



## SOCIAL MEDIA PHENOMENA WITH NEGATIVE CONTENTS

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### Abstract

Social media is very trending used among teenagers to communicate. The information contained is not only in a positive form but is conveyed also in negative forms such as sexual harassment. The study's problem is to find out why teens are sexually harassed through social media. The purpose of this study was to find out the forms of sexual abuse committed by adolescents and how to overcome them. Research methods are qualitatively descriptive with critical paradigms. The informant of this study is a teenagers as perpetrators and victims of sexual abuse. Data were collected through Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The results of this study suggest that sexual harassment is highly likely to occur in public spaces, specifically through social media. Perpetrators are very easy to publish negative information with the aim of arousing martyrdom. Such information is like teasing the victim both in the comments field, sending negative images, and making video calls by showing physical forms that lead to pornographic elements. The occurrence of sexual harassment through social media certainly has an impact on high levels of fear and anxiety for victims. The recommendation in this study is that it is necessary to educate teenagers as the next generation of the nation to be smart in using social media with positive content.

**Keywords:** *Social media, sexual harassment, teens*



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## INTRODUCTION

The presence of the internet is evidence of the rapid development of information technology in Indonesia, this is a good effect caused by modernization. The Internet helps us in a variety of social activities, education, business, and much more. Advances in internet technology have also been followed by the rise of social media. Social media is a site where one can create a personal webpage and connect with others who are on the same social media (Rosyidah & Nurdin, 2018). The purpose of having social media is varied can be to share information or just communicate and add friendships. The widespread use of social media then established a new social interaction called social networking, which is a social structure formed by individuals or groups connected by one or more interdependence factors, such as friendship, brotherhood, common interests, trade, dislike, dating, the similarity of beliefs, knowledge, and prestige (Rosyidah & Nurdin, 2018).

As young people, we have coexisted with social media. Social media itself has become a new socializing platform because it can bring interactions closer to long distances. Interactions in social media have the same patterns as real life, such as norms and rules that apply and are recognized. There is no significant difference between socializing in cyberspace and socializing in the real world. When socializing through social media, we are limited only by space and cannot touch physically, but any form of conversation will feel real. Reporting to the official website of Ministry of Communication and Informatics, based on research conducted with UNICEF in 2014 at least 30 million children and adolescents in Indonesia are internet

users (Kominfo, 2014). Later there is data collected by the Association of Internet Service Providers, internet users in Indonesia are in quartz II in 2020 and reached 73.7% or equivalent to 196.7 million users (APJII, 2020). Through this data, we can see the rise of internet users in Indonesia. Moreover, these social media users are dominated by young women and even teenagers. Adolescence is a period of transition from childhood to adult life period characterized by biological and psychological growth and development. At that time, teenagers will learn and accept what is given and curiosity will be greater so that it gives rise to the desire to use social media as a new means of communicating in addition to real face-to-face communication.

Just as technological advances, in general, have a negative impact, social media also has a negative side. Its appearance at the beginning was seen as good to help human activities were abused. There are individuals who take advantage of advances in internet technology for negative content. According to Great Indonesian Dictionary, the definition of content is information available through media or electronic products. So, it can be concluded that negative content is information that smells negative and detrimental that is disseminated through the media. Reporting from the official website of Ministry of Communication and Informatics, which includes negative content is pornographic images/videos, gambling, fraud, harassment, defamation, and fake news (Ferissa, 2017). The rise of negative content and pornographic impressions has dragged the younger generation and even children to have casual sex. The flow of information invades young people and is packaged in such a way that sex activities are considered commonplace and fun (Shofiyah, 2020). Therefore, negative content can be the root of sexual harassment crimes because perpetrators get stimulation from pornographic content.

People who want to carry out indecent acts usually enter through social media networks and send private messages to carry out their actions. As a young person, skating on social media for hours was commonplace. Because one of the effects of social media is addiction. This causes young people to be vulnerable and feared to be exposed to negative content related to sexual harassment, even being victims of sexual harassment that is rife on social media. Farley (1978) describes sexual abuse as a sexual seduction that is not desired by the recipient, the seduction appears in various forms both subtle, rude, open, physical, and verbal, and in the same direction because it is only from perpetrator to the victim (Farley, 1978). Zastrow and Ashman, Kremer and Marks, in Kurnianingsih (2003) explain that verbal sexual abuse occurs more than physically.

Unexpected sexual solicitation, messages wrapped in continuous sexual jokes, instead of being a joke it instead includes harassment. In addition, calls for dates that continue to be sent when they have been rejected many times, insulting or demeaning messages, suggestive or obscene comments, sexist expressions about women's sexual clothing, bodies, or activities, requests for sexual services expressed with indirect or open threats, all of which are included in verbal sexual harassment. Sexual harassment can happen to anyone regardless of gender and anywhere.

Sexual harassment in the scope of social media is part of negative content. Sexual harassment is not only physical touch, sexual violence, rape, but it contains verbal speech and approaches sent through the comments field or personal messages peppered with sexuality and also online gender-based sexual violence. Some of the things that have been mentioned are

categorized as cyber sexual harassment, namely acts of sexual harassment-related to the internet and located in cyberspace (Hayati, 2021). The form of action is if someone repeatedly texted or called in a harassing manner. If someone electronically sends you or shows you sexual content without your permission, such as via email, Snapchat, or Facebook, or on your phone or computer. Finally, if someone takes and/or shares your sexual images or videos without your permission.

According to research conducted by digital security firm Norton, 76% of 1,000 female respondents under the age of 30 have experienced sexual harassment online (Aprilia in Rosyidah & Nurdin, 2018). Furthermore, based on annual records from the National Commission on Women, attached from Service Provider Agency data shows that Cyber Gender-Based Violence jumped from 126 cases in 2019 to 510 cases in 2020. The forms of violence that dominate Cyber Gender-Based Violence are psychic violence 49% (491 cases) followed by sexual violence 48% (479 cases) and economic violence 2% (22 cases).

This has proven the rise of sexual harassment in the public space of the internet. Usually, individuals do their actions in the form of solicitation of sex or comment on someone's posts on social media by slipping words that harass one's sexuality. As young people, if we feel uncomfortable, intimidated, or feel humiliated because of sexual messages or comments then the act has included the realm of sexual harassment and can be reported (Hakim et al., 2019).

Especially if the action interferes with activities and even causes trauma in a person's life. For example, the incident experienced by a gold-winning badminton athlete at the Asian Games, namely Jonathan Christie. One of the posts on his Instagram account has been filled with comments by women who refer to things that smell of sexuality. The comments read "my uterus is shaking", "what is it that stands out behind Jojo's pants", and much more. The act of comments made by Instagram users in the comments column of athlete Jonatan Christie has been included in the class of sexual harassment because it is demeaning and leads to the sexuality of a person's body parts (Maghfiroh & Muqoddam, 2018). Because sexual harassment in the public space of the internet has too often taken its toll. Therefore, through this writing, the author tries to examine the forms of sexual harassment in online media and how to overcome them.

## **METHOD**

This research method uses descriptive qualitative methods with critical paradigms. Ontologically, critical paradigms view the observed reality as pseudo-reality, which is shaped by historical processes. In other words, this topic discusses how sexual harassment through social media is seen as a real reality in society due to some similar cases that have occurred. Epistemologically, researchers view the separation of subjective values they have with objective facts. In a sense, researchers try to view sexual harassment that occurs through social media objectively, regardless of how the background of the perpetrator, and still see that this sexual harassment is the wrong thing to do. Axiologically, this paradigm is not value-free between researchers and the reality studied. In other words, researchers are trying to position themselves as third parties by criticizing how sexual harassment through social media occurs in society. Methodologically, critical paradigms use comprehensive, contextual, and multilevel analysis (Denzin, 2009).

Data were obtained from interviews in focus group discussion as many as 10 people consisting of 4 men and 6 women with positions as perpetrators and victims of sexual abuse. Informants are aged 18 to 22 and live in Jakarta and surrounding areas. Data obtained from focus group discussion is then analyzed using miles and Huberman interaction model (1992) which starts from data collection, data presentation, and conclusion withdrawal. The theory used is the theory of Social Media Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) which is a theory that seeks to explain how communication is done between parties related to mediated by technology (Littlejohn & Foss, 2016). This theory developed rapidly, especially in era 4.0, considering everything that humans do use technology. Pratiwi (2014) explained that a form of communication that belongs to CMC is when two or more participants who communicate with each other use computers (technology) as a medium or means to facilitate both.

As support for CMC patterns, the internet strongly supports the existence of this CMC pattern in people's lives. This is because everything that individuals do use this CMC pattern will use the internet. This is supported by Arnus's statement (2015) in his journal that the CMC pattern allows one to communicate using computer-based equipment (Arnus, 2015). For this reason, the internet is divided back various kinds of services that can be used by the community, such as social media. Social media is a real form of the application of CMC. This is indicated by the existence of communication carried out by individuals in social media, where this communication does not take place face-to-face but requires the media to mediate it. In this case, the implementation of CMC is strongly supported by this social media presence.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The results showed that 100% of the informants studied were active users of social media, most of whom used Tiktok, Instagram, Twitter and Whatsapp. Not only that, one of the informants also use Line, Telegram, YouTube and even Facebook as an active social media that they currently use. As one of the informants put it:

*“Usually, I use is Instagram, it can be from morning to morning again. Continued on Whatsapp is also quite often, Telegram, Line, same YouTube. YouTube can also be longer than Instagram. It also helps us not to travel outside the home in the pandemic period.”*

This shows that there are various kinds of social media that can be used by the community, coupled with the condition of the Covid-19 pandemic that requires people to keep doing activities online. This of course increases the use of social media as a way individuals get a variety of information such as related to sexual harassment information that occurs on various social media.

Based on the results of the interview mentioned that 3 out of 10 informants have seen or experienced sexual harassment from social media. Both mentioned that they had received sexual comments and received photos and sex videos. One of the informants mentioned that the photos and videos he got came from Telegram, Whatsapp, and Snapchat. This shows that sexual harassment is not restricted by any media. This is marked by a statement from 2 informants who said that they get posts in the form of photos and videos smelling sexual through Whatsapp, where someone can only contact others through Whatsapp if they have stored the person's phone number. Because phone numbers are a matter of privacy and are often

not disseminated, it is less likely that sexual harassment occurs through Whatsapp. However, in fact, 2 out of 10 informants get this.

Based on an explanation in computer-mediated communication (CMC) theory, where communication itself is done by mediating by computer-based technology. Acts of sexual harassment carried out on social media, prove that communication that takes place is not only communication that has a positive meaning or purpose, but the use of CMC theory also supports the exchange of information that aims to harass someone sexually.

Furthermore, the discussion continued by questioning what the perpetrators get when they commit acts of sexual harassment. One of the informants mentioned that the perpetrators get their satisfaction when committing sexual harassment, specifically on social media. This is because there is a lot of possibilities that sexual abusers on social media often do not use their real identity in doing their deeds, making it more difficult to overcome. As one of the informants put it:

*"If we see it from the point of view of the perpetrator, then what is obtained is satisfaction. Because he sexually abused him had a purpose. When he's done and gets his goal, he'll get that satisfaction himself."*

This statement was later supported by other informants who mentioned that this act of sexual harassment was solely to fulfil the desire of the perpetrator, and was conveyed as follows:

*"The benefit that the perpetrator find is satisfaction, in addition to the purpose of personal desire is more conveyed through the comments he gives. So, what the perpetrator thinks, the passion or passion that is in his mind is more channeled through comments on social media."*

From these two statements, it can be concluded that the main reason the perpetrators of sexual abuse commit their actions is to fulfill the satisfaction of their passions. Regardless of what media the perpetrators use, it does not reduce the likelihood of this act of abuse occurring. The perpetrator tends to sexual addiction so that the brain no longer functions as it should. The weakened logic of thinking and tendency to follow sexual instincts makes the perpetrator without thinking long looking for the victim. The first reason perpetrators commit online harassment is because they consider it not a crime. After all, there is no specific law to handle cases like this, considering that the PKS bill has not yet been passed to make the perpetrator feel safe doing so.

