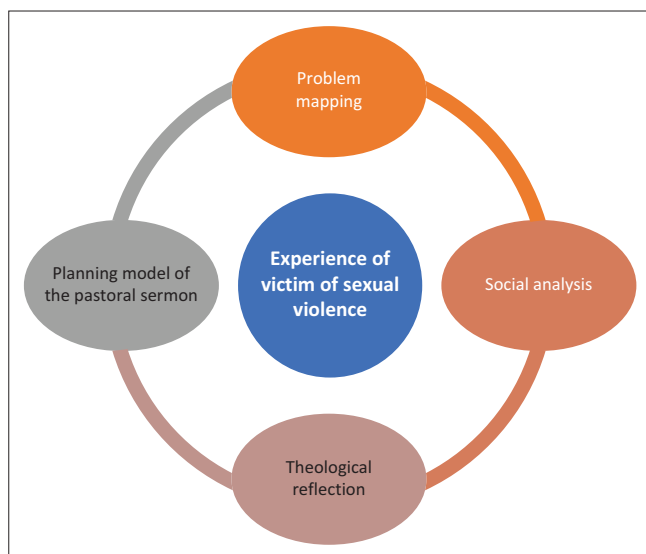
tribes that are characterised by a patriarchal culture that contributes to increasing rates of sexual violence. Moreover, each tribe constructs customary norms and rules to handle this issue.

## Method

In order to solve this problem, the author uses a qualitative research method with a pastoral sermon circle approach. This approach elaborates the approaches of homiletics and pastoral care. The premise of this approach is built from the concept of pastoral care. Etymologically, the term 'pastor' comes from the Latin word *pastor* which means 'to care for'. Apart from that, the term pastor also comes from the word *ποιμήν* (*poimen*) which means 'shepherd' who 'looks after livestock'. These two terms indicate the meaning of the expression 'pastoral care' as an 'act of shepherding'. The pastoral circle is a pastoral approach used to deal with social problems, especially for marginalised people (Choi 2018:60; Joo 2020:70).

Victims of violence need hospitality. Hospitality is needed by victims of violence as a sign of the presence of God's work of salvation (Holland & Henriot 1994). The task of pastoral care is to be God's instrument to heal and guide each person to experience recovery. This approach is called by two terms, namely the 'praxis circle' and the 'hermeneutic circle'. This circle refers to the relationship between four experience factors, namely: (1) problem mapping, (2) social analysis, (3) theological reflection, and (4) planning of the pastoral sermon models. These four elements are displayed in Figure 1, followed by a description of the stages:

1. The pastoral circle begins with problem mapping. This stage is based on our pastoral answers in the real experiences of individuals and communities. Stories, experiences and feelings of victims become experiences that form primary data. All of the data are linked to people's collective experiences. This requires interpersonal conversation and active listening (Iheluwezi 2011; Holland & Henriot 1994).



Source: Holland, J. & Henriot, P., 1994, *Analisis Sosial & Refleksi Teologis - Kaitan Iman dan Keadilan*, Kanisius, Yogyakarta

FIGURE 1: The pastoral sermon circle.

2. The second stage in the pastoral circle is social analysis. Social analysis investigates cause and effect, describes relationships and identifies the victims. Social experiences must be mapped well and describe points of connection with each other. In this regard, preachers must study and know the communities where violence occurs. Heterogeneous socio-cultural experiences become the locus of analysis.
3. The third stage is theological reflection. This reflection is an attempt to understand the experiences of victims of sexual violence from a faith perspective. In the standards of faith, the experiences of victims of violence are dialogue with the views of the Holy Scriptures, church teachings and traditional sources. God's word reflected in concrete situations will give rise to new questions, ideas and answers.
4. The fourth stage, which is very important, is planning the pastoral sermon. The aim of this circle is to develop an adaptive and transformative pastoral preaching formula. The formulation of the pastoral sermons is based on socio-cultural heterogeneity. This approach describes a circular 'spiral' rather than a 'circular' motion. Each step does not merely update the previous steps, but presents a new foundation.

## Problem mapping

The problem mapping of sexual violence is described based on the context of Indonesia in general and Maluku, in particular. Gender-based violence (GBV), which includes actual or threatened physical, sexual or psychological harm, coercion or deprivation of liberty, is a significant global health and societal issue (World Health Organization [WHO] 2017). Although included within the wider definition of GBV, sexual violence as a separate entity has been defined as the following (Randa et al. 2023):

... any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or other-wise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work. (WHO 2002)

Sexual violence occurs in several forms of non-violent acts of sexual violence and sexual intimidation. These include acts of rape, hysterectomy (unnecessary surgery to remove the uterus), terror and exploitation of women via the media.

Indonesia is in an emergency situation of sexual violence (Suwandi, Chusniatum & Kuswardani 2019; Anindya, Indah & Oentari 2020). The annual record for 2022 shows that during the last 10 years (2012–2021), reports of sexual assault have shown an increasing trend every year. In 2021, the number of sexual violence cases reported was 459,094. There was an increase in cases of around 51% from 2020 with reported data of 302,300 cases (Safitri, Ardiansah & Prasetyo 2023). In 2022, there will be 457,859 cases. This figure has decreased from 2021, but complaints of cases to the National Women's Commission actually increased in 2022, reaching 4371 cases. It is estimated that the National Women's

Commission will receive 17 complaints per day in 2022. Data for 2022 shows that sexual violence is the dominant violence (2228/38.21%) followed by psychological violence (2083 cases/38.8%).

The national map of sexual violence is linked to the problem of sexual violence in Maluku. This is indicated by the increasing number of cases in Maluku in the last 3 years (2019–2021). According to data from the Women and Children Empowerment Circle, in 2019, 165 cases were recorded, while in 2020 it increased to 202 cases. These cases are dominated by cases of rape and molestation. At the beginning of 2021, an additional 20 new cases were handled (Radiodms 2021). The provincial Government of Maluku recorded 382 cases of violence against women and children in 11 districts or cities. The highest number of cases of violence were in the city of Ambon with 189 cases, followed by the city of Tual with 58 cases and Buru district with 40 cases (Ayal 2022).

Table 1 shows the data of cases of sexual violence in two district cities, namely, Tual and Dobo sourced from the Directorate of General Criminal Investigation of the Republic of Indonesia Police – Maluku Region.

The numbers and forms of sexual violence against women as shown in Table 1 are just the tip of the iceberg. In fact, the number could be much larger and more diverse than the cases detected or reported to the authorities. This is based on several reasons. Firstly, there is a tendency towards public attitudes that contribute to the increase in cases, namely apathy, silence and a culture of shame in admitting 'disgrace' in public. 'disgrace' in public. Secondly, there are indications

**TABLE 1:** Data from the general criminal investigation directorate of the Republic of Indonesia Police – Maluku Region.

Location	Case type	Number of cases
Dobo	Forced sexual intercourse	8
	Fornication	6
	Rape	2
	Persecution	22
	Domestic violence	10
Total cases	-	48
Tual	Forced sexual intercourse	16
	Fornication	3
	Rape	3
	Persecution	13
	Domestic violence	13
Total cases	-	48

Source: The general criminal investigation directorate of the Republic of Indonesia Police – Maluku Region.

**TABLE 2:** Focus group discussion case exploration.

Location	Number of cases	Form of sexual violence	Victim	Motive
Passo village	6	Fornication, intercourse and rape	Children	Money
Talake	8	Fornication, domestic violence, forced intercourse and held at gunpoint	Adult women and children	Alcoholic drinks
Tual	14	Fornication, rape and beatings	Adolescent girls	Blackmail via social-media
Saumlaki	12	Fornication, sexual abuse or oral sex, physical violence that accompanies sexual intercourse	Adolescent girls	Money and alcoholic drinks
Hutumuri village	6	Repeated copulation, copulation during menstruation, and force and violence during sexual intercourse	Adult women and children	Money and alcoholic drinks
Latuhalat village	8	Sexual abuse on social media platforms, such as Facebook	Adult women and children	Extortion via social media

Source: Data from FGDs in Passo, Talake, Tual, Saumlaki, Hutumuri, and Latuhalat, in 2023.

of slowness and a lack of seriousness by state officials in resolving cases.

## Social analysis

In the Maluku context, researchers focus on victims of sexual violence, namely women and children. The research results show that the number of cases of sexual violence increases every year. Researchers conducted social analysis based on the results of case exploration using the focus group discussion (FGD) method in all locations. The number of respondents in the FGD was 10 people consisting of: religious leaders, community leaders, medical personnel, police officers, traditional leaders, and community leaders who handle and know about cases of sexual violence against women. In the FGD, a number of violence cases were explored and identified as shown in Table 2.

The data in Table 2 show that cases of sexual violence are distributed in all regions with different accentuations. The results of this FGD present several results of social analysis as follows:

Firstly, the most dominant form of violence in Maluku, especially in Passo, Hutumuri, Latuhalat, Talake, Tual and Saumlaki is domestic violence followed by other acts of violence, such as rape, fornication, forced sexual intercourse and abuse. The victims of violence are generally women and children. Motives for violence generally include money, blackmail on social media and being under the influence of alcohol. Resolving the problem of sexual violence in areas around the city and Ambon Island tends to use a positive legal approach. In contrast, in district cities such as Tual and Saumlaki, problem solving tends to use a customary law approach.

