The Threat of Online Sexual Violence And Social Media Pitfalls in Adolescents

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Abstrak
Artikel ini menitik beratkan pada remaja yang aktif menggunakan media sosial dan kerawanan terhadap Kekerasan Berbasis Gender Online. Hal ini dilatarbelakangi oleh fenomena kekerasan berbasis gender online yang berdampak negatif terutama yang dilakukan melalaui media sosial. Riset dilakukan secara kualitatif dengan metode etnografi virtual untuk melihat fenomena sosial dan kultural penggunaan ruang siber. Riset ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui sejauh mana literasi remaja tentang kekerasan berbasis gender online terutama dalam aktifitas keseharian mereka yang tidak bisa dipisahkan dengan media sosial. Remaja yang menjadi informan menyatakan bahwa mereka takut kehilangan komunitas maya di media sosial dan tidak cukup banyak yang sudah terliterasi mengenai kekerasan berbasis gender online. Riset ini menegaskan bahwa masih diperlukan lebih lagi mengenai literasi keamanan digital yang langsung mengerucut pada Kekerasan Berbasis Gender Online dan juga dibutuhkan literasi di kantong-kantong pemuda dan remaja, disertai dengan pemahaman secara tepat sasaran, sehingga remaja dapat terhidar dari munculnya KGBO dan dampak negatif lainnya.

Kata kunci: Kekerasan Berbasis Gender Online, Media Sosial, Remaja

Abstract
This article focuses on adolescents who actively use social media and vulnerability to Online Gender-Based Violence. This is motivated by the phenomenon of online gender-based violence that has a negative impact, especially those carried out through social media.. The research was conducted qualitatively with a virtual ethnography method to see the social and cultural phenomena of using cyberspace. This research aims to find out the extent of adolescents' literacy about online gender-based violence, especially in their daily activities that cannot be separated from social media. Teenagers who became informants stated that they were afraid of losing their virtual communities on social media and not enough had been literate about online gender-based violence. This research confirms that there is still a need for more digital safety literacy that directly focuses on Online Gender-Based Violence and also needs literacy in areas of youth and adolescents, accompanied by targeted understanding, so that adolescents can avoid the emergence of OGBV and other negative impacts.

Keywords: *Gender-Based Violence, Social Media, Teens*

INTRODUCTION

Based on records conducted by Simon Kemp through datareportal.com in January 2022 the number of internet users in Indonesia reached 204.7 million, while in the following year, January 2023, internet users in Indonesia reached 212.9, with the internet penetration rate in Indonesia reaching 77.0 percent of the total population at the beginning of 2023. This suggests that internet users in Indonesia increased by 10 million (+5.2 percent) between 2022 and 2023. Meanwhile, a 2022 survey by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII 2022-2023) mentioned that

students and college students are the internet users with the highest penetration of up to 98.8% (APJII 2022-2023). Also contributing to this is the Covid-19 pandemic which only provides online learning options. Automatically, digital native's internet users in Indonesia are in the age group of teenagers or students. This age category has a character that is very active in using digital technology and has the ability to operate internet-based technology. According to Bencsik and Machova (2016), adolescents and youth born in the period 1995 - 2010 are the age group that uses digital technology the most. Not only to produce, consume and distribute information through various interesting features in their applications but also as an identity because they prefer to utilize digital platforms for all aspects of life (Dangmei, 2016). They are a group that can actually be educated more intensely to understand the digital world that has two sides of the sword, namely positive and negative. Teenagers between the ages of 18 and 20 are also among those who actively use social media and spend more time surfing.

Figure 1: Essential Digital Headlines
source : https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2023-indonesia

The not-yet-fully-developed level of psychological maturity of adolescents, coupled with their active use of social media, sometimes has an impact on their subsequent development.

