Spill The Tea Phenomenon in Social Media as a Medium of Revictimization of Sexual Violence

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ABSTRACT

To intensify a gender-fair society and be free from sexual violence is the goal of every nation in the world, moreover, it's one of the agendas accommodating in sustainable development goals od SDGs as a global agreement. The States are obliged to ensure that no one is being left behind or suffers from gender discrimination and violence. But in the status quo, efforts to eliminate gender-based violence need more encouragement, given the increasing cases of sexual violence in this one nation. The urge to have a safe space for the victim is shown by the most recