

## SAFE SPACE FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS: ACTIVITIES OF THE KAWAN PUAN BANYUWANGI COMMUNITY IN BUILDING MENTAL HEALTH AT 2019-2021

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**Abstract**

The persistent patriarchal culture in Indonesian society does not allow all women to get a safe space, especially women survivors. The purpose of this study is to explain the patriarchal culture in Banyuwangi Regency and the history of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community, as well as analyze their activities in building mental health, so that women survivors can have safe spaces. This research's novelty lies in examining the activities of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community in creating safe spaces through the mental development of women survivors. So the questions of this research include what the patriarchal culture is in Banyuwangi Regency, what is the history of the birth of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community, and how are the activities of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community in building mental health, so that women survivors get a safe space? This research method used a case study with a historical approach in the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community. The analysis used Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory. The results of the study indicate the existence of a patriarchal culture in Banyuwangi Regency in 2021, including 38% of cases of sexual intercourse, 12 % of obscenity, 23% of psychological violence, 19% of sexual violence, 4% of physical violence, and 4% of neglect, resulting in women lacking access to safe spaces. The Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community builds the mental health of women survivors through sharing activities without judgment, providing psychological assistance for survivors to map their problems appropriately, and creating a women-support-women habituation, which is key to safe spaces. Therefore, safe spaces need to be built collectively by various parties; all parties must have knowledge of how to protect women.

**Keywords:** history, safe space, mental health, Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community, women, survivors.

## Background

“Everyone has the right to protect their personal life, family, honor, dignity, and property under their control, and they have the right to a sense of security and protection from the threat of fear of acting or not acting as a human right.” (Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945 Khususnya Dalam Pasal 28 G Ayat 1’, 1945.

The patriarchal culture that develops in Indonesian society causes women to experience limitations in the public sphere. Many women experience double burdens, marginalization, subordination, and negative stereotypes. Because this view has been legitimized for generations, it thrives in society.<sup>1</sup>

Marginalization is a situation that limits women's access due to various policies, religious interpretations, traditions or customs, and even scientific assumptions.<sup>2</sup> Subordination is the assumption that a role can only be carried out by one gender (male), such as that men have the authority and power to make decisions.<sup>3</sup> The double burden on women means playing a role in reproduction but also taking care of household chores. Meanwhile, negative stereotypes attached to women include being considered weak, timid, dressed, dependent, and emotional.

The consequence of patriarchal culture is that it makes women vulnerable to violence in both the domestic and public spheres. Violence is an act of violence, both physical and non-physical, committed by one gender or an institution of the family, society, or state against

the other sex. Various forms of violence experienced by women include physical and non-physical violence in the household; beatings, torture, and rape in life; sexual harassment; and sexual exploitation of women and pornography.<sup>4</sup>

Based on data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection in 2019, there were 20,530 cases of violence, 17,132 of which were experienced by women. In 2020, cases of violence decreased to 20,499, with female victims accounting for as many as 17,574 cases. In 2021, cases of violence increased to 25,210 cases, with 21,753 victims being women. In 2022, there were 27,593 cases, 25,053 of which were experienced by women. In 2023, cases of violence increased to 29,883 cases, and 26,161 women became victims.<sup>5</sup>

Specifically, socio-cultural factors, one of which is patriarchal culture in the form of dual roles, negative stereotypes, and marginalization, are the causes of women being more vulnerable to experiencing mental health issues.<sup>6</sup> Based on data from the current study, Indonesian women are more susceptible to mental health issues than men. Women's mental health includes anxiety disorders, depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and eating disorders.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection of the Republic of Indonesia, 'Glossary of Gender Injustice', <https://www.kemenpppa.go.id/index.php/page/view/23>, December at 19.19 WIB 2021

<sup>5</sup> SIMFONI PPA', <https://kekerasan.kemenpppa.go.id/ringkasan>, 2024

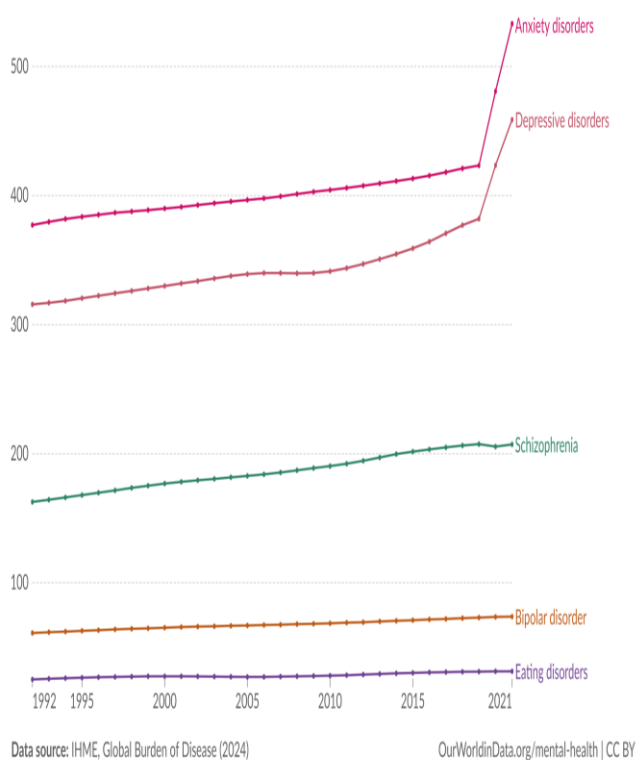
<sup>6</sup> Vika Azkiya Dihni. (2023). Mengapa Perempuan Lebih Banyak Menderita Gangguan Mental? <https://katadata.co.id/analisisdata/649e2c12b7ca0/mengapa-perempuan-lebih-banyak-menderita-gangguan-mental>

<sup>7</sup> Adi Ahdiat, 'Women are More Vulnerable to Depression than Men', <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/layanan-konsumen-kesehatan/statistik/33043f2e6d4b621/perempuan-lebih-rentan-depresi-dibanding-laki-laki>, 2024, 14/06/2024 ed.