Social media becomes a space for them to post and share personal activities, confessions, and photos with friends. In their development, teenagers try to find their identity by hanging out with their peers. Nowadays, teenagers often assume that the more active they are on social media, the more they will improve their social status so that they are considered cooler and more famous. This is inversely proportional to teenagers who do not have social media are usually considered old-fashioned or outdated and less sociable and are in a low social status. Social media is one of the tools for teenagers today to represent themselves to the surrounding social environment. The use of social media by teenagers makes them more vulnerable to becoming perpetrators or victims of various online-based deviant behaviors. According to research conducted by digital security firm Norton, 76% of 1,000 female respondents under the age of under 30 years old have experienced sexual harassment online. Research on online violence has also been conducted by

Ramdhani, where it was found that one case of online violence can involve several types of online gender-based violence with a high percentage of revenge porn at 33%, mallcious distribution at 20%, and cyber harassment/bullying/spamming at 15%. Based on 31 media reports that also reinforce this data, 55% of online and print news are cases related to revenge porn. The second and third highest positions were occupied by mallcious distribution at 23% and cyber harassment/bullying/spamming at 19% (Ramdhani, 2018).

This is reinforced by data from the National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan), which recorded cases of violence against women reaching 457,895 cases in 2022. The number of complaints about violence has decreased slightly from the previous year where in 2021 the records of violence compiled by Komnas Perempuan were 459,094 cases. (Komnas Perempuan, 2023). The phenomenon of violence against women is seen from the aspect of the emergence of new media which is a space for perpetrators to commit these acts, interactions carried out in social networks that are very real and often have a lot to do with matters of privacy. This then becomes a new space that has the potential to become a trap net. The trap of "comfort" for all in sharing stories, even things that are private.

This condition opens up great opportunities for the rise of digital crimes with various patterns and types. High digital activity makes adolescents more vulnerable to becoming victims and or perpetrators of various online-based deviant behaviors. Komnas Perempuan identified Kekerasan Berbasis Gender Online or Online Gender-Based Violence since 2015 identifying that digital media paved the way for online forms of violence such as harassment, doxing, sending sexual content, and even threats of rape (SAFEnet, 2019). Such violence even has an impact on offline violence. The term GBV refers to the definition of gender-based violence. Online Gender-Based Violence refers to the medium used or technology-facilitated gender-based violence. Digital GBV crimes are a concern in Indonesia because the number of cases has increased significantly. Southeast Asia Freedom of Expression Network (SAFEnet) in 2021 received 677 cases of GBV in the form of Non-Consensual Intimate Images (NCII) (508 cases/75%) and complaints other than NCII 169 cases (25%). Sexual violence using technology has been a prominent case over the past 4 years. Acts of sexual violence and sexual assault involve technology as a facilitator. (Powell, 2015). There are similarities in acts of gender-based violence committed in real life in social environments and those that occur online or on social media. However, the fundamental difference is the media as well as the form of symbols used to commit sexual harassment. Therefore, this research aims to find out the extent of adolescents' literacy about online gender-based violence, especially in their daily activities that cannot be separated from social media. This research seeks to answer questions about concerns about the threat of online sexual violence and social media traps among adolescents aged 14 to 20 years. How is their personal experience and awareness of this threat so that it is expected to be more skillful as well as vigilant with online sexual violence through social media.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach was conducted with a virtual ethnographic study. Virtual ethnography study is an ethnographic method conducted to look at social phenomena and user culture in cyberspace or cyberspace. As a culture and cultural artifact, cyberspace or the cyber world for virtual ethnography researchers can approach several objects or phenomena on the internet (Nasrullah, 2016). The method used aims to reveal the extent of adolescents' understanding of the problem of online-based sexual harassment. The research was conducted on natural subjects, researchers as key instruments, data collection techniques were carried out by studying documentation, distributing online questionnaires to informants with the category of private high school students in Semarang, followed by interviews, and observation. The data generated in this study are descriptive, while data analysis is carried out inductively, and this research emphasizes meaning and does not generalize.

