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Development and Preliminary Validation of a Scale to Measure Sexual Violence Awareness using the Rasch Model

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Abstract

This study develops a sexual violence awareness scale (ID-SVAS) using the Rasch Model, as well as assessing its validity and reliability. This developed scale was tried out on 1022 respondents consisting of students, lecturers, and college employees. In this study, the Rasch Model was used to measure the psychometric properties of the 14 items of the SVA scale through WINSTEPS 3.73. Our analysis results indicate that the developed sexual violence awareness measurement tool has good validity and reliability. Therefore, this scale be relied upon to measure sexual violence awareness experienced by respondents. This research is expected to present significant impacts in developing an accurate and reliable measurement tool to measure sexual violence awareness among university students in Indonesia, designing educational programs and social campaigns to increase sexual violence awareness.

Keywords: Sexual Violence Awareness Scale; Validation; Rasch Model; Student

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Introduction

Sexual violence is a prevalent problem in society that is still considered a taboo topic for discussion. It carries damaging physical, emotional, and psychological consequences for the victim. Kelly (2013) defines sexual violence as 'any physical, visual, verbal or sexual act that is experienced by the woman or girl, at the time or later, as a threat, invasion or assault, that has the effect of hurting her or degrading her and/or takes away her ability to control intimate contact.' Sexual violence is also described as any sexual act, attempted sexual act, or comment and suggestion of sexual behavior, whether intentional or not, that constitutes a violation by forcing someone to engage in sexual intercourse against their will (Organization, 2014; Sorrentino & Alfano, 2023) which results in various losses (Purwanti & Hardiyanti, 2018). World Report on Violence and Health (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2013) defines sexual violence as any sexual act, attempted sexual act, or other action related to sexual purposes directed at a person using coercion, harassment, or any act beyond that committed by any person regardless of relationship to the victim, including but not limited to their relationship at home and work (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2013; Dini et al., 2022).

Sexual violence can occur anywhere, including in the field of education. Among various levels of education, higher education records the highest incidence of sexual violence cases between 2015-2021 (Perempuan, 2021). The highest violence in the education environment is sexual violence 87.91%, psychological and discrimination 8.8%, and physical violence 1.1%. Furthermore, the National Women's Commission of Indonesia (Komisi Nasional Perempuan Indonesia) has received 3,014 cases of gender-based violence against women from January to November 2022. In the latest case, a 15-year-old teenager was sexually assaulted by 11 people. This teenager experienced severe trauma and reproductive disorders that necessitated uterine removal surgery (Fajarlie, 2023).

A survey related to sexual violence conducted on December 01, 2022, suggested that 23.9% of respondents had experienced verbal violence, 10% of them encountered physical or sexual violence, and 17.9% had experienced cyber (online) sexual violence. In addition, victims also experienced sexual violence perpetrated by their seniors. This incident arises from a sense of power among the seniors, leading them to believe that juniors must comply with their every desire. Imbalanced power dynamics between the perpetrators and victims of sexual violence instill fear in the victim, leading to their reluctance to report the incidents (Aryana, 2022; Elindawati, 2021; Farid, 2019).

In addition, the social stigma surrounding the issue of sexual violence positions it as a taboo issue of discussion (Fandia, 2021). Consequently, once the victims report the case, the community mostly blames them (victim blaming) (Hackman et al., 2017; Royal, 2019; Shopiani et al.). As described in the research conducted by Darma et al. (2022); (Hackman et al., 2017; Wulandari & Krisnani, 2020) that aside from being blamed by various parties, including those in authority, for the crime, the women who are victims of sexual violence frequently feel reluctant to report such crimes due to feelings of insecurity. Consequently, sexual violence negatively impacts the psychology of victims, resulting in trauma, depression, lack

of confidence, anxiety, fear, and even suicide (Eva et al., 2020; Winingsih et al., 2021).

For those issues, this study develops a tool to measure the condition of the existing sexual violence awareness scale (ID-SVAS) in Indonesia. In order to address this issue, it is important for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to have a valid and reliable measurement tool that can assess the prevalence, characteristics, and impact of sexual violence. One increasingly popular approach in the measurement of sexual violence awareness is the use of the Rasch Model, a statistical method developed by Georg Rasch in 1960 to measure latent attributes, such as abilities or attitudes, from dichotomous or polytomous data (Bond et al., 2020). This study designed the validation of sexual violence awareness using the Rasch model with the help of the WINSTEP 3.73 application. The validation process involved assessing the psychometric properties of the research instruments related to sexual violence, ensuring they meet the required standards. In addition, we also took a close look at how to position respondents to respond to all items in ID-SVAS.