<sup>1</sup> Nanang Hasan Susanto, 'Tantangan Mewujudkan Kesenjangan Gender Dalam Budaya Patriarki', *Muwazah*, 7.2 (2016), doi:10.28918/muwazah.v7i2.517..

<sup>2</sup> Gusri Wandi, 'Reconstruction of Masculinity: Uncovering the Role of Men in the Struggle for Gender Equality', *Kafa'ab: Journal of Gender Studies*, 5.2 (2015), p. 239, doi:10.15548/jk.v5i2.110.

<sup>3</sup> Dewi Ratnawati, Sulistyorini, and Ahmad Zainal Abidin, 'Gender Equality on Male and Female Education', *Jurnal Harkat, Gender Communication Media*, 15.1 (2019), pp. 10–23.



**Figure 1.** Burden of Disease from Each Category of Mental Illness in Indonesia in 1992 - 2021  
Data processed from IHME, Global Burden of Disease.

Based on data from worldwide data on mental health, many people experience anxiety disorders, depressive disorders, schizophrenia, bipolar disorders, and eating disorders. People with anxiety disorders were 423.3 people in 2019, 480.7 people in 2020, and 533.1 people in 2021. The number of patients with depressive disorders was 382.0 in 2019, 423.5 in 2020, and 458.8 in 2021. There were 207.5 people with schizophrenia in 2019, 205.5 in 2020, and 207.3 in 2021. The number of patients with bipolar disorders was 73.2 people in 2019, 73.6 people in 2020, and 73.9 people in 2021. Eating disorders were experienced by 31.4 people in 2019 and 2020, as well as 31.5 people in 2021.<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand, social support is a form of perception of each individual in being treated humanely as a result of social interactions carried

out through mutually supportive activities.<sup>9</sup> Social support has a vital role in maintaining mental health, especially for women. This aligns with Cohen and Wills's opinion that Social Support Theory shows a positive relationship between social support and mental health.<sup>10</sup>

Forms of social support can be informational, instrumental, and emotional. Information support involves providing information that can help a person feel better. Instrumental support involves providing tangible assistance such as services, financial aid, and other special assistance or goods. Meanwhile, emotional support consists of giving warmth and nurturing to another individual and reassuring a person that the individual is a valuable person whom others care about.<sup>11</sup>

In this case, the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community is one of the communities in Banyuwangi Regency. This community was established in December 2020. This community was formed due to the increase in the number of victims of violence experienced by women.<sup>12</sup>

The social support provided by Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community for women survivors is reflected in several informational, instrumental, and emotional supports. The presence of a psychologist to help survivors manage their emotions plays a significant role. Survivors are invited to map their mental state, especially for survivors who have experienced violence that has resulted in trauma in their lives. Once the survivors can map out their psychological burden, their lives are healthier and better able to survive every hardship.

<sup>9</sup> Shelley E. Taylor, 'Social Support: A Review', in *The Oxford Handbook of Health Psychology*, ed. by Howard S. Friedman, 1st edn (Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 190–214, doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195342819.013.0009.

<sup>10</sup> Sheldon Cohen and Thomas Ashby Wills, 'Stress, Social Support, and the Buffering Hypothesis', *Psychological Bulletin*, 98.2 (1985), pp. 310–57.

<sup>11</sup> Taylor, 'Social Support'.

<sup>12</sup> Aditya Mega P., 'Kawan Puan, Safe Space for Women', <https://Mepnews.Id/2022/03/17/Kawan-Puan-Ruang-Aman-Untuk-Perempuan/>, 17 March 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Saloni Dattani and others, 'Mental Health', <https://Ourworldindata.Org/Mental-Health>, 2024.

The presence of friends to support each other also plays a crucial role in maintaining the mental health of women survivors. This emotional support is also seen during the discussion sessions, where they encourage each other and avoid judgment based on past experiences. Instead, they embrace each other to reach the present and the future. Therefore, social support in the Kawan Puan Community is what shapes women survivors' mental health, enabling them to rise above adversity and become useful women for themselves, their family, and their environment.

The significant role of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community in creating a safe space for women survivors in Banyuwangi Regency through the development of mental health is the reason why the researchers raised it as the focus of this research. This community actively voices women's rights and creates safe spaces for women. The women can tell each other about what they have experienced and strengthen each other. Women also dare to free themselves from violence against women, double burdens, marginalization, subordination, and negative stereotypes. They create activities to love themselves if they are valuable people. This is because women must be empowered to participate in designing, conceptualizing, and building the quality of their children who will become this nation's next generation, so that they are ready to make the nation's civilization.<sup>13</sup>

There have been several previous studies. The research of Muhammad Jauhari Sofi, Nasim Basiri<sup>14</sup>, Zalifa Nuri, and Susi Machdalena<sup>15</sup> is in

line with Wiyatmi's research on the existence of women, which was formed due to the educational patterns of parents, the environment, groups with the same emotions, and government policies.

Studies of Lyn Parker and Helen Creese,<sup>16</sup> Fawziah Zahrawati,<sup>17</sup> and Israpil<sup>18</sup> discuss how women are victims of patriarchal culture, such as the negative stigma experienced by divorced women, and how men have absolute authority in life. The distribution of power of men has an advantage over women in one or more aspects, such as the determination of lineage (exclusive patrilineal descent and carrying surnames), the rights of the firstborn, personal autonomy in social relations, and participation in public and political status.