The researcher collects initial data by analyzing several documents related to the research problem which serves as a basis for researchers to understand the phenomenon of online gender-based violence that occurs today. The primary data sources used in this research are the results of unstructured interviews conducted with 40 teenagers aged 14-20 years in Semarang City. To see teenagers' understanding of online gender-based violence, researchers conducted unstructured interviews with teenagers in the age range of 14 to 20 years. The indicators in this study consisted of: 1) whether or not they have experienced or committed acts of online gender-based violence; 2) how many times they experienced/performed acts of online gender-based violence; 3) the response they made when facing online gender-based violence.

Several documents on statistics and graphs of social media usage related to the forms of deviations that occur in social media in general and related to the transformation of gender violence spaces among adolescents in particular were used as secondary data sources in this study. Data analysis in this study was carried out by abstracting some of the data that had been obtained and collected and grouped into several sections.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Spectrum of Gender-Based Violence Online

Initially, gender-based violence was only commonly carried out by the community conventionally, namely directly without being facilitated by technology. The presence of social media has changed the existing paradigm in society, this virtual space is currently being misused by certain individuals to be used as a medium for committing gender-based violence. Gender-based violence is not just about sex, the core of the issue is the abuse of power or authority, although the perpetrator may try to convince the victim and himself that his actions are actually sexual attraction and romantic desires. Gender-based violence against adolescents can also occur in social networks as public spaces in cyberspace. In fact, the easiest way today for perpetrators to meet and engage children or adolescents for the

purposes of sexual abuse, pornography or prostitution is through the internet. An era where children and teenagers spend so much time in front of screens that they struggle to interact with real, live humans (Alter, 2017). This is not linear with the expectations that the rapid advancement of technology should be a positive medium Seductive and disturbing invitations to chat are commonplace in the context of social media use. It is not much different from the whistling, words and touching that are usually done by people in the real world. The scope of gender-based violence is not only limited to rape and physical violence, but some of the actions taken and shows approaches related to unwanted sex. Cyber-based violence against women is the terminology for cases of gender-based violence in cyberspace issued by the National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan). Cyber crimes with female victims are often related to women's bodies being used as pornographic objects. The form of crime that is often reported is the dissemination of their personal photos or videos on social media or pornographic websites.

Based on the form and type, there are several types of activities categorized as online gender-based violence (OGB). First, violation of privacy by accessing, using, manipulating and disseminating personal data (photos or videos), as well as personal information and content without knowledge and without consent. Digging up and spreading someone's personal information (doxing) with the intention of providing access for malicious purposes in the form of harassment or intimidation in the real world is also a violation of privacy. Second, surveillance and monitoring by tracking online (cyber surveillance) or offline with the intention of stalking, using spyware, GPS or even other geo-location applications to track the movements of the target (tracking). Third, damage to reputation or credibility is also included in KGBO. This can be done in various ways, namely: (1) creating and sharing false personal data with the aim of damaging the reputation of users and others, (2) manipulating or creating fake content, (4) identity theft and impersonation, (3) making comments and posts that are offensive, disparaging, or other false things to damage someone's reputation. Fourth, online harassment is accompanied by or triggers offline harassment. Cyber harassment can be done through sexting, unwanted attention or contact (spamming). Other categories include direct sexual or physical threats, abusive comments, hate speech related to gender or sexuality, and mallcious distribution of photos or videos. Fifth, threats and direct violence can be carried out by trafficking women through the use of technology, sexual blackmail which is often known as revenge porn as an act of revenge from an ex-boyfriend or partner. Revenge porn gives the impression that the perpetrator is taking revenge on the victim with a view that blames the victim (victim blaming) as if the victim has made a mistake that deserves to be rewarded with threats and distribution of intimate content by the perpetrator. Sixth, targeted attacks against specific communities. Cyber hacking of websites, social media accounts or emails of organizations and communities with negative purposes can also be categorized into GBV activities, which can have an impact on intimidation and harassment of a group of people rather than individuals. Based on this description, it can be seen that the activities included in online gender-based violence are not limited to harassment alone. Some activities that reflect cultural patterns of violence with elements of gender and sexuality are

included. Most of the violence that occurs in cyberspace is committed by the closest person.

