Cyberbullying and Woman Oppression

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ABSTRACT

Based on Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia (APJII) data, the number of cyberbullying in 2019 is 49%. Cyberbullying is a growing problem associated with act of giving comment intending to ridicule, do body shaming, and harassment against someone through digital communication, such as social media. Based on the phenomenon, it is important to analyze and to describe cyberbullying practices towards woman on the Instagram social media in Indonesia. The data were based on the results of identification of comments on the Kekeyi @rahmawatikekeyiputricantika23 Instagram account. Rahmawati Kekeyi is famous for face makeup tutorial videos in 2018. Kekeyi often gets cyberbullying because her facial and physical appearance is considered not an ideal body. Relating to cyberbullying, this study also identifies cultural factors that contribute to cyberbullying of woman. The method used in this study was critical discourse analysis in order to describe forms of cyberbullying that discredit woman. The results of this study indicated that the act of cyberbullying cannot be separated from the strong perspective of the dominant discourse about the ideal body. Idealization such as a slim, white, and tall body, also sharp nose towards woman has been oppressing a woman's body. In particular, negative stereotypes given through comments as an attempt to express the body of woman who is considered not ideal. After analyzed, it can be concluded that cyberbullying is addressed to woman who physically does not has the ideal body like the dominant construction formed by beauty standard in society. The using of social media has been open the door for bullying for woman

Keywords: Cyberbullying, Ideal Body, Instagram, Woman

1. INTRODUCTION

Cyberbullying is defined as the act of commenting on someone aiming to harass and embarrass via the internet. Internet media include social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, Youtube, and Instagram. The existence of social media has opened up opportunities for various actions, one of them is cyberbullying. The rise of CYB action is supported by anonymity practice on the internet. Based on the data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), the number of cyberbullying in Indonesia reached 49% in 2019 [1]. Anonymity makes the impact of bullying more worrisome than traditional bullying. Anonymity is exacerbated by the large number of audiences that makes cyberbullying victims unable to avoid it [2].

Cyberbullying allows victims to experience acute depression, and even can cause psychological damage. Korean artist, Choi Ji Ri, stopped her activities in the world of entertainment after receiving negative comments related to her appearance, style, and private life in social media Instagram. Hate speeches constantly received by her trigger depression, and are considered acute. On 14 of October 2019 she was found dead in her apartment. Strong suspicion, cyberbullying is the background of her choice to have a suicide. Two days later, the Korean Entertainment Management Association (CEMA) delivered a statement that they would act seriously to the perpetrators of cyberbullying [3].

Meanwhile in Indonesia, UNICEF in 2016 explained that 41 to 50 percent of adolescents in Indonesia between the ages of 13 and 15 have experienced cyberbullying [4]. One of them was the bullying that befell Rahmawati Kekeyi. Starting in 2018, when he uploaded a make-up tutorial video, it got various responses from netizens. Kekeyi chose to use a balloon to apply foundation. However, he received many negative comments. Her social media account, @rahmawatikekeyiputricantika23 often targets the negative expression on her face and physical appearance of Kekeyi that they do not meet the beautiful standard of common woman, they are: white, slim, and tall.

The phenomenon of cyberbullying that is oppressive is one of the crucial problems in modern life. Nowadays,
many people know that online harassment and cyberbullying has serious impact [2]. Depend on the Crime Prevention Council, young people who experience cyberbullying often feel insecure and trigger to emotional pain (Parks, 2013). The bullying that often occurs is body shaming. Body shaming is part of the act of commenting on a person’s physical appearance which tends to be associated with negative contexts.