Secondly, data show that majority of the victims of sexual violence are women, especially children around the age of 10–17 years. Victims generally come from family backgrounds with low economic levels, low education and people with disabilities. Victims are generally exploited with the motive of extortion of money via social media. The dominant cases of violence are domestic violence in homes and gardens, in quiet areas such as cemeteries, educational institutions (schools and campuses), in hotels and in cars. Usually, incidents occur in hidden areas where there are no people. Cases are usually revealed based on witness reports and observations of changes in the victim's attitude. The

perpetrators of sexual violence are people closer to the victim, including uncles, stepfathers, neighbours and motorbike taxi drivers.

Thirdly, sexual violence occurs repeatedly, and the several causal factors of it are as follows:

- Handling problems with a traditional approach. This is dominant in the cities of Tual and Saumlaki. The Tual community who adheres to the *Larvul Ngabal* culture and the Saumlaki community with the *Duan Lolat* culture tend to be used as media to silence problems. When this approach is used, the problem is considered resolved by approaching the family and paying a compensation fine.
- Sexual violence is rarely revealed because of a culture of shame. Generally, cases of sexual violence are considered a shame, so many victims avoid reporting the problem. This reinforces the persistence of this problem.
- The community does not have an in-depth understanding of Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Crimes of Sexual Violence which provides a new perspective in law enforcement in cases of sexual violence. The public does not yet have comprehensive insight into the concept and forms of sexual violence against women.
- The negative impact of social media strengthens the perpetuation of sexual violence against women. Social media is used as a means of exploitation of women's bodies.

Fourthly, this case of sexual violence has a negative impact on the victim, namely:

- Psychologically, sexual violence has long and short-term impacts. In the long term, this event can cause lasting trauma, even into adulthood. If left untreated, the victim will experience a phobia. In the short term, the victim will experience nightmares, excessive fear and decreased concentration which will have an impact on health.
- In this case, it requires not just a superficial acknowledgment of the suffering of others; instead, it requires sensitivity, sympathy and a willingness to understand women's suffering and love them.
- Victims experience sanctions and social punishment. Victims experience stigmatisation and discrimination. GBV actions for students have a direct impact on their academic life. Most students lose concentration on their studies and choose not to attend school again because they experience negative pressure from social stigma (Samakao & Manda 2023).
- Sexual violence has a negative impact on the psychological well-being of the victim. Victims will experience changes in behavior, sleep and eating disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and others (Randa et al. 2023).
- Victims are always placed in a weak position by state law and church law. Victims are exploited and interrogated to get more complete evidence. This is a form of psychological exploitation based on legal demands. Hanny Thenu said:

'Several cases of sexual violence in the community of church servants have been identified. Acts of violence against female pastors and congregation members who serve them. Victims experience trauma and isolation. In church police, disciplinary action tends to be given to victims of violence.' (Hanny, Male, 57, Maluku, Indonesia)

## Theological reflection

Based on the social mapping and social analysis discussed above, a theological reflection based on the biblical tradition is formulated. Related to this, sexual violence requires the offer of theological reflection that sides with the victim. The author offers theology and spirituality of hospitality for victims. The theology and spirituality of hospitality contain several basic principles, namely (Hwang & Tuasela 2022):

Firstly, in hospitality, the spirit works to create a reciprocal relationship between God's special children and victims of sexual violence. The moral measure of a community lies in the way it treats its most vulnerable members, the weak and those on the margins including the victims of sexual violence. Being friendly and welcoming to other people, especially 'despised women' means giving room for change for those who welcome and those who are welcomed. Empowering women to obtain special positions in the church. In essence, the Church must be a place of redemption for everyone, including women. God is present in a reciprocal relationship of receiving and giving, present in a way that produces wholeness and hospitality. Hospitality attitude begins with acknowledging the existence of women. In this case, it requires not just a superficial acknowledgment of the suffering of others; instead, it requires sensitivity, sympathy and a willingness to understand women's suffering and love them.

Secondly, friendliness means advocacy, meaning an attitude of friendliness to stand and side with the women. This is true solidarity. Advocacy is the work of God's spirit. Women are not anomalous individuals but individuals who have the creative capacity to share with others, face their vulnerabilities and empower their spirits. A true community is made by sharing one another's burdens and weaknesses, so that each member is empowered to be themselves and be loved by God in His image. Hospitality is recognition of, and advocacy for the victim, so that the church can be the church. We tend to hide from vulnerability, then avoid them from others. In hospitality, we openly accept others, becoming hosts who are aware of their own vulnerabilities and needs.

Thirdly, Jesus proved true hospitality on the cross. Jesus participated in God's gracious hospitality by hanging on the cross. Jesus 'was for others' on the cross. A luxurious and joyful practice of hospitality, offered without reservation. In his hospitality, he experienced betrayal, loss, humiliation, suffering, and death. Jesus' attitude was not a masochistic ethic of self-sacrifice, or praise for martyrdom. On the contrary, his hospitality required death followed by his

resurrection. His principled faith that God in Christ conquered death and enmity once and for all served as the foundation for a radical act of hospitality.