Research by Dhea Nur Arifah and Pipit Feriani Wiyoko,<sup>19</sup> Putri et al.<sup>20</sup>, Niman et al.<sup>21</sup>, and Ryan Ariadi<sup>22</sup> explained that victims (survivors) of violence tend to experience severe mental health

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*Journal of Gender Studies*, 4.2 (2020), doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.30983/humanisme.v4i2>

<sup>16</sup> Lyn Parker & Helen Creese, 'The Stigmatisation of Widows And Divorcees (Janda) in Indonesian Society', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, published online 2016, doi:10.1080/13639811.2015.1111647

<sup>17</sup> Fawziah Zahrawati B, 'Resilience of Post-Divorce Women Educators in Parepare City', *Kafa'ah Journal*, 10.2 (2020).

<sup>18</sup> Israpil, 'Patriarchal Culture and Violence Against Women (History and Development)', *Jurnal Pusaka*, Vol. 5, No.2, 2017', *Jurnal Pusaka*, 5.2 (2017).

<sup>19</sup> Dhea Nur Arifah and Pipit Feriani Wiyoko, 'Hubungan Kekerasan Psikis dengan Kesehatan Mental pada Remaja Sekolah Menengah Pertama Selama Pandemi Covid-19 di Kecamatan Sungai Kunjang Samarinda', *Borneo Student Research*, 3.2 (2022) <<https://journals.umkt.ac.id/index.php/bsr/article/view/2683/1182>>.

<sup>20</sup> Triyana Harlia Putri and others, 'Dukungan Kesehatan Jiwa Bersama Teman Sebaya melalui Program Duta Kesehatan Jiwa Sekolah', *Jurnal Kreativitas Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat (PKM)*, 7.11 (2024), pp. 4737–46, doi:10.33024/jkpm.v7i11.17522.

<sup>21</sup> Susanti Niman and others, 'Dukungan Kesehatan Jiwa dan Psikososial pada Anak Penyintas Gempa Bumi', *Jurnal Ilmu Keperawatan Jiwa*, 6.3 (2023) <<https://jurnalppnajatengorg/index.php/jikj>>.

<sup>22</sup> Ryan Ariadi, 'Pengaruh Kekerasan Terhadap Kesehatan Mental Dampak Jangka Panjang', *circle-archive*, 4.1 (2024) <<https://circle-archive.com/index.php/carc/article/view/72/70>>.

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<sup>13</sup> Lailatuzz Zuhriyah, 'Women, Education and Architects of National Civilization', *Dignity: Journal of Women and Children*, 2.2 (2018), pp. 249–68, doi:10.21274/martabat.2018.2.2.249-268.

<sup>14</sup> Muhammad Jauhari Sofi and Nasim Basiri, 'Reclaiming Identity: Women, Social Exclusion, and Resistance in Bumi Manusia.', *SAWWA: Journal of Gender Studies*, 15.2 (2020), pp. 155–72.

<sup>15</sup> Zalifa Nuri and Susi Machdalena, 'The Formation of Women's Social Identity in the New Order Era in the Novel Saman by Ayu Utami.', *HUMANISMA:*

symptoms, including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, and behavioral disorders.

The similarity of this research with existing research is that it discusses how women who experience violence in patriarchal culture, such as violence in general, experience trauma in terms of mental health. Conversely, the difference is that this research focuses on the activities of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community to create a safe space through the mental development of survivor women.

The method used in this study was a case study in the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community in 2021. The instruments employed were questionnaires, interviews, and observations. The sampling technique employed purposive samples, namely, women survivors who are members of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community. The validation process was carried out using data triangulation techniques. Triangulation was conducted by comparing various sources from interviews and field observations. Following that, the analysis of this study used Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory.

According to Maslow, humans have five basic needs: physiological, safety, belongingness and love, esteem, and self-actualization.<sup>23</sup> This security need is related to guarantees, stable protection, predictable situations, and being free from fear and anxiety, which the violence experienced by women shows that women survivors do not have a sense of security or a safe space.<sup>24</sup>

Therefore, the purpose of this research is first to explain the patriarchal culture that develops in Banyuwangi Regency. Patriarchal

culture disrupts women's safe spaces because this culture makes women unable to be on par with men, which results in women's mental health, as women are always considered a source of problems. Second, to explain the history of the Birth of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community, and third analyze the activities of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community in building mental health so that women survivors get a safe space.

The importance of this research is to provide a role model for women's safe spaces carried out by the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi community in an effort to build the mental health of women, especially survivors. Considering that women have a central role in life, especially in the family, mothers are the first place of learning for their children. Mentally healthy women give birth to a healthy generation, but when the woman experiences a mental health disorder, it will be difficult to educate her children, for example, children who like to be yelled at, then their future life will become grumpy.

The safe space created by this community is in the form of a storytelling space submitted by the oldest women survivors to share stories, where the stories that have been conveyed are kept confidential and not for public consumption. The safe space created is in the form of the presence of a psychologist who will help in mapping the mental health problems he faces, so that he will not take the wrong step in making the next decision, because it is handled directly by his experts without incurring costs. The safe space created is also a judgment-free zone for past mistakes. Another safe space created is a trust. The female survivors built their confidence. Because the importance of self-confidence improves the quality of life of individuals, both in personal and professional life, by encouraging courage to face challenges, better communication, positive decision-making, and the formation of healthy social relationships. Confidence also allows a person to be more optimistic, responsible, and not easily

<sup>23</sup> Andarweni Astuti and Loina Christine, 'The Concept Of The Needs Of Society According To Abraham Maslow's perspective', *JBKI Jurnal Bimbingan dan Konseling Indonesia*, 7.2 (2022), pp. 1–8

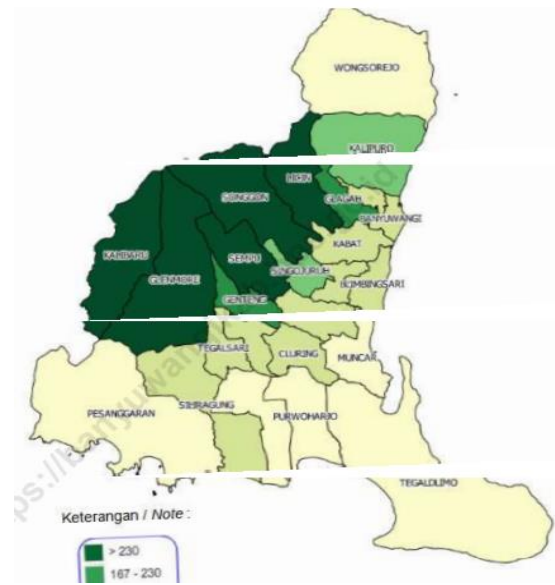
<sup>24</sup> Ahmad Zainal Mustofa, 'Hierarchy of Human Needs: A Humanistic Psychology Approach of Abraham Maslow', *Kawanua International Journal of Multicultural Studies*, 3.2 (2022), pp. 30–35, doi:10.30984/kijms.v3i2.282

give up when facing failure, thus being the key to growth and achievement.

So the questions of this research include what the patriarchal culture is in Banyuwangi Regency, what is the history of the birth of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community, and how are the activities of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community in building mental health, so that women survivors get a safe space?

### 1. Patriarchal Culture in Banyuwangi Regency

Banyuwangi Regency is located at the eastern tip of Java Island. Astronomically, this area is located at 7° 43' — 8° 46' South Latitude and 113° 53' — 114° 38' East Longitude. The geographical boundary of the northern part of this region is Situbondo Regency, the eastern boundary is the Bali Strait, the southern boundary is the Indonesian Ocean, and Jember and Bondowoso Regencies border the west. Banyuwangi Regency has 25 sub-districts consisting of Pesanggaran, Siliragung, Bangorejo, Purwoharjo, Tegaldlimo, Muncar, Cluring, Gambiran, Tegalsari, Glenmore, Kalibaru, Genteng, Srono, Rogojampi, Blimbingsari, Kabat, Singojuruh, Sempu, Songgon, Glagah, Licin, Banyuwangi, Giri, Kalipuro, and Wongsorejo. There are 217 villages in Banyuwangi Regency.<sup>25</sup>



**Figure 2.** Map of Banyuwangi Regency in 2021  
Source: Banyuwangi Regency in 2022 Figures

Banyuwangi Regency in 2021 had a population of 1,718,462 people with a population density of 297 people/km<sup>2</sup>. The highest population density in the Muncar sub-district was around 136,722 people. Licin sub-district, with a total of 2,952 people, had the lowest population in Banyuwangi Regency. However, the highest number of births was in the Tegaldlimo sub-district with 2,423 people. In comparison, Singojuruh sub-district had the lowest number of births in Banyuwangi Regency, with 507 people.

**Table 1.** District capital, number of villages, and area of sub-districts in Banyuwangi Regency in 2021

No	District	Capital city	Number of Villages	Broad (km <sup>2</sup> )
1.	Pesanggaran	Sumberagung	5	802.50
2.	Siliragung	Siliragung	5	95.15
3.	Bangunrejo	Kebondalem	7	137.43
4.	Purwoharjo	Purwoharjo	8	200.30
5.	Tegaldlimo	Tegaldlimo	9	1341.12
6.	Mucar	Blambangan	10	146.07
7.	Cluring	Cluring	9	97.44
8.	Gambiran	Wringinagung	6	66.77
9.	Tegalsari	Tegalsari	6	65.23
10.	Glenmore	Karangharjo	7	421.98
11.	Kalibaru	Kalibaruwetan	6	406.76
12.	Genteng	Genteng Wetan	5	82.34
13.	Srono	Sukomaju	10	100.77

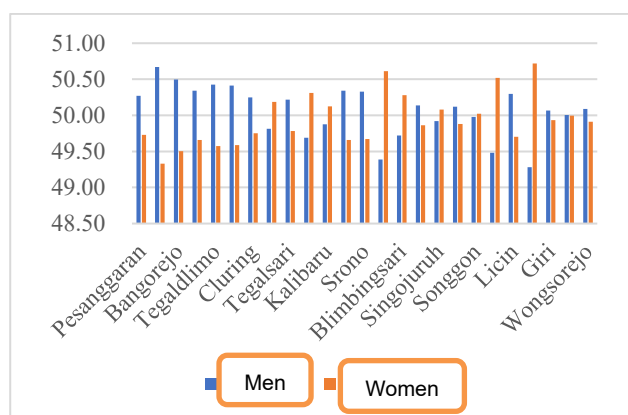
<sup>25</sup> BPS Banyuwangi Regency, 'Banyuwangi in Numbers', <https://Banyuwangikab.Go.Id/Profil-Daerah/Geografi>, 2021.



14. Rogojampi	Rogojampi	10	48.51
15. Blimbingsari	Blimbingsari	10	67.13
16. Kabat	Kabat	14	94.17
17. Singojuruh	Singojuruh	11	59.89
18. Sempu	Sempu	7	174.83
19. Songgon	Tegalarum	9	301.84
20. Glagah	Glagah	10	76.75
21. Licin	Licin	8	169.25
22. Banyuwangi	Tukangkayu	18	30.13
23. Giri	Mojopanggung	6	21.31
24. Kalipuro	Kalipuro	9	310.03
25. Wongsorejo	Wongsorejo	12	464.80

Source: Banyuwangi Regency in 2022 figures

Men dominate the population of Banyuwangi Regency. The proof is that the percentage of the population is much higher for males than for females. In 2020, out of 25 sub-districts in Banyuwangi Regency, around eight had more female residents than men. The sub-districts include Gambiran, Kalibaru, Rogojampi, Blimbingsari, Singojuruh, Songgon, Glagah, and Banyuwangi.



**Figure 3.** Population Percentage Chart by Gender in Banyuwangi Regency in 2020

Source: processed from the BPS Banyuwangi Regency in 2021

Moreover, patriarchy is a system of social structure and its practices that positions men as superior so that they have the opportunity to dominate, oppress, and exploit women in daily life. The dominance of men is not only in the domestic realm but also in the public sphere.<sup>26</sup>

The patriarchal culture in Banyuwangi Regency still exists, even though it differs from

the past because some women are aware and understand that patriarchy is detrimental to them. However, patriarchal culture is still developing even though it is not dominant. This is evident in the access to education of indigenous women and women in general, and the absence of rejection of the underlying religion and culture of those around them. This is also supported by the fact that gender-related education exists, although it remains unequally distributed among patriarchal societies.<sup>27</sup>

The impact experienced by women due to the existence of a patriarchal culture, even though it is not dominant, prevents women's access and independence from being fully obtained. For example, for families that still preserve the patriarchal culture, they choose to marry their underage children and women who are in charge of taking care of the household. In addition, a woman is not allowed to go home at night; there are restrictions on determining a woman's ideals, with the maximum being to become a teacher. Women who are members of a male-dominated community will be discussed.<sup>28</sup>

Additionally, the gender development index in Banyuwangi Regency has increased from year to year. Based on statistical data, it was 86.20 in 2017, 86.44 in 2018, 86.81 in 2019, 86.66 in 2020, and 86.96 in 2021. This shows that in Banyuwangi Regency, there is an increase in gender development every year.<sup>29</sup>

The development of gender equality in Banyuwangi Regency can be seen from traditional ceremony activities involving women. There are even some Banyuwangi traditional cultures whose leading actors are women, such as *Seblang* and *Gandrung* cultures. In addition, gender equality can be observed in the fact that the leader of Banyuwangi Regency is a woman. Gender equality is also seen in the presence of women

<sup>26</sup> Arwan, 'Budaya Patriarki Bahasa Dan Gender Terhadap Perempuan Bima', *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Pendidikan*, 4.4 (2020), pp. 401–07..

<sup>27</sup> IR, 'Wawancara Pribadi', 10 December 2022.

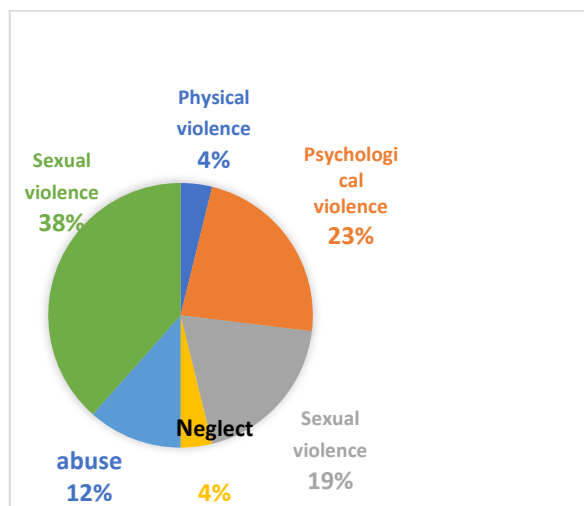
<sup>28</sup> IR, 'Wawancara Pribadi', 10 December 2022.

<sup>29</sup> BPS Banyuwangi Regency, 'Banyuwangi in Numbers'.

who are members of the Moco Lontar Yusuf Community.<sup>30</sup>

However, women in Banyuwangi Regency still experience violence. Types of violence include physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, psychological, economic, intimidation, and threats.<sup>31</sup> Forms of violence in Banyuwangi Regency in 2021 include domestic violence (KDRT), non-domestic violence, and trafficking.

Based on the results of the interviews, several friends who are members of the Kawan Puan Community still told stories of being victims of domestic violence and violence committed by romantic relationships or their partners and their parents. This is due to the dominant male power relations factor in the household and society. Domestic violence cases are in the form of physical violence, psychological violence, sexual violence, and neglect. Meanwhile, non-domestic violence cases are in the form of sexual assault and sexual intercourse. The highest level of cases experienced by women in Banyuwangi Regency in 2021 was intercourse.



**Figure 4.** Percentage of Female Sexual Violence in Banyuwangi Regency in 2021

**Source:** processed from data from the Banyuwangi Regency Women's Empowerment and Family Planning Social Service

<sup>30</sup> FY. *Wawancara Pribadi*, 11 December 2022.

<sup>31</sup> Yanuarious You, 'Patriarchal Gender Relations and Its Impact on Hubula Women of the Dani Tribe, Jayawijaya Regency, Papua', *Sosiohumaniora*, 21.1 (2019), p. 65, doi:10.24198/sosiohumaniora.v21i1.19335.

The condition of women survivors in Banyuwangi Regency who experienced sexual violence decreased from 19% in 2021. Psychological violence amounted to 23% in 2021. Cases of sexual intercourse amounted to 38%. Physical violence increased to 4% in 2021. Cases of abuse increased to 12% in 2021. This demonstrates that the situation of women is not entirely safe.