This study was conducted with the aim of developing an accurate and reliable measuring instrument to evaluate sexual violence awareness using the Rasch model. The Rasch model is one of the analytical methods used in the development of measurement instruments with high levels of validity and reliability. This research aims to significantly contribute to the development of an accurate and reliable instrument to measure sexual violence awareness of university students in Indonesia so that it can help victims get the proper support and treatment.

Method

Research Design

This study applied a quantitative approach to analyzing the ID-SVAS instrument, using the Rasch model to validate sexual violence awareness. Rasch analysis offers more advantages over other methods, namely, it is capable of predicting missing data based on individual response patterns (Huisman & Molenaar, 2001; Sumintono, 2018). In instrument validation, the use of Rasch analysis provides more thorough information about the instrument and is more consistent with the instrument's definition (Bond et al., 2020).

Ethics Approval

This study adheres to ethical principles by ensuring participant confidentiality. The participants consented to participate in this study and the publication of the results in accordance with ethical approval. Ethical approval Number: 95667/EC/IKI/X/2022 was obtained from the official counseling professional organization, Ikatan Konselor Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia.

Participants

This study involved 1022 students at private universities in Jakarta. We invited respondents through WhatsApp messages

to take part in this study. Respondents were given initial information about the purpose of this study, and there was no coercion for respondents to take part in this study. We also ensured that all respondents' personal information was guaranteed confidentiality. Table 1 shows the demographics of respondents who filled out the sexual violence awareness scale.

Tab. 1. Respondent Demographics (N=1022)

	Demography	Sum
Status	L = Lecturer	60
	S = Student	958
	E = Employment	4
	Total	1022
Gender:	F = Female	538
	M = Male	484
	Total	1022
Department:	GC (Guidance and Counseling)	282
	EH (History Education)	11
	IE (Industrial Engineering)	446
	EIL (Indonesian Language and Literature Education)	267
	Other/N.A.	16
	Total	1022

Source: Data processed from the results of research data collection

Data Collection Tools

The research instrument was compiled based on the opinion of Kelly (2013) regarding sexual violence awareness that reflects understanding, attitude, and behavior. Understanding involves aspects of understanding the definition of sexual violence, knowing the extent to which sexual violence occurs in the community, understanding the consequences of sexual violence, and power dynamics. While attitudes involve aspects of the views, beliefs, and feelings that a person or group has concerning sexual violence. Meanwhile, behavior includes aspects of actions and practices related to this phenomenon, both from perpetrators, victims, and society. The response categories on this scale are in the form of a Guttman scale, consisting of yes and no.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was performed using the Rasch model (Bond, 2015; Folastrri et al., 2017; Sumintono & Widhiarso, 2014). Rasch Model was selected as it was considered an excellent way to report results on estimating reliability components, separation index, Test Information Function, Partial Credit Model (PCM), Unidimensional through Principal Component Analysis (PCA), Person Fit and measure, Item Fit and measure, and Item Difficulty. To perform the analysis, WINSTEP version 4.45 was used (Linacre & Linacre, 2012).

Results

The results of the study illustrate the accuracy of the obtained items and personal data based on the model for

ideal measurement. The amount of ideal fit is in the range of MNSQ OUTFIT 0.5 – 1.5 logit (Boone et al., 2013; Folastrri et al., 2017; Solihatun et al., 2022; Sumintono & Widhiarso, 2015; Syahputra et al., 2020). The analysis results suggested that the Sexual Violence Scale (SVS) consisting of 14 items obtained an average score of 1.00 logit, signifying that, in general, the items are good for measurement purposes. Meanwhile, the person in this study amounted to 1022 respondents (person).

In addition, the reliability of the scale was evaluated using two statistics, the person separation index and Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach & Warrington, 1951). More specifically, the estimate of reliability was divided into three parts, namely (1) item reliability, (2) person reliability, and (3) reliability of interaction between person and item. The results of the reliability and separation index are presented in Table 2.