Based on complaints received by Komnas Perempuan in 2022, violence in the personal sphere and against partners was rampant. (Komnas Perempuan Annual Report 2023). Personal violence reached 2,098 cases or complaints in 2022. Of these, violence by ex-boyfriends was the most common, with 713 cases. The other biggest case in the personal sphere was violence against wives with 622 cases. Furthermore, violence in dating, as many as 422 cases. Meanwhile, violence against girls amounted to 140 cases. Then other domestic violence, such as violence against sons-in-law, cousins, brothers/sisters-in-law or other relatives, amounted to 111 cases. Finally, violence by ex-husbands was recorded in 90 cases. In addition to the personal sphere, Komnas Perempuan also recorded complaints of violence in the public sphere of 1,276 cases and the state sphere of 68 cases throughout 2022. As internet use increases and access to social media opens up, cases of gender-based violence online are increasing. Women and children are most often the victims. Reports of online gender-based violence (GBV) cases occupy the highest position in complaints to Komnas Perempuan in the public domain, namely 69 percent of the total cases.
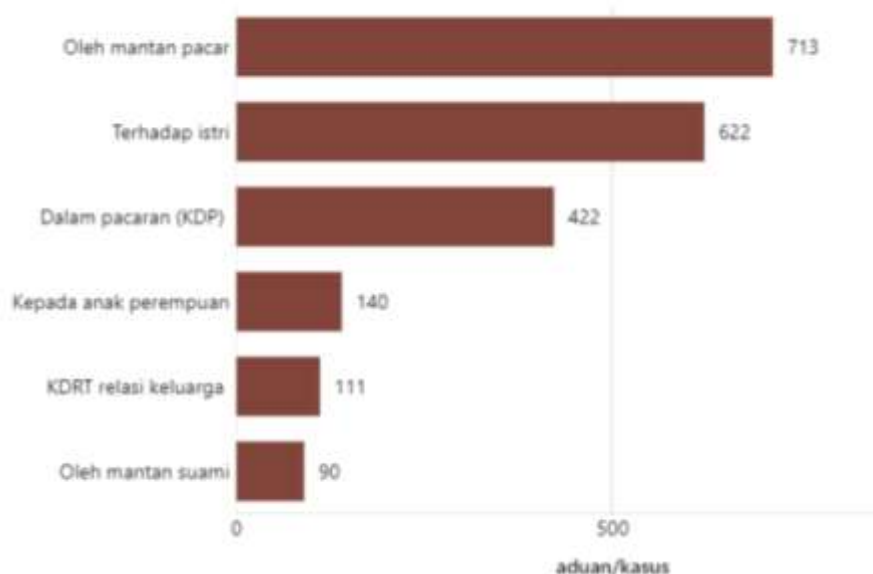

Figure 2. perpetrators of sexual violence based
Source: Komnas Perempuan visualized by databoks katadata.co.id

There are several impacts that can be felt by victims or survivors of GBV such as psychological loss, social isolation, economic loss, limited mobility, and self-censorship. It is important to distinguish online gender-based violence (GBV) in society so that the solutions provided are more appropriate and effective. Not only law enforcement, but interventions are needed that are able to change the perpetrator's perspective regarding gender and sexual relations with victims. This needs to be done so that the perpetrator no longer uses his gender and sexually biased perspective.

Online Gender-Based Violence in the World of Social Media Among Teenagers

In social media, emoji is a symbol used to express feelings, emotions, and activities that the communicator wants to convey (Ashley, 2018). Symbols and words in writing become "something" meaningful in interactions between teenagers on social media. According to Herbert Blumer in symbolic interaction theory, humans act towards something based on the meanings that something has for them (Poloma, 2013). These meanings come from a person's social interactions with others and are refined during the social interaction process. Such a process occurs because humans are conscious and reflexive actors. Humans bring together known objects through the process of self-indication when individuals know something, judge it, give it meaning and decide to act on that meaning at the time of communication. It is not only external objects that are interpreted by humans in the process of interaction, but themselves become objects as well. The differences in meaning related to the exchange of symbols (emoticons, pictures, and photos) and language also have a certain impact on relationships between individuals in social media, so that it can lead to different understandings between parties involved in communication on social media.