## Planning a model of pastoral sermons for victims of sexual violence against women

Responding to the reality, the author plans a model of pastoral sermon as an alternative church service to overcome sexual violence against women. In this section, the author presents the concept and model of pastoral sermon for victims.

### Concept of pastoral sermon

Conceptually, the pastoral sermon is a type of sermon specifically for victims of sexual violence. This sermon represents the 'new homiletic' movement in the postmodern era. The postmodern preaching movement which presents a change in preaching paradigm is firstly, a change in the centralisation of preaching from the preacher to the audience, changing from what and how to preach to who is the target of the sermon. Secondly, the change from monologue sermons to dialogic sermons, from deductive sermons to inductive sermons. Inductive sermons create a dialogue between the biblical text and the audience's real experiences. Thirdly, multi-disciplinary sermons are formulated because the science of preaching is elaborated with other social science disciplines including pastoralism and psychology. Experiential sermons are based on problems, character, experiences, emotions, feelings and thoughts of victims of violence. The victims' stories and experiences are the main reference for the sermon (Hwang & Tuasela 2022).

### Model of pastoral sermon

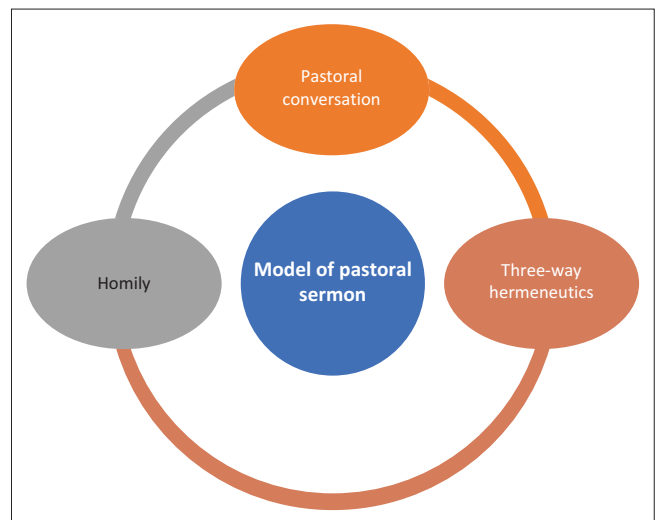
The model of pastoral sermon is constructed as part of the pastoral circle method. The planning of the sermon model is shown in Figure 2.

#### Pastoral conversation with the victim of violence

This section emphasises the importance of moving the stories of victims of violence to the pulpit. The shift in the story has a lot to do with interpersonal discussions between the pastoral preacher and the victim. In this section, three things are discussed: firstly, interpersonal conversation, secondly, active listening and thirdly, making meaning of interpersonal conversation.

#### Interpersonal conversation

In pastoral conversation with victims, effective pastoral conversation is needed. In conversation, it is necessary to understand the reasons and goals of people communicating. One of the main purposes of communication is to transfer or



Source: Research Results in 2023 on the construction of the Pastoral Sermon model.

FIGURE 2: Model of the pastoral sermon.

exchange information (Meadow 2002). Information exchange occurs between two or more private people. Interpersonal communication is a necessary social act that helps define us as human beings. One of the most important features of life is conversation. Through conversation, we can shape and reform victims' experiences and life events; recreating meaning and understanding of the victim; building and reconstructing reality and the victim's self. Through body language, gestures, facial expressions and other people's words, the victim is strengthened in difficult and good times, making them more enjoyable (Boothman 2000). Many people become frustrated in life just because they have few relationships and friends to talk to so that this problem becomes a heavy personal burden in life (Iheluwezi 2011).

In pastoral sermons, the interaction between the preacher and the victim is very important. The aim is to support each other in times of crisis in the victim's life. The effective interaction between individuals in pastoral care can be built on several principles, including:

Firstly, to achieve a good exchange of information, communicators (speakers and audiences) must follow cooperative principles that guide how people speak and interpret. The cooperative principle requires that conversations be directed according to needs. Collaboration between preachers and victims needs to be built to support each other in facing the storms of life's suffering. Therefore, a pastoral preacher must build effective interpersonal communication by using appropriate references and broad terms at the appropriate time (Iheluwezi 2011).

Secondly, to achieve effective interaction, open and honest communication is needed. Feelings need to be shared freely with respect for others. In this communication, a high level of trust is required. This attitude is analogous to an 'Emotional Bank Account'. In every interaction, the practice of 'emotional deposit' or 'emotional withdrawal' is built up. In an atmosphere of depositing or withdrawing into an 'emotional

bank balance' a high degree of trust is needed so that the relationship is intact and constructive. Victims of violence must have ethical character in expressing their life experiences. This requires a high level of trust and integrity (Covey 1999). Victims learn to express, communicate positive and negative feelings, thoughts and emotions in a relaxed manner and without excessive anxiety without violating the dignity of other people.