Tab. 2. Reliability and Separation Index (N = 1022)

Estimation	Measure
Items reliability	1.00
Person reliability	0.52
Cronbach alpha (KR-20) person raw score "test" reliability	0.47
Item separation index	20.53
Person separation index	1.03

Table 2 shows that the person reliability value is 0.52, which indicates the moderate quality of the answers provided by the respondents. Their moderate answers indicate that the answers are not always reliable and accurately measure their sexual violence awareness. This non-reliability can be caused by various factors, such as unclear instructions, communication problems, or a mismatch between the characteristics of the respondents and the measurement items. On the other hand, the obtained item reliability value was 1.00, signifying that the items measure the construct of sexual violence awareness accurately and consistently.

Furthermore, to determine the scale's ability to measure its intended construct accurately, we analyzed it using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) of the residuals, which measures the level of diversity. PCA analysis uses two parameters, the first is the total raw variance in the observations (minimum 20%), and the second is the total unexplained raw variance (minimum 15%) (Afdal et al., 2021; Linacre, 2006; Mokshein et al., 2019). Further details of standardized residual variance analysis are presented in Table 3.

Tab. 3. Standardized Residual Variance

	Observed	Expected
Total raw variance in observations	100.0%	100.0%
Raw variance explained by measures	61.5%	61.2%
Raw variance explained by persons	16.4%	16.4%
Raw variance explained by item	45.1%	45.0%
Raw unexplained variance (total)	38.5%	100.0%
Unexplained variance in 1st contrast	6.4%	16.5%
Unexplained variance in 2nd contrast	4.5%	11.8%
Unexplained variance in 3rd contrast	3.7%	9.6%
Unexplained variance in 4th contrast	3.6%	9.4%
Unexplained variance in 5th contrast	3.0%	7.9%

Principal Component Analysis results showed that the raw variance explained by ID-SVAS reached 61.5%, above the minimum criteria (>40%). This indicates that the items in the scale have been representative and able to measure the ID-SVAS construct well. In addition, the result of unexplained variance is deficient (less than 15%), suggesting that the items in the scale are independent and not highly correlated with each other. This fulfills the unidimensional requirements of the scale. Therefore, the scale can be considered valid and very well formed. Principal Component Analysis on this sexual violence awareness scale provides essential information about the measurement quality of the instrument or scale. The scale with unidimensionality and representativeness of items can be optimally used in the measurement of the ID-SVAS construct in the population under study.

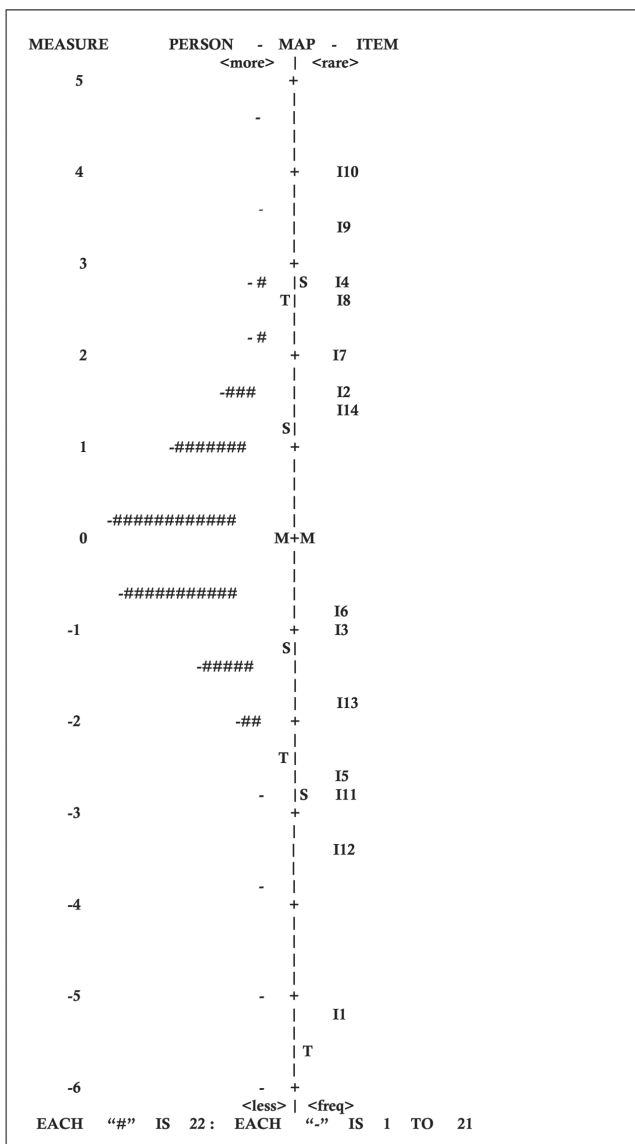
In addition to describing Rasch Principal Component Analysis (PCA), researchers also looked at the DIF results of sexual violence awareness. Differential Item Functioning (DIF) shows that nine out of 14 items show a probability value of less than 5%, namely: (1) item 1 (0.000) -- Have