Synott explained that the cultural and belief systems built in the minds of the people place the body as an element of social symbols [5]. Media have the power, and become machines of commodification symbols and concocting standards of body proportionality. Media with hegemonic role constructs public perception of beauty [6][7][8]. Media is like an image factory, building and reproducing images dynamically. Media is able to increase sensitivity in humans and reinforce labels on certain social groups [9]. Deviations from the beauty standards created by the media, for an act of bullying, in turn legitimizing women’s repression from verbal to action. Conventional media in social dynamics does not only contain entertainment and information. Based on these descriptions, this study aims to critically analyze the forms of cyberbullying against women, and to reveal the dominant discourses in cyberbullying in the comments.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Cyberbullying in Social Media

Peggy J. Parks in Cyberbullying explained that cyberbullying is defined as an act of harassment that is expressed through internet media or other digital communication [2], such as email, instant messaging, media comments in social media like Facebook, blogs, YouTube and other sites. Comments that tend to harass are aimed at victims of cyberbullying [10]. Cyberbullying is a new form of bullying behavior. Cyberbullying has a different form from face-to-face bullying, if previously bullying was only limited to a certain area and time, now bullying can extend beyond the territory due to the presence of internet media and digital technology [2].

The presence of digital media such as Instagram opens opportunities for its users to carry out various activities. Instagram social media was released in 2010. Since its emergence, social media Instagram becomes popular social media. As a popular digital media for sharing photos and videos, on the other hand, it also opens up opportunities for new bullying, namely cyberbullying. Reported on idntimes.com, a survey from Dicth The Label explained that cyberbullying occurs a lot on Instagram social media [11]. There are various effects of cyberbullying. The decrease of someone’s confidence, insecurity, spirit lost even suicide [2]. Some forms of cyberbullying include body shaming, hate speech, sexism, and racism. These actions are the consequence of the changing standards that affect a stereotype. Stereotypes are concrete examples where the goals are to over-represent someone, tend to be negative, and homogenize a person through power operations [12].

Cyberbullying in the form of body shaming is often shown against women whose bodies are considered not meeting the criteria for standardizing an ideal body. The beauty standard of women as slim, tall, white, sharp, tapered and straight hair has been discredited women whose bodies did not meet the those criteria. Helen Malson explained that the fat body was hated. Instead, slim body considered as perfection and beauty. And the fat is considered ugly [13][14]. Women whose bodies do not have an ideal body will be labeled with terms that tend to be negative, ugly, unattractive, lazy, and so on. The term was later developed into a stereotype.

2.2. Ideal Body Discourse

In general, the body is understood as a physical organism like a lump of flesh and bones (Barker, 2008). At the next level, in the socio-cultural life of the body is not just a bunch of meat and bone together, but as arena of fight for various discourses. The body has been arranged, conditioned by the operation by a specific and made an object [12]. The female body becomes one part that is used as the locus of battle for various discourses in social life. Discourse is an idea that is deliberately produced in order to interpret, form, and produce an object of knowledge aiming to control a socio and cultural condition [12]. In the context of women's bodies, the discourse deliberately manufactured with the aim of controlling is full of women's bodies in to social life. The discourse on beauty refers to the cultural discourse that constructs and controls the body of women.

The antique discourse, standardizing beautiful women is slender, white, slim, sharp nose, thin, and plump. The ideal body is slim, no excess fat, flat stomach, toned breasts, curvy waist and the buttocks [14]. One of the producers of this ideal body discourse is mass media. Slim body then becomes a promotional tool for market segmentation [15]. The female body is used as a vehicle for promoting the perpetuation of the discourse on beauty. The beauty industry uses the media as a means of promoting slim bodies as ideal bodies. Images of women were promoted through women's magazines, health, sports, fashion, television and the film is young and has a slim body [15]. In the end, the conventional mass media helped to design the production of women's body standards that were considered ideal and beautiful.

Idealization about the body continues to dominate the person until it becomes a myth that must be fulfilled. The spirit of beauty places a woman's body in submission. The domination of discourses on beauty has never allowed women to become subjects of themselves or in social life. Control of the dominant discourse sometimes makes women do some activities busily to the fulfillment of the myths of beauty. Discourse of beauty is used as a feminization tool that makes the body imprisoned in
dissatisfaction with body image itself, can not satisfy the taste of men, even women may hate themselves [16].

2.3. Stereotypes of Fat Body

The discourse on the ideal body that has been dominant often has a practical impact on everyday social life, especially for women who oppose this discourse. Under certain circumstances, various negative stereotypes often associated by female overweight. For example, women with fat bodies are often associated with ugly, lazy, and lazy to move. Stereotype works through the eyes and ratings see a person or group based on the appearance and social background. Stereotypes usually involve negative attributes that are shown to people who are different from "us", a process driven by the operation of power [12].

In general, stereotypes dwarf people who are considered to have violated conventional normal levels (Barker, 2008). Simultaneously, stereotypes define who we are and who they are [12]. Stereotypes place the body to comply with levels that are considered normal. The forms of stereotypes is one of the effects of their dominance of the discourse ideal body. The formation of stereotypes projects the mindset of society towards the assessment of women's bodies.

Conventional media and the beauty industry have contributed to fostering these representations, as well as increasing oppression. The established standards eventually form stereotypes of women “outside” discourse, such as fat women. Discrediting in the form of negative stereotypes makes the woman's body conditioned and controlled continuously. Fat women are often labeled with negative connotations, ugly, lazy, unhealthy, greedy, stupid, and powerless [17]. These various stereotypes make women's bodies never be separated from judgment.

3. METHODS

It is a qualitative research. It uses an approach that aims to explore and interpret the meaning of data [18]. The process of interpretation in qualitative research was conducted using text and images. The process of interpretation in this study used the critical discourse analysis method of Theo van Leeuwen. According to Leeuwen, in the realm of technology, various multimodality such as images, words, and comments become the capital in conveying things clearly and being complete [19]. Thus, discourse is contained and can be identified through text in the form of texts, sentences and so on.

The data in this study was collected using a method to document images by capturing screens in the form of writing or comments on the Instagram account @rahmawatikeyiputricantika23. The writing contained in the comments fits the research criteria. The research criteria are in accordance with the trends determined in this study. The corpus in this research is in the form of comments on the Instagram account @rahmawatikeyiputricantika23. Researchers determine the data to be analyzed based on two trends: First, comments in the form of negative stereotypes against women's bodies; and second, negative comments that discredit women's bodies.

All the collected data were analyzed using Theo van Leeuwen's critical discourse analysis method which is related to the analysis framework of cultural and biological categorization. Categorization on the analytical framework assumes, first, the categorization is based on the cultural social actors represented cannot be separated from the standardization of certain attributes. These attributes work through good connotations and negative connotations for a particular group. Next, on the framework of biological analysis, this categorization is used to analyze how the comments that produced fiction based on her physical condition showed to an individual or group. The practice on association with negative stereotypes mean that one association is based on the physical characteristics of an individual. The associations that are produced are closely related to stereotypes of certain socio-cultural groups.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Cyberbullying against Woman

One of the popular social media today is Instagram. The advantage of Instagram lies on the multimedia content of photos and videos as well as features that aim to provide feedback with fellow users [20][21][22]. Users are free to share photos and videos instantly and are accessed by other users. Users have various reasons for using Instagram social media. Some the annullled use Instagram to reduce [23]. There are also those who use Instagram because of their interest in other users [24]. Others are motivated to document personal life [21].

The popularity of Instagram lies on the way users present their self-image. Instagram is in line with the disclosure of human images and lifestyles, it always requires space for the production of meaningful expressions, because basically humans need space to produce the meaning of their lives [20][25]. The phenomenon of the presence of Instagram as a means of presenting self-image has many negative consequences. The bad impact occurs because social cognition does not understand the educational aspects of the media. The low awareness of social media behavior is actually indicated as an exploitative effort [26]. Instagram can be one medium that facilitates the production and consumption of image and lifestyle in the virtual space. Like social media in general, Instagram with multimedia sharing and commenting feature. However, this feature actually inserts various negative comments on the image of other users. The use of Instagram social media has an impact on discrimination, bad stigma, cyberbullying, and even ends in physical violence.
As experienced by Rahmawati Kekeyi Instagram account. Since her make-up tutorial video went viral in 2018, Kekeyi has often been hit. Kekeyi is considered not to have a standard of ideal body for women who are slim and tall. Bullied as ugly and not worthy often received by her through the comments on Instagrammya account. Most of these negative comments targeted female victims. With positioning, the media mix gender ideology continuously into the realm of people's lives, the general understanding of women who must follow beauty standards, transforms into the realm of social media interactions [27].