Thirdly, interpersonal conversations between preachers and victims are built on a high level of 'interdependence'. This relationship is analogous to the statement 'one plus one equals three' ( $1 + 1 = 3$ ). This means that good cooperation between two people can achieve success and personal happiness that is far more total and greater than self-development alone. A relationship that is 'symbolic interactionism' is needed (Cohen 1985). In the dependency principle, victims gain understanding and associate the meaning of life through interactions with other people. The personal meaning and understanding of victims will develop through interaction in the socio-cultural environment (Grove 2004). This process will help the recovery of victims of violence.

### Active listening

Mindful listening is one of the most powerful ways to communicate with victims of violence. When the priest listens to the deepest needs and concerns of the victim's soul, it means the priest affirms the victim's personality. Like most people, victims need validation as people of worth. The most desperate human need is for someone to listen to us as human souls (Caldwell 1960). Listening becomes a sacred act when the pastor sees others through the lens of God's love, beyond the surface of his soul. The best role model is Jesus. He is the best holy listener. As the Son of God, Jesus had the authoritative right to say a lot; but, Jesus chose to listen to other people before acting (Campolo & Darling 2010).

Active listening is listening with empathy, attention and purpose. This contrasts with listening which is done in a relaxed and less focused manner. The goal of active listening is to connect with others at the deepest level. This is a creative way to draw out someone's mental problems. Active listening involves careful attention; it is not superficial and touches the centre of one's consciousness (Iheluwezi 2011). Empathetic listening means that we are open to understanding and exploring someone's problems, without judgement. The pastor must clear all prejudices for victims. This attitude will help build a sense of trust and openness in victims for pastors. A priest must be willing to listen to the victim's story, emotions, feelings and thoughts actively and empathetically. This attitude will result in recovery for the victim.

The effectiveness of interpersonal interactions can be built through active listening. In interacting, communicators must have the following three listening skills: Firstly, listen with interest. Effective listening requires the communicator to demonstrate that he or she is genuinely interested in what the victim is saying and experiencing. Secondly, listen and

give the proper response. A responsive listening attitude is manifested in the form of 'responsive-active listening-hearing' (Anderson 1997). Responses are indicated by nodding the head, a sign that the pastor is listening attentively. Whereas, looking away from the speaker is a sign that the listener is bored, distracted or not paying attention (Iheluwezi 2011). Thirdly, listening and contributing. Listening skills involve the contributions of the person speaking and the person listening. Women's voices are often overlooked and ignored (Randa & McGarry 2023). Conversations must be dialogical because they involve the contributions of the person speaking and the person listening. This is referred to as 'joint action' (Shotter 1993). Contributions are presented in verbal and non-verbal forms.

### Making meaning out of the interpersonal conversation

Interpersonal conversations need to be processed for meaning-making. In conversation, the communicator's words, phrases and sentences need to create meaning. In this regard, the author uses Victor E. Frankl's ideas regarding the psychological theory of logotherapy. This theory is a method for finding the meaning of suffering. Pastoralist preaching can function as logotherapy for the recovery of victims. Logotherapy is a meaning-centred psychotherapy. Through logotherapy, the victim is confronted and reoriented to the meaning of their life, thereby giving them awareness and the ability to overcome their neurosis. According to logotherapy, the struggle to find meaning in one's life is a primary motivating force in humans (Frankl 1992).

Logotherapy offers four things for victims to find meaning in their lives, namely:

Firstly, the meaning of life. Every human being has a different meaning in life from time to time. Each person has their own character and unique suffering. Therefore, pastors must be proactive in helping victims find meaning in their life experiences. In this case, the victim is not looking for abstract meaning, but rather concrete meaning. The reason is, every person has a specific calling or mission in their life in this world. Logotherapy helps victims to see the essential responsibilities of human existence (Frankl 1992). The goal is to have an impact and meaning for God and other people, even in humiliation.

Secondly, the essence of existence. Logotherapy helps victims to become fully aware of their responsibilities towards their own lives in the past, present and future. Therefore, the victim must understand what his life is for, who he lives for and how he is responsible for his life. Pastor as a logotherapist must help the victim interpret the goals and tasks of his life by being responsible to his conscience and to society. The more a person forgets himself and is willing to serve or love others, the more he is able to actualise himself as a human being. Self-actualisation is possible only as a side-effect of self-transcendence. According to logotherapy, we can find the meaning of life in three different ways: (1) by creating a work or performing an action; (2) by experiencing

something or meeting someone and (3) with an attitude of responsive action towards suffering (Frankl 1992).

Thirdly, the meaning of love. Love is the only way to understand another human being at the deepest core of his or her personality. No one can fully realise the essence of another human being except by loving him. Love has a big impact on the lives of loved ones, especially victims of violence. With love, the victim is able to see the essential characteristics and character of the person he loves, including his hidden and unactualised potential. The power of love is able to enable loved ones to actualise their life potential. So that he is aware of what he is capable of and what he should become; he makes these potentials a reality. In logotherapy, love is not defined as a mere *epiphenomenon*, a sexual urge and instinct called sublimation. Love is not understood as a side effect of sex; on the contrary, sex is a way of expressing the experience of togetherness called love. In pastoral preaching, victims need to be guided with love to experience and express love (Frankl 1992).

Fourthly, the meaning of suffering. In pastoral preaching, victims need to be motivated to find the meaning of life in their suffering. When facing a hopeless situation and a fate that cannot be changed, the victim needs to try to find the meaning of his life. The most important thing is that the victim gives positive testimony about his or her suffering. That is, turning personal tragedy into triumph, turning adversity into human achievement. When the victim feels that he is no longer able to change his suffering situation, he is challenged to change himself. Suffering ceases to be suffering the moment one discovers the meaning of hope and sacrifice. One of the basic principles of logotherapy is that humans' main concern is not to obtain pleasure or avoid suffering, but to see meaning in their lives. Therefore, a person must be prepared to suffer provided that his suffering has meaning (Frankl 1992).

### Three-way hermeneutics

Preaching to victims involves a three-way hermeneutic of the victim's community, the victim's story, and God's own story (the biblical text). The main goal of hermeneutics is to fulfil the victim's need to struggle to find new meaning. According to Scott Kevin Davis, exploring meaning is a search for conformity and correlation of the victim's personal story with communal and transcendent stories. Exploration and disclosure of meaning and understanding are hermeneutic process. Hermeneutics is the process of recovering old meanings and discovering new understandings of life experiences by critically assessing and interpreting the values held by individuals and communities (Davis 2003).

### Interpreting the experiences of victims of sexual violence

Preaching for victims requires the pastor's special skills to create message content and sermon presentations according to the victims' needs. Preachers are required to have the skills to interpret the unique problems of victims of violence. In this case, the people who suffer greatly and have various problems are the victims and their families (Iheluwezi 2011). A pastor

must pay attention to and understand well the character of the victim in his sermon. The pastor must consider the victim's attitudes, opinions, beliefs and convictions. Victims of violence tend to be very emotional. Pastors must choose language carefully in their sermons so as not to cause negative reactions from victims of themselves. For example, preachers should not speak as if judging the victims and the causes of their suffering. Pastors must use positive, optimistic and constructive words, so that victims feel accepted, loved, cared for and have hope for life (Iheluwezi 2011). This was revealed through the testimonies of two victims of child sexual abuse, Suci and Melati. Melati said:

'I felt ashamed, hopeless, anxious, worthless to my parents and wanted to commit suicide. Because every day, I am under pressure from my mother who accuses me of bringing disgrace to the family and causing my father and mother to be separated. I admitted that I could not go to school anymore, because I was embarrassed about going back to school, embarrassed and afraid of being rejected by teachers and friends. I want to go to school and be filial to his parents, but is imprisoned by shame.' (Melati, Female, 14, Maluku, Indonesia)

Suci's testimony is as follows:

'I felt worthless, embarrassed and pessimistic about my future. I was unable to enjoy pleasure, lacked enthusiasm, withdrew from the environment, had disturbed sleep patterns and attempted suicide. I felt embarrassed and worried about being accepted in the social environment.' (Suci, Female, 14, Maluku, Indonesia)

The main thing is that the pastor must study and know the victim well in preparing his sermon. The priest must know the victim's social environment.

### Interpreting biblical texts

When interpreting biblical texts for sermons in public liturgy, pastors need to be aware that victims must discover new understandings of the gospel message from their lived experiences. The pastoral minister is responsible for helping victims to interpret the meaning of the text in their reality. When preaching, pastors consider the following questions: What does the text say to victims of violence? What is the central theme of the text? What problem does the central theme aim to solve? The pastoral minister prepares a homily that is sensitive to the victim's concerns (fear, mental anguish, abandonment, anger, depression, etc.) (Lowry 2001). If the pastor begins with a focused life situational sermon on victim's feeling of shame, the question is: what kerygmatic themes of the text can provide clues to the resolution of this problem? Regarding this question, good Bible exegesis is needed. In hermeneutics, research is needed on two main questions, namely: what the text says and why the text says what it says. Regarding sermon preparation, a pastor must determine where he is starting from and in what direction he is moving. In the thematic kerygma concept, the focus of the sermon is to provide a message of hope and encouragement to the victim (Lowry 2001).