The low understanding of adolescents regarding online gender-based violence is one of the reasons they are vulnerable to becoming victims. Meanwhile, the high use of social media is not matched by sufficient knowledge. This can be seen based on the data collected by researchers, which shows that only 11 people (27.5%) said they had experienced online gender-based violence, 6 people (15%) said maybe, and 23 people (57.5%) said never. However, this changed significantly when researchers specifically explained about the forms of online gender-based violence.
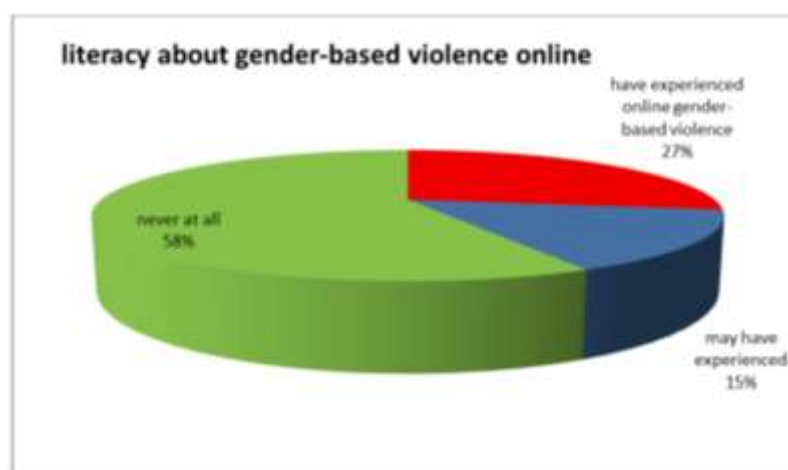

Figure 3. Teenager's Literacy about OBGV
Source : research data processing

Based on this data, an anomaly emerged, stating that although they stated that they did not know at all about the types of online gender-based violence, they also stated that they had experienced one or even several forms of online gender-based violence such as harassment, hacking and invasion of privacy. This was expressed by an informant who said that her account had been hacked because she refused to send nude photos. "Yes, at first I was asked to submit a photo wearing only a

tanktop, I refused, then I was asked to submit a nude photo. I got angry and left my Instagram DM chat, not long after, my account was hacked, lost and changed to an obscure account." Others stated that the online sexual crimes they received were considered just a passing thing, even though they were very disturbing to their comfort. "Once, I was sent a dirty picture on Line, I replied with a funny emoticon and ignored it, but I didn't block it.". Online harassment is a form of online gender-based violence that is currently rampant but its existence is not directly realized by the community, especially among adolescents. In the case of online harassment, the cause of not realizing this is because the perpetrators are the closest people (intimate partner violence) such as lovers and ex-lovers. The perpetrators are the closest people (intimate partner violence) such as lovers and ex-lovers among teenagers.

Some online violence such as sexting has even become more acceptable and a new trend to be able to appear more slick and contemporary than other friends because it is considered a form of communication. These teens express their sexuality towards their partners as a form of affection and deep love and to appear more romantically appealing to their partners. Social media then takes on a role as a means to satisfy their desires, both positive and negative, which they cannot do in the real world. If depicted in a diagram, between being literate in digital violence and being a victim of digital violence would be like this.
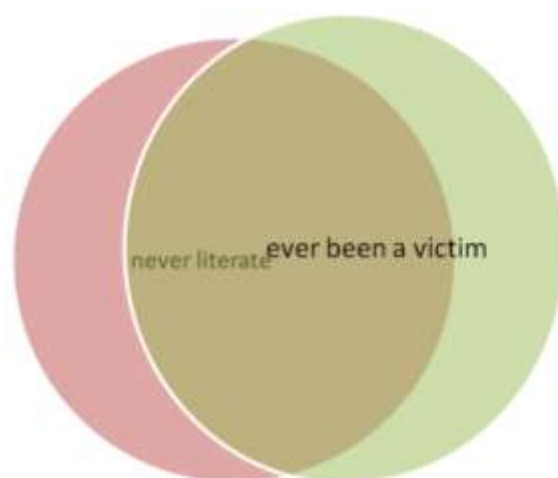