Cyberbullying is in the form of negative comments aimed at Kekeyi such as “realizing that you are not beautiful”, “don't be pretty, don't act cute”, “those who say Kekeyi is beautiful, her eyes are myopic”, “it's ugly, it's easy to add an ugly face, added bully yes if you want to say “, shows that the someone's physical appearance be decisive whether he considered beautiful or not. The label with the words “not pretty and don't act cute” shows that Kekeyi is considered unfit to appear in the public area.

**Figure 1** Cyberbullying on the @rahmawatikeyiputricantika23 account

Figure 1 contains some negative comments directed at Kekeyi. Comments such as "Do not act pretty, ugly, not pretentious cuties", are expression with negative connotations, attached to the women who does not meet the standards of beauty. This expression is part of the cultural categorization. Cultural categorization is the attributes that have been standardized and aims to categorize a person [19]. In social life, discourse on the ideal body has bridged the exclusion of the female body through cultural categorization. Attributes such as negative or positive connotations, and associations are attached to certain individuals or socio-cultural groups [19]. Words such as “pretentious, ugly, and pretentious” represent negative stereotypes attached to women with less than ideal bodies. The word "ugly" describes an unsightly body. Appearance serve as the primary factor in determining the quality of a person. In this context, cyberbullying modes of verbal is used to produce meaning that the body Kekeyi women are not ideal, it is not pleasing to the eye, are not eligible to appear in the public domain through social media Instagram.

In social practice, women are commented on, addressed, and directed. The existence of women in free representational spaces such as Instagram social media, in fact does not prevent women from “judging” dominant discourses. Women as objects whose existence continues to be controlled. Such a situation is caused by a perspective based on male gaze. The codification of male gaze is a sub-visual pleasure that illustrates the female body as an icon, displayed and enjoyed through a male perspective, and men also participate in controlling what must be displayed [28]. The power of patriarchy thus puts women as objects of men. In this context, a woman's body is slender, white, tall, which is worth looking at. Women are able to suffer to appear in accordance with the concept of beauty myths built by the media [16]. In line with this opinion, objectivity to the female body is closely related to the construction of labeling. In printed media, the labeling framework is based on four codes, including the body with the face, appearance, mentality, and domestic role of women [29].

Within its abstract and maze-filled form, Instagram social media has become a wetland for perpetrators of violence. A common pattern that is often used are attacks of negative comments and hate speech that taper off women. Cyberspace thus narrows the interaction space for women. On the other hand, women dominate the use of social media, especially media users who snatch all levels of social class which have an impact on the spread of cyberbullying cases [30]. In 2017, a story said that cyberbullying has shifted from one social media to another. Cyberbullying on Facebook is currently dim. Most of the bullying has switched to use Instagram [31]. Feno says cyberbullying cannot be interpreted as an ordinary symptom. Cyberbullying perpetrators have different motives, from ordinary exclamations to hurt factors. The hiding of identity provides the opportunity for freedom to carry out cyberbullying actions. A study found that cyberbullying is more dangerous than bullying in real life [32]. The psychological impact on the victims affects their attitudes in the real world such as self-isolation and various other mental disorders which actually destroy their academic work. Various studies have revealed the impact of cyberbullying on mental health, but only a small number have dared to reveal it from a gender perspective. In the gender categorization, men tend to be more able to face bullying than women [33][34][35][36].

The media have cultivated the objectification of women and fostered normality of male hegemony as spectators. Power relations in the patriarchal world have always wrapped women as objects of gaze [37][38][5]. The media in such a way preserves the myth of beauty that cannot be separated from patriarchal connotations. The connotation of male power triggers a relationship that will never be balanced. As long as the image and myth of beauty are consistently within the frame of men, women will always be entangled as objects [39][40][41][42]. The media has great power to make the image of women a
commodity. The media in Indonesia has revitalized the messages of commodification of women. The shift from print media space to online media since 2010 has become a momentum for the continuation of this objective, symbolically visualizing women's bodies as commodities [43]. Different research has found that, after the New Order, the domestication of women appeared to be receding. The issue of the rise of women globally has also influenced some news media. The media moved and helped develop issues of women's resurrection [44].

The existence of social media does not necessarily provide opportunities for women to be free from patriarchal hegemony, which leads to bullying. Social media accounts with high active hours play a big role in building images of subordination to women, for example, the form of social media subordination with the representation of women in the household. Women only deal with appearance, cosmetics and kitchen furniture [45]. Constructed ideological determination builds the stigma that women must concentrate on the domestic sector. This proves that patriarchal hegemony is prevalent in any space, including Instagram social media. Beauty myths in situations of social interaction side by side to form various images of the female figure. Bullying is the only way to counter contradictory fantasies. The determination of women with beauty myths and slender bodies in social spaces can be visualized by the media in an aesthetic way. Simply put, the idea of female beauty fantasies finds its place in social media [46].

The freedom to express opinions contained in democracy results in flexibility in the occurrence of negative practices, the occurrence of cyberbullying which targets certain social media such as Instagram accounts [47][48]. Freedom of opinion with anonymity actually makes cyberbullying actors not feel guilty [49]. Social media like Instagram with its comment column is a hotbed of negative comments from the perpetrators, so that bad implications cannot be dispelled easily. Meanwhile, all texts apart from being a means of expressing reality are also a vehicle for the production of meaning [50].

**4.2 Discipline of the Female Body**

The female body in the human entity is not only interpreted as a physical existence. The body, which was previously the subject representing experience, knowledge and consciousness, turns into an object. General knowledge exploits the meaning of the female body, the ideals of the body are part of consumption. Conventional media adapt these ideals and position themselves as a means of co-opting beauty myths with a barometer of certain figures, certain characteristics, and the use of certain cosmetics. Women as the owner of the body, in practice, hold control of the interaction in social media. Women can freely express, interact and build social networks with other social media users. However, the genetically constructed patriarchal and socio-cultural macro power positions women as inferior. Even though women are the subjects, women's meetings with the macro system have no power over them. Power in Foucault's view no longer operates through state oppression, but through control and normalization [51][52][53].

The disciplinary to the body makes women are always in the power of the dominant control. These controls participated is experienced by Kekeyi in Instagramnya account @rahmawatikekeyiputranticika23. Controls which have operated in social interactions, often promoting symbolic violence [54]. As one comment from @ gegee.ce which stated, "try to diet and pay close attention to your appearance so you can glow up the spirit of your friends ". As was the case with comments by @dheahav. @dheahav commented, “...you try to treat, put braces, diet, so that people are more interested because of your changes …

The commentary in the form of the verb 1 mode produces a discourse that Kekeyi's body should be "fixed" with beauty treatments, diet and the like. In a series of certain treatment activities such as body care, stirrup, diet, and the like must be fulfilled by women in order to meet the standardization of beauty discourses related to Biological categorization.

**Biological categorization puts the physical condition of a person in a negative or positive connotation through the mode produced [19]. Some comments that appear tend to interpret Kekeyi's body as a "bad", negative body, so it must be "fixed". A comment in the form of " so you can glow up, give it a try" emphasized that Kekeyi's appearance was considered not to have standardized beautiful looks such as clean and white skin in general. The word "glow up" is often associated with clean, bright, and bright skin. In achieving all of this, the female body is forced and disciplined through a series of bodily treatments. The beauty industry is used as a bridge as the fullest manifestation of idealized beauty. Body condition which is not considered ideal to make the body to be forced "to fix" body with a dominant rules. Spaces not tolerate representation for the body that assumed not in accordance with the standards of discourse beauty. Power uses social and cultural coordination tools that cannot be challenged frontally, which forces women to adapt to a will outside of themselves [55]. The media in this case regulates two things, as a means of distributing messages, the media also reproduces beauty myths. The discourse on beauty makes women increasingly oppress and oppress their own bodies. Appearance is a control tool for women to see themselves and others to see them [14].