### Interpreting and selecting the appropriate story

In this section, the focus is on the preacher's efforts to interpret the victim's life story with the gospel narrative. It has to do with how the gospel story is preached as a message of hope and empowerment for victims in facing the suffering of their lives. The preacher interprets the victim's story and reveals the problematic nature of the problem. Common problems for victims are depression, disappointment, hopelessness, anger, sadness and limitations. Based on the interpretation of the victim's story, the pastor must know whether the story can be used as sermon material. In choosing the appropriate story for preaching the gospel, the preacher must consider the following:

- How does the story raise questions and challenges faith?
- Does the story address the issue of shame and hopelessness?
- Does the story show the testimony of the gospel? Does it express acceptance of conditions of suffering or can it be seen as a model of Christian living? In planning a homily, the pastor must be able to know which story is most appropriate for proclaiming the gospel.

### Make homily

After the interpretation of the biblical texts and the victim's story, the pastor has important references in planning the homily. There is an indication of the dialectic between the biblical text and the victim's story. The biblical text expresses the main theme or message, while the victim's story expresses a need or problem that must be overcome. When planning a homily, it is necessary to build interaction between the problem and the theme. The preacher needs to involve the interaction between the victim's story and God's story (Lowry 2001). The key to bridging the gap between textual themes and problem ideas is relational thinking. Dynamic sermons are formed through the interaction between needs and themes so that the sermon becomes lively and meaningful (Lowry 2001).

### Conclusion

This research presents a model of the pastoral sermon as a constructive method for the church to handle the problem of sexual violence against women in Maluku. In the Maluku context, the rate of sexual violence against women has increased significantly. The results of this research show that victims of sexual violence tend to be women, especially school children. Victims experience a number of complex impacts from these acts of sexual violence. Pastoral preaching is the approach used by the church to deal with this problem. This pastoral sermon is based on transformative values, namely, the values of hospitality, acceptance and love. This model starts from the process of mapping problems and social analysis, constructing theological reflections and ending with planning pastoral sermons. The pastoral sermon planning model for victims is constructed in several steps: firstly, pastoral conversation; secondly, three-way hermeneutics and thirdly, creating a sermon.

The aim of the pastoral sermon has a dual function: firstly, to provide hope and restoration of life for the victim and secondly, to build social sensitivity for the victim and prepare the victim to face future challenges. The homily should be plotted and presented as a message of hope for the victim. Sermons are not a solution to overcome victims' problems, on the contrary, sermons function to help victims see and understand suffering from a different perspective, namely the Gospel. This method contributes to building community sensitivity and awareness to break the chain of sexual violence. The pastor must begin his homily by telling the story of the victim, and then move on to the gospel message. Listening to victims' stories helps pastors reflect theologically. When theological reflection based on the victim's story is shared in the homily, the homily can act as a source of grace for the entire community and help the victim see their story as part of a larger divine story.

### Acknowledgements

The authors would like to acknowledge the Directorate General of Higher Education, Research and Technology, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, and Head of the Research Institute of Indonesian Christian University Maluku for extending their moral and financial support for this research.

### Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationship(s) that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

### Authors' contributions

J.A.T., D.S.N. and J.P. contributed to implementation of this research work. J.A.T. conceptualised the research, conducting data collection, analysing data, conceived, advised and wrote the final manuscript.

### Ethical considerations

This article followed all ethical standards for research without direct contact with human or animal subjects.

### Funding information

The authors disclose receipt of the financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article. This research was supported by the Budget for the Directorate of Research, Technology and Community Services, Directorate General of Higher Education, Research and Technology, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, Fiscal Year 2023, No. DIPA-023. 17.1.6905523/2023.e

### Data availability

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.



## Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and are the product of professional research. It does not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated institution, funder, agency, or that of the publisher. The authors are responsible for this article's results, findings, and content.