Negative stereotypes, such as bullying, are still experienced by women in Banyuwangi Regency. Women who failed in the household (widows) are considered women who liked to marry and divorce. Many idioms in Banyuwangi say that a remarkable woman gets married several times, even though Banyuwangi women can make decisions about their lives. Hence, they choose to be widows rather than living with a partner who is uncomfortable and uncalm in their lives.<sup>32</sup>

Harmful stereotypes that develop and are experienced by women, such as women who work as journalists, cause them to go home at night to be considered as untrue women. Women who have male friends are seen as more dominant than women who have female friends, who also face negative stereotypes.<sup>33</sup> Women should not marry over time and should not look for something too high. Women who joined the Moco Lontar Yusuf Community are considered not good because men usually read them.<sup>34</sup> Culture, religion, status differences, and lack of education from the bullies cause this bullying.

Marginalization and subordination are still experienced by women in Banyuwangi Regency. The culture in Banyuwangi Regency is of the Osing and Mataraman cultures. Women's subordination is still seen in Mataraman because women are still considered as *konco wingking*. However, in the Osing Culture, equality is already visible. Men and women are involved in home

<sup>32</sup> LI. *Wawancara Pribadi*, 14 December 2022.

<sup>33</sup> IR, '*Wawancara Pribadi*' 10 December 2022.

<sup>34</sup> MA. '*Wawancara Pribadi*', 10 December 2022



and social activities, such as women being the head of the RT/Neighborhood Association.<sup>35</sup>

## 2. History of the Birth of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community

The Kawan Puan Banyuwangi community is present due to the increase in violence against women and children in the last three years. Based on data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (Kemen PPPA), in 2019, the number of reports of violence against women reached 8,864 cases. In 2020, it became 8,686 cases. This figure jumped to 10,247 cases in 2021. Meanwhile, the number of victims of violence against women was 8,947 people in 2019, decreased slightly to 8,763 people in 2020, then jumped to 10,368 cases in 2021. This is the basis for several women in Banyuwangi to create the Kawan Puan Community. Fiya Qutrunnada is one of them. This 26-year-old woman said she and several colleagues initiated Kawan Puan in Banyuwangi in mid-2020.

“This community was built from our anxiety, female friends from various professions, and also housewives, responding to the many cases of violence against women.”<sup>36</sup>

The Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community started activities in December 2020. From this activity, this community carried out the inauguration in January 2021. This community was founded on the ideas of Ira, Fiya, Bibeh, Mei, and Lilis. Their motivation for establishing this community is the number of female friends who confide in one another, so they choose to do confidant activities together, strengthen each other, provide each other with input, solve each other's problems, and celebrate together. In addition, because the Banyuwangi area still has many women who are survivors who need a safe space, they need help both psychologically,

financially, and physically. With the help of psychologists, survivors can be helped to map the problem and make decisions to solve it.

For the meaning of the community's name Kawan Puan *kawan* is taken from the word woman. Puan is from the word *Empu*, i.e., the master is the mother or the beginning of a life. This Kawan Puan Community is expected to be the starting place for the lives of female friends in Banyuwangi. Some interpret friends for women. Thus, it is hoped that this community will be a forum for women to support and accompany each other. The vision of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community is to build a safe space for women in Banyuwangi. The missions carried out by this community include supporting the Banyuwangi women's system to empower their life choices, increasing women's knowledge in handling women's cases, and building understanding related to mental health issues in women.

The initial purpose of establishing the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community was to gather female friends to tell each other stories. Furthermore, this community is a forum for female friends to speak and share various stories. In addition, it aims to warn and educate the public so that violence no longer occurs as an effort to reduce the number of victims and perpetrators; thus, women do not become victims or perpetrators of sexual violence or domestic violence. Kawan Puan was attended by women born out of the anxiety of those related to the lack of safe spaces for women to tell stories. To strengthen the support system, women can be empowered over their life choices, increase women's knowledge in handling cases of violence against women, and provide understanding related to mental health issues in women.

This community agrees that all community members must obey several points. First, there is no judgment from the story told. Second, whatever happens and the story told must not come out, primarily until the details and identities of the story are revealed to the public. The

<sup>35</sup> IR, 'Wawancara Pribadi', 10 December 2022.

<sup>36</sup> FY, 'Wawancara Pribadi', 23 December 2022.

purpose of this rule is to protect the participants' friends. At each event held, women who come will sit in a circle and share stories according to the theme of the meeting. Meetings with female friends are held at least once a month. Even if female friends have problems, they will be helped.

The Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community does not have a standard management structure. However, this community is driven by a core team that takes care of activities in the community. The core team is the founder of the Kawan Puan Community. This member of the Kawan Puan Community joined through a flyer spread on social media. Currently, the number of women in this community is 50.

### 3. Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community Activities in Building the Mental Health of Survivors as a Safe Space

The Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community was formed in mid-2020 by Ira, Fiya, Bibeh, Mei, and Lilis. Starting with the many friends of women survivors who confided in each other, they then took the initiative to vent together to form women supporting women. In addition, because the Banyuwangi area still has many women survivors who need a safe space, they need help both psychologically, financially, and physically. With the help of psychologists, survivors can be helped to map the problem and make decisions to solve it.<sup>37</sup>

The increase in cases of violence against women and children in the last three years is also the reason for the formation of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community. Based on data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (Kemen PPPA), in 2019, the number of reports of violence against women reached 8,864 cases. In 2020, it became 8,686 cases. This figure jumped to 10,247 cases in 2021. Meanwhile, the number of victims of violence

against women was 8,947 people in 2019, decreased slightly to 8,763 people in 2020, and then jumped to 10,368 cases in 2021.