you ever experienced verbal sexual violence?; (2) item 2 (0.001) -- Do you think whistling or name-calling is sexual violence?; (3) item 3 (0.003)-- Have you ever experienced physical, sexual violence?; (4) item 4 (0.003)-- In your opinion, the act of looking at someone with sexual desire, which causes discomfort to the person being looked at, is sexual violence?; (5) item 5 (0.000)-- Do you think that the victim's appearance (clothing/physical appearance) is an influencing factor for the acts of sexual violence?; (6) item 6 (0.000)--Have you ever experienced sexual violence in cyberspace/online/internet/social media?; (7) item 7 (0.000)-- Have you ever been a victim of sexual violence?; (8) item 8 (0.000)-- If you know that the perpetrator of sexual violence is an official/lecturer/education staff, do you have the courage to report it?; (9) item 9 (0.000)-- Do you know how to prevent sexual violence?.

Furthermore, to evaluate the measurement quality of an instrument or scale in the Rasch model, the Wright Map was used. Wright Map displays the location of items and respondents on a continuum that describes the level of ability or constructs measured by the scale through the logit value of items that range from the most difficult to the most agreeable, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1 describes the item size, while the Wright map on the left depicts the respondent's ability, and the right side shows the item difficulty. As shown on the right side of Figure 1, the distribution of item difficulty shows the largest logit value of (+4.03 logit). This reflects that item 10 is the most challenging item for respondents to agree with, while item 1 is the easiest item for respondents to agree with as it presents the smallest logit value (-5.19 logit) among all items on the ID-SVAS.

Fig. 1. Wright Map Sexual Violence Awareness



Discussion

The sexual violence awareness scale (ID-SVAS) has been confirmed to be a reliable and valid tool to accurately measure sexual violence awareness using Rasch modeling. Rasch analysis provides a more accurate picture of instrument validity evaluation and produces more holistic information about the instrument that better fulfills the definition of measurement instrument (Bond et al., 2020; da Rocha et al., 2013; Hagquist & Andrich, 2017). The use of Rasch analysis in developing and validating a measurement tool also helps uncover the weaknesses and strengths of the items of an instrument (Hagquist & Andrich, 2017). Therefore, it increases the accuracy of the measurement results for an instrument. Due to the importance of measurement in the field of education, Rasch analysis is the solution to various problems of instrument validity and reliability (Van Zile-Tamsen, 2017). Subsequently, the popularity of Rasch analysis has been growing, specifically in the field of counseling psychometrics (Willse, 2017). In the counseling psychometrics field, the Rasch analysis has been applied in the development and validation of the Indonesian peace of mind scale (Saputra et al., 2022), career decision self-efficacy scale (Makransky et al., 2015), and Psychological well-being youth inventory scale for domestic violence victims (Fadli et al., 2019).

The implementation of a sexual violence awareness measurement tool in Indonesia can help in understanding perceptions of sexual violence. The results showed that the ID-SVAS is unidimensional, as well as providing effective results because all items match the ideal standard we tested. The scale also showed evidence of strong reliability. The results of this study also highlighted the low understanding of sexual violence among university students, indicating that the issue of sexual violence is still considered a taboo or inappropriate topic of discussion and the lack of awareness among university students about sexual violence. As a result, students may not be fully aware of the prevalence of sexual violence, both within the campus and in society as a whole. Individuals' sexual violence awareness should be developed so they develop positive thoughts and actions toward sexual violence based on cultural aspects (Hambali & Gipayana, 2016). Awareness of sexual violence is an important aspect of responsible and empathetic individuals. This process should start from an early age and continue throughout life. This awareness is crucial for society to understand that fighting social violence is a shared task, not just an individual responsibility.

Low sexual violence awareness may affect an individual's ability to identify and report sexual violence and prevent them from seeking help or support if they are the victim. Research conducted by Lonsway et al. (2008) underlines that the low reporting of sexual violence is partly due to victims' ignorance that they have been sexually assaulted. This problem is real and quite serious, as indicated by many cases of sexual violence left unreported because the victims do not realize that they experienced an act of sexual violence. This issue is also induced by misconceptions about the definition and types of sexual violence.