Figure 4. The Wedge between Literacy and Victimization
Source : Research Data Processing

There is a new construction in the development of social media use among adolescents who use social media and the internet where they have opened a gap in themselves to become victims of bullying, sexual harassment and other deviant behaviors (Nurwati, 2019). High curiosity in adolescents is also a factor that causes adolescents to want to try to do what is often done by adults including in terms of sexuality. Based on the results of research conducted on 40 teenagers in the city of Semarang who are currently studying high school with an age range of 14 to 20 years, it can be seen that the social media platform that is most vulnerable to becoming a KGBO space today is Instagram WhatsApp (19.5%). Line (28%), and Instagram (52.5%), are favorite social media because users can share their personal

lives through visuals. The uncontrolled use of Instagram by some teenagers is one of the causes. They often upload photos and videos with indecent and immodest clothing categories just to get praise and likes from followers.
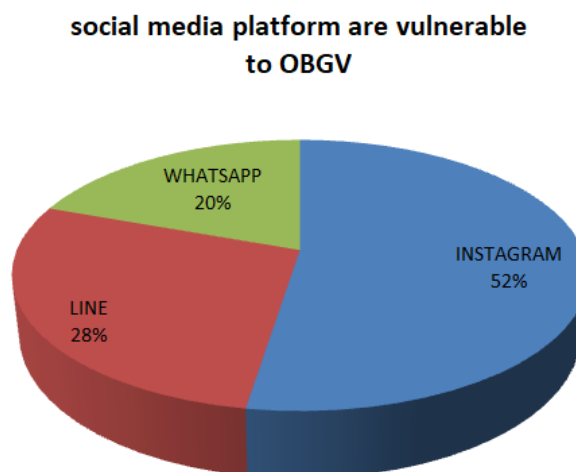

Figure 5. Social Media Platforms are Vulnerable to OBGV
Source : Research Data Processing

Teenagers and social media are inseparable nowadays. The active use of social media by teenagers has changed the style and characteristics of communication. Many teenagers post various things from daily activities to privacy issues. The communication formed by these teenagers is a manifestation of the awareness of how their lives will be assessed by others in social media. This shows that their existence has not been recognized if they are not on social media. Statements about fear of losing peers, anxiety of being rejected and having to be silent when finding uncomfortable things dominated the answers of informants. As expressed by this third grade informant from a private high school in Semarang.

Social media, which originally functioned to connect various people around the world, then developed into a commodity that was not only about building networks and relationships, but developed towards certain interests. Teenagers are trapped in their desire to exist on social media without further considering the risk of weakening their privacy when entering the cyberspace.

CONCLUSION

Online gender-based violence is one of the problems that has not received much attention in society in general, especially among adolescents who are digital natives. Based on research that has been conducted, the low understanding of adolescents regarding the forms of online gender-based violence is one of the factors why it is still rampant, especially in the form of cyber harassment which has a fairly high rate. Many of these actions occur without realizing it because they are carried out by people who are in the inner circle or the closest people. The development of social media, which is currently increasingly diverse and supports various aspects of life, is not matched by a qualified understanding in dealing with the various problems that arise along with its use. Social media that has been closely attached to

teenagers is like two different sides of a coin. In fact, social media facilitates the communication network formed in society, but on the other hand social media is also like a trap that at any time can ensnare its users into the negative side, especially for teenagers who use social media as a tool to show their existence. It is necessary to socialize and raise awareness regarding various forms of online gender-based violence as an effort to minimize the emergence of these cases so that there is comfort in using social media. This must also be accompanied by regulations and punishments that can create a deterrent effect so that there are no more irresponsible individuals who commit various forms of online gender-based violence.

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