**4.3 No Safe Space for Women?**

The rapid development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) gave birth to a variety of features and an active exchange of information packaged in social media [56][57][58]. The advancement of ICT has sustained the speed aspect of social media in the information transmission process. One of the accelerations of information transmission occurs in social media. Social media has a different style from mass media. The process of delivering messages through social media is more concise because the control lies with the user.
Meanwhile, the mass media went through a series of verification and confirmation to the source of the message. In addition, mass media into centrum social self-actualization (self-disclosure) in the virtual realm. Media represents users to share anything and with anyone regardless of their economic, social or political background [59]. The self-expression of social media users can become a culture that breaks down the walls of private and public spaces at the same time because the elements in it provide an opportunity for anyone to become a user. With today's advances in technology, all types of social media are in one hand.

Social media users can share anything with the device they want. Ambition is one of the operators that manages the existence of social media users in a virtual space. The manifestation of desire is channelled through the “like,” “comment” and “share” features, enabling interaction and social glue between users. However, the use of social media has logical consequences for the emergence of various negative impacts. The freedom to express opinions contained in democracy results in flexibility in the occurrence of negative practices, the occurrence of cyberbullying which targets certain social media such as Instagram accounts [47],[48].

Most of these negative comments targeted female victims. Gender is not static and neutral, the media confirms the involution of gender as an ideology, resulting in the repression of women's domestic roles to migrate towards women which must be in line with the myth of beauty. It is not uncommon for women to do a series of treatments aimed at homogenizing their bodies with the mythical concept of beauty. Women are able to suffer to certain social targets which cannot make the existence to escape from negative connotations. Women have the opportunity to reconstruct forms of confrontation of cyberbullying against women, it shows that women have no safe space to escape from negative stereotypes. In fact, social media which has the characteristics of freedom cannot make women freely represent themselves through social media. However, women can try to minimize bullying in various ways. The contemporary women's movement sees social media as a potential political vehicle for self-actualization and identity representation in order to voice opinions freely [63],[65]. Gender inequality on social media like Instagram can be countered with criticism on Instagram itself. Women have the opportunity to reconstruct the growing patriarchal hegemony by expressing opinions, expressing themselves, and voicing their ideas. Women can use social media as a means of free and equal dialogue and gain broad support. The dialogue is aimed primarily at confronting forms of violence and re-interpreting the image and body of women. The forms of confrontation of women through social media include symbolic resistance such as humor and art [66].

5. CONCLUSION

The results show that the existence of contemporary social media opens the door to bullying of women. Social media became a new place for acts of harassment virtual or cyberbullying. Conventional face-to-face bullying has shifted and is inevitably happening in the digital world. Cyberbullying is often directed at women whose bodies are outside the dominant discourse of beauty. This phenomenon confirms that power relations in real life about the ideal body extend to social media. Discourse as an idea of the production of objects of knowledge and socio-cultural control has arrouse to patriarchal power relations identifying women's bodies as objects of male gaze. The patriarchal perspective influences a person to have the power to judge and comment on the female body. In its development, social media has become a means of manifesting the fish beauty myth. Through social media, negative stereotypes are expressed and perpetuated against women who are considered not ideal. As negative stereotypes such as being not beautiful, ugly, and so on are shown to Rahmawati Kekeyi on her Instagram account. The scathing comments on the @rahmawatikekeyiput ricantika23 account prove that women's bodies are always the object of gaze, and at the same time they don't have a safe space to escape from negative connotations. Women cannot freely present themselves as the subject of the body which has autonomy over themselves. In the context of patriarchal culture, basically, they control, and oppress women's bodies in sociocultural life. This phenomenon shows that social media, as a space for free representation,
has not fully been able to divide women from oppressive judgments.

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