"This community was built from our anxiety, female friends from various professions, and also housewives, responding to the many cases of violence against women."<sup>38</sup>

The activities of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community are done in collaboration with various stakeholders such as IPPNU, journalists, reading houses, and students. The Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community is in great demand by women in Banyuwangi Regency, especially for women who are victims of patriarchal culture. The motivation of Banyuwangi women to join the community is to get a safe space for women to confide and tell each other's stories, a place to be able to support each other to maintain sanity because the average attendance is from survivors of domestic violence and sexual violence, and a place for women to feel safe.<sup>39</sup>

Some women who are members of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community have experienced the impact of patriarchal culture. The forms of patriarchal culture that they experienced are such as women behind the wings; women who do not work get economic violence treatment from their partners; the assumption that married women are better than those who are not married; women must have children; women should not be widowed; in divorce, women are the guilty party; and patriarchy in freedom of expression in the family, for example, they should not choose ideals, preferably a teacher, should not choose the ideal of being a teacher. Therefore, they join the community to get a safe space.<sup>40</sup>

According to the Roestone Collective, a safe space is a living concept with variations adapted

<sup>37</sup> IR, 'Wawancara Pribadi', 10 December 2022.

<sup>38</sup> FY, 'Wawancara Pribadi', 11 December 2022.

<sup>39</sup> BB, 'Wawancara Pribadi', 23 April 2022.

<sup>40</sup> MY, 'Wawancara Pribadi', 23 April 2022.

to various contexts. Safe space can mean spatial space that refers to a geographical location or is a habitable place. However, safe spaces can also refer to the process of living and looking at things.<sup>41</sup> Because women need a space to tell stories and share, it must be safe. In this case, a safe space is a space for survivor women to feel relieved, comfortable, and independent of what they think, and when telling stories, their privacy is maintained by others.<sup>42</sup>

The Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community provides a safe space for women. In this community, there is a rule that applies, namely, when someone tells a story, there should be no judgment on what has been done in the past, and the story's identity should not be published. In Kawan Puan, there is no activity of blaming each other, but embracing each other to support each other. The other listening members should not be to blame for the person telling the story.<sup>43</sup> This community is a safe forum or space for women to express their grievances so that they can impact women's mental health.

Furthermore, mental health is where the mind is at peace and tranquility, making it possible to enjoy daily life and appreciate others around you. Mental health conditions include mental, neurological, and substance use disorders, suicide risk, and related psychosocial, cognitive, and intellectual disabilities.<sup>44</sup>

Mental health criteria, according to WHO, include the individuals knowing their potential, being able to overcome conflicts in their life, being able to provide benefits to themselves and others, and being active in social activities.<sup>45</sup>

Mental health is essential for women because if they are mentally disturbed, it will disrupt their mood, thinking ability, and emotions, so that their behavior becomes bad.<sup>46</sup>

The safe space that the Kawan Puan Community provides is to build mental health for women survivors. Mental health built by the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community is carried out through meeting activities with a different theme at each meeting. The themes covered were such as toxic relationships, prevention of sexual violence, and the complexity of motherhood. This aims to build mental health for women in Banyuwangi Regency.

From the various activities held by the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community, such as meetings both online and offline, aim to create a safe space for women survivors. For example, a meeting that discusses women in the vortex of domestic violence that presents peyintas as resource persons. They can tell their stories freely without any pressure or justification about what they have experienced in the household, some get physical violence when they become wives so that it causes prolonged trauma. Before they join this community, they only harbor what they are going through that causes mental health problems such as being depressed, lacking confidence. They have difficulties in living a life where they have no dreams of living in the future.

After they join this community they experience a change like at first they were afraid to step up, afraid to make decisions, they became brave to make life decisions. At first they thought being a widow was a disgrace, but after they realized it was better to separate than to live together but experience domestic violence. When they were widowed they initially experienced a negative stigma from society, but by having

<sup>41</sup> Boy Achmad Sofyan, 'Is There Still a Safe Space for Women in Indonesia?', <https://www.jalastoria.id/masibkah-ada-ruang-aman-bagi-perempuan-di-indonesia/>, 24 January 2022.

<sup>42</sup> LI, 'Wawancara Pribadi', 14 December 2022.

<sup>43</sup> LI, 'Wawancara Pribadi', 14 December 2022.

<sup>44</sup> Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, 'Universal Health Coverage for Mental Health', <https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/310981/WHO-MSD-19.1-Eng.Pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>, 2019.

<sup>45</sup> Rina Ayu Panca Rini, '4 Criteria for Mentally Healthy People in the WHO Version',

<https://www.tribunnews.com/Seleb/2022/02/18/4-Kriteria-Orang-Sehat-Secara-Mental-Versi-Who?Page=2>, 2022, Friday, February 18, 2022 17:16 WIB Edition.

<sup>46</sup> Kementerian Kesehatan Republik Indonesia, 'Pengertian Kesehatan Mental', <https://ayosehat.kemkes.go.id/pengertian-kesehatan-mental>, 2018, 08 Juni 2018 Edition.

confidence as a form of safe space that they got from the community they were able to rise from the downturn and be able to prove in life after separation to be more independent, a few years later they married a couple who respected equality between men and women.