Perpetrators also think if doing so with a false identity will be difficult to find even cannot find their true existence. Keep in mind the sophistication of technology also has a good impact so that even though the perpetrator performs his actions with a false identity can still be searched and found, one of them through IP address. The next reason the perpetrator considers his actions are just a joke or a joke, such as writing comments smelling of sexuality on the public figure's private page or some messages that are considered only a joke addressed to friends. This increasing event of online sexual harassment is also followed by the current Covid-19 pandemic that is happening to limit direct interaction and make everyone at home do activities online and seek entertainment also only through social media.

The impact that victims of sexual harassment may have, specifically on sexual harassment that occurs on social media. One of the informants mentioned that the impact obtained by the perpetrator is a psychological or mental impact, such as the following:

*“The impact is that it will disturb the psychological as mentally as the victim. For example, when sexual abuse has occurred, there will be excessive anxiety, fear, and guilt that increasingly give a sense of fear to the victim.”*

Most of the informants mentioned that they still harbor the trauma to this day, even though acts of sexual abuse were committed online. As one of the following informants points out:

*“If the impact is still remembered and tends to be more afraid to use social media applications again. But the impact did not interfere with daily activities, because when I had gotten such behavior (sexual harassment), the culprit immediately reported on my social media.”*

Furthermore, the discussion continues by questioning how to anticipate sexual harassment behavior that occurs when we place ourselves as victims. Most informants say that messages from unknown numbers are better blocked, the perpetrator's accounts are deported, even the case is reported to the authorities, especially if his behavior has been so troubling and even leads to terror against the victim. In addition, some informants argue that sexual harassment behavior can be overcome by exposing or virtualizing their cases on social media. Virtualizing cases on social media can certainly easily get the attention of the public so that the perpetrator can be arrested and deterrent to his actions but like a boomerang, virtualizing can also be a stumbling block for victims. Perpetrators can easily strike back at victims with the article of the Information and Electronic Transactions Act of defamation. Therefore, preventing the boomerang from happening, it would be nice for the victim to continue censoring the identity of the perpetrator until law enforcement officials jump directly and try to gather more concrete evidence so that the perpetrator cannot avoid his actions.

Based on the description above that although sexual abusers remain wrong, everyone also can be a victim of sexual abuse. Thus, all individuals must also be able to take care of themselves, regardless of all possibilities that can occur. Therefore, various ways that can be done to overcome sexual harassment behavior is to report all acts of harassment to the authorities. If indeed this act of sexual harassment is not responded to by the authorities, then it never hurts to virtualize cases like this to be overcome by the authorities. Thus, we as a society do not engage in, even normalize sexual harassment behavior occurs, specifically on unbound social media.

In addition, one way that can also be done is to put ourselves as a victim, then we sympathize with what is felt by the victim. This is important given the many negative stigmas that are likely to be gained by victims of this act of sexual abuse (Astuti et al., 2019). They tend to be held accountable for actions they didn't do. These victims tend not to be able to defend themselves and the conditions experienced, because of the lack of education about sex in the community. Thus, more and more stigma is likely to be gained by victims in this act of sexual abuse. This is called normalizing behavior, such as mentioning that sexual harassment occurs because of inviting clothing, all perpetrators are men, etc. By placing ourselves as victims, we

can break the chain of normalization of sexual abuse behavior, so that sexual abusers cannot move freely normally without caring about the victim who still has his trauma for the rest of his life.

## CONCLUSION

Sexual harassment is very likely to occur in public spaces, specifically through social media. Perpetrators are very easy to publish negative information with the aim of arousing martyrdom. Such information is like teasing the victim both in the comments field, sending negative images, and making video calls by showing physical forms that lead to pornographic elements. The occurrence of sexual harassment through social media certainly has an impact on high levels of fear and anxiety for victims. Moreover, the perpetrator to threaten the safety of the victim's life. The recommendation in this study is that it is necessary to educate teenagers as the next generation of the nation to be smart in using social media with positive content.

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