## References

- Anderson, H., 1997, *Conversation language, and meaning: Communication in small groups*, BasicBook, New York, NY.
- Anindya, A, Indah Y.S.D. & Oentari, Z.D., 2020, 'Dampak Psikologis dan Upaya Penanggulangan Kekerasan Seksual Terhadap Perempuan', *TIN Terap Informatika Nusantara* 1(3), 137–140.
- Ayal, J., 2022, 382 Kasus Kekerasan Perempuan dan Anak di Maluku Sepanjang Tahun 2021, Antara News, Ambon, viewed 14 March 2024, from <https://www.antarane.ws.com/berita/2791837/terjadi-382-kasus-kekerasan-perempuan-dan-anak-di-maluku>.
- Boothman, N., 2000, *How to make people like You in 90 seconds or less*, Workman Publishing, New York, NY.
- Caldwell, T., 1960, *The listener*, Doubleday, Garden City, NY.
- Campolo, T. & Darling, M.A., 2010, *Connecting like Jesus – Practices for healing, teaching & preaching*, Jossey Bass – A Wiley Imprint, San Francisco, CA.
- Choi, C.H., 2018, 'Pastoral Care in Practical Theology', *Theology and Praxis* 60(3), 159–185.
- Cohen, A., 1985, *The symbolic construction of community*, 1st edn., Elish Horwood, Chichester.
- Covey, S., 1999, *The seven habits of highly effective people – Manual*, Covey Leadership Centre, Salt Lake City, UT.
- Davis, S.K., 2003, 'Proclamation, a pastoral care hermeneutic for preaching: From patient besides narrative to congregational pulpit', Thesis Project for Doctor of Ministry in Preaching, Aquinas Institute of Theology ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, Saint Louis, Missouri.
- Frankl, V.E., 1992, *Man's searching for meaning: An introduction to logotherapy*, Beacon Press, Boston.
- Grove, M., 2004, 'The three R's of pastoral care: Relationship respect and responsibility', *Pastoral Care in Education* 22(2), 34–38. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0264-3944.2004.00261.x>
- Holland, J. & Henriot, P., 1994, *Analisis Sosial & Refleksi Teologis - Kaitan Iman dan Keadilan*, Kanisius, Yogyakarta.
- Hwang, B.J. & Tuasela, J.A., 2022, 'Practical theology approaches and sermons for hospital sermon ministry', *Theology and Praxis* 80(2), 37–63. <https://doi.org/10.14387/jksph.2022.80.35>
- Iheluwezi, N.C., 2011, *Hospital preaching as informed by bedside listening – A homiletical guide for preachers pastors and chaplains in hospital, hospice, prison, and nursing home ministries*, University Press of America, Laymoth.
- Joo, Y.S., 2020, 'Embracing Otherness: Christian Practice of Hospitality', *Theology and Praxis* 70(3), 461–485.
- Lowry, E.L., 2001, *The homiletical plot – The sermons as narrative art form*, Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, KY.
- Meadow, C.T., 2002, *Aking conversation: Communication through the ages*, Scarecrow Press Inc, New York, NY.
- Muryati, M., Koswanto, A., Setianto, Y. & Abrillan, M., 2023, 'Kekerasan Seksual dan relasi kuasa: Tinjauan plot narasi 2 samuel 11:1–27', *Dunamis: Jurnal Teologi dan Pendidikan Kristiani* 7(2), 646–659.
- Radiodms, 2021, *Kasus Kekerasan Perempuan dan Anak di Maluku Meningkat di Tahun 2021*, Radiodms.Com, Kota Ambon ID, viewed 14 March 2024, from <https://radiodms.com/kasus-kekerasan-perempuan-dan-anak-di-maluku-meningkat-di-tahun-2021/>.
- Randa, M.B.M., Julie, G.S. & Hinsliff-Smith, K., 2023, 'Accessing care services after sexual violence: A systematic review exploring experiences of women in South Africa', *HTS Theological Studies* 46(1), 10–25. <https://doi.org/10.4102/curationis.v46i1.2405>
- Randa, M.B. & McGarry, J., 2023, 'Experiences of healthcare staff in forensic care facilities supporting sexual violence survivors, in Tshwane, South Africa', *HTS Theological Studies* 46(1), 5–26. <https://doi.org/10.4102/curationis.v46i1.2374>
- Safitri, S.S., Ardiansah M.D. & Prasetyo A., 2023, 'Quo Vadis Keadilan Restoratif Pada Perkara Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual Pasca Undang-undang Nomor 12 Tahun 2022 tentang Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual (Studi Terhadap Pasal 23 UU TPKS)', *Jurnal Hukum dan HAM Wara Sains*, 2(1), 29–44.
- Salamor, Y.B. & Salamor, A.M., 2022, 'Kekerasan Seksual Terhadap Perempuan (Kajian Perbandingan Indonesia - India)', *Balobe - Law Journal* 2(1), 8–11.
- Samakao, M. & Manda, H., 2023, 'Effects of gender-based violence on students' well-being: A case of Mufulira college', *HTS Theological Studies* 79(3), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v79i3.8492>
- Shotter, J., 1993, *Conversational realities: Constructing life through language*, Sage, London.
- Suwandi, J., Chusniatun, C. & Kuswardani, K., 2019, 'Karakteristik Kekerasan Seksual Terhadap Anak Perempuan di Wonogiri dan Boyolali', *JPIS Jurnal Pendidikan dan Ilmu Sosial*, 29(1), 65–77.
- World Health Organization (WHO), 2002, 'World report on violence and health', *World Health Organization* viewed n.d., from [https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/42495/9241545615\\_eng.pdf;jsessionid=CD33E5937BDD7241F74B0E9A40F50A97?sequence=1](https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/42495/9241545615_eng.pdf;jsessionid=CD33E5937BDD7241F74B0E9A40F50A97?sequence=1).
- World Health Organization (WHO), 2017, *Violence against women*, viewed n.d., from <https://www.who.int/news-room/factsheets/detail/violence-against-women>.