The safe space created by the Kawan Puan community in the form of trust, freedom to tell the problems they experience, the existence of psychologists as facilitators in mapping problems, and the existence of support between women make female survivors grow in a healthy mentality. Evidently, those who were initially afraid to look at the future because of past traumas, were afraid to speak up, were afraid to make decisions became women who dared to speak out without pressure, dare to make decisions, and most importantly were independent of themselves and happy for the life they were experiencing. They are no longer bothered by the negative talk of others who do not know the real fault. In addition, the stories they experience are guaranteed confidentiality. After they are able to tell their stories, it means that they have felt relieved of the pressure they have been feeling. Problem mapping assisted by psychologists is really that they are able to have confidence again that has been lost. Confidence is so important in mental health because it is the driving force to be able to face every difficulty in life more wisely and maturely.

On January 21, 2021, the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community carried out activities closely related to efforts to build mental health. This activity was done face-to-face at Café Palm Sugar. The performers of this activity are Adreina Marcellina, a psychologist who talks about Taking Care of Mental Health, Ira Rachmawati, a journalist from *kompas.com* who talks about writing on social media, and Meydiana Isfandari, a gender activist who talks about Women and Stigma. The spark in this discussion was Durrotun Nasihah as the driving force of Kawan

Puan and Fiya Qutrunnada as the founder of the Reading House.<sup>47</sup>



**Figure 5.** Kawan Puan Community Activities in January 2021

**Source:** documentation of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community in 2021

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the activities of the Kawan Puan Community in building mental health continued even though they were carried out online. The activity with the theme "Women in the Vortex of Domestic Violence" was carried out in April 2021 through a Zoom meeting. The respondents in this activity were from PHD Perempuan Osing and The Samdhana Institute, such as Surti, a woman Aman Osing, and Siti Mafrochatin Nimah (DPRD PKB Faction). The speakers presented were Adreina Marcelina as a psychologist, Ira Rachmawati as a journalist, and Confiscator. Confiscators are given so community members can learn, take wisdom, and not judge others' pasts. This is done so that the participants who attend can build their mental health through the stories presented.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>47</sup> BB, 'Wawancara Pribadi', 23 April 2022.

<sup>48</sup> IR, 'Wawancara Pribadi', 10 December 2022.



**Figure 6.** Kawan Puan Community Activities in April 2021

**Source:** Kawan Puan Banyuwangi community documentation in 2021

The activities of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community continued to strive to build mental health as a safe space for women survivors in Banyuwangi Regency despite the pandemic. On July 28, 2021, a virtual meeting was held with the theme "Sexual Harassment: What Should We Do?" This activity was in collaboration with IPPNU East Java. The resource persons in this activity were Puput Kurniawati, who is the chairman of IPPNU East Java, Nurul Hidayah Ummah, the general chairman of IPPNU, Fiya Qutrunnada, the coordinator of the IPPNU Tapalkuda branch, Andreina Marcelina, a psychologist, and Ira Rachmawati, a Kompas.com journalist, with moderator Lucky Dwi H as the chairman of PC IPPNU Jember.<sup>49</sup>



**Figure 7.** Kawan Puan Community Activities in July 2021

**Source:** documentation of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community in 2021

Thus, the form of safe space created by the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community is to build mental health for women in the Banyuwangi Regency. The safe space is manifested in various ways, including trust. Trust builds confidence so that women can make the best decisions for themselves, so that there is a behavior change. For example, friends in the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi Community encourage female survivors to have confidence even though their past is so difficult, but survivor women build their confidence to look at the present and future. Many of the survivors are able to live better as they recover from trauma, especially as a result of the patriarchal culture they experienced. After they are able to have confidence, they are not easily distracted by negative stigma or the impact of patriarchal culture on them and are resilient in facing life's challenges.

Second, they are given the freedom to vent about the problems they experience. For example, women survivors are given space to tell their stories in formal forums such as the Kawan Puan Community activity in April 2021. They are free and unforced to reveal what they have

<sup>49</sup> MY, *Wawancara Pribadi*, 23 April 2022.

experienced to make an experience for the friends in attendance.

Third, there is psychological assistance from psychologists in mapping the difficulties encountered and how they can take action. For example, when a female survivor has personal problems, especially about past trauma that causes her mentality to be problematic so that her life is messy, the Kawan Puan community provides a solution for her to tell a psychologist. After the female survivors were able to map out their problems, they were able to rise from the downturn they experienced so that their lives became more directed.

Fourth, there is a support system for women. No judgment, bullying, or disgrace is used for public consumption. For example, when a female survivor tells about her past trauma, other community friends give her support and the story will not be told to others.<sup>50</sup>

These forms of safe spaces can build women's mental health so that women feel independent over themselves. Whatever they choose will bring happiness to them. The choice is based on the fact that they like, not the choice of others, and their own. A woman who is happy with her marriage will produce a happy family and get quality and useful children for the nation and religion. In addition, it aims to maintain support and sanity of mind, to be a woman, to empower women, encourage each other, and become a woman who must be strong and empowered.

## Conclusion

The patriarchal culture in the Banyuwangi Regency causes women to lack a safe space. It has been proven that in 2021, women experienced several cases, such as 38% of cases of sexual intercourse, 12 % obscenity, 23% psychological violence, 19% sexual violence, 4% physical violence, and 4% abandonment. Kawan Puan

Community activities can provide a safe space for women survivors through mental health development, namely, first, trust. Trust builds confidence for women to make the best decisions for themselves, so there is a behavior change. Second, they are given the freedom to vent about the problems they experience. Third, there is psychological assistance from psychologists in mapping the difficulties encountered and how we can take action. Fourth, there is a support system for women. No judgment, bullying, or disgrace is used for public consumption. This research is still as balanced as the activities of the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi community in building the mental health of women survivors so that they can create a safe space. The next research will be on other forms of safe spaces that the Kawan Puan Banyuwangi community can create.

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<sup>50</sup> IR. 'Wawancara Pribadi', 10 December 2022.



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