Further referring to DIF, as we have mentioned earlier, this situation requires careful interpretation and foresight. Our findings show that 9 out of 14 items showed DIF, signifying that the majority of questions in this scale elicited varying responses from different groups, despite their equal level of understanding regarding sexual violence awareness. Consequently, it may suggest that perceptions, experiences, or understanding of sexual violence may be influenced by a number of factors such as gender, age, or culture. Gender often affects how a person perceives and experiences sexual violence. Women, for example, may have more awareness or direct experience with sexual violence than men, especially given that they are often the targets of sexual violence. Therefore, women may be more likely to identify certain behaviors as sexual violence than men.

In addition, age also affects one's understanding and experience of sexual violence awareness. For example, older students may have a more complex understanding of sexual violence compared to younger students, as they may have had more life experiences and been exposed to more information about the issue. Culture can also influence the way an individual perceives and experiences sexual violence. In some cultures, for example, sexual violence may be considered taboo or inappropriate to talk about, influencing a person's ability to identify and report sexual violence. Therefore, the use of a sexual violence awareness measurement scale is essential. This scale helps in measuring an individual's level of knowledge and understanding of sexual violence as well as their attitude towards the issue. Accordingly, this research is expected to

present an important contribution to developing an accurate and reliable instrument to measure sexual violence awareness among university students in Indonesia, designing educational programs, and conducting social campaigns to increase sexual violence awareness.

For future research, although this instrument is good, basically, we involved respondents with relatively excellent qualifications. Therefore, it does not fully represent respondents' awareness of sexual violence. Besides, future researchers also need to pay attention to the reliability of the response for accurately mapping the respondents' capabilities. They are suggested to recommend the use of longitudinal studies in assessing changes in sexual violence awareness over time, particularly after clinical or educational interventions. This would allow for a more in-depth understanding of the effects of interventions on individuals' awareness and attitudes toward sexual violence. To increase the validity of the scale, it would be valuable to investigate its correlations with social attitudes toward women or groups experiencing sexual stigma. This can help strengthen the connection between sexual violence awareness toward societies' views and attitudes, thus providing a more thorough understanding of the construct of sexual violence awareness.

This study also has limitations in developing and validating the ID-SVAS. Research that develops and verifies the ID-SVAS needs to pay attention to the composition of the sample representativeness. As the majority of the sample was female, the findings of this study may not be directly applicable to the overall population, which includes men. Furthermore, in research on sensitive and stigmatized topics such as sexual violence, bias may be a serious concern. Bias may arise from various sources, including respondent selection bias, where participants who agree to participate may have different characteristics from those who refuse. In addition, while Rasch's analysis provides preliminary evidence for the reliability and validity of the sexual violence awareness scale, it is not yet sufficient to prove that the scale measures the construct it is intended to measure. Other types of validity tests on the sexual violence awareness scale need to be conducted, such as criterion-related validity, which uncovers the capacity of a measure to predict or correlate with other measures that are known to be valid indicators of the sexual violence awareness construct.

Conclusion

This research is an initial effort to develop a sexual violence awareness scale and has produced a sexual violence awareness scale (ID-SVAS) with good reliability and validity confirmed through the Rasch modeling. The implementation of the ID-SVAS in Indonesia has demonstrated effectiveness and robust evidence of reliability. The scale is unidimensional, and all of its items conform to the specified ideal standard. Besides, the ID-SVAS has adequate psychometric properties to measure the sexual violence awareness of university students in Indonesia.

Author Contributions

Sisca Folastrri: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Data curation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing, Funding acquisition. IM

Hambali: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Writing – review & editing, Visualization, Supervision. M. Ramli: Resources, Data curation, Formal analysis, Writing – review & editing, Supervision. Sa'dun Akbar: Resources, Data curation, Formal analysis, Writing – review & editing, Supervision. Afriyadi Sofyan: Resources, Data curation, Formal analysis, Writing – review & editing, Supervision.

Conflict of interest

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors. The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest

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Ethical approval

This study adheres to ethical principles by ensuring participant confidentiality. The participants consented to participate in this study and the publication of the results in accordance with ethical approval. Ethical approval Number: 95667/EC/IKI/X/2022 was obtained from the official counseling professional organization, Ikatan Konselor Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia.

Data availability statement

Data will be made available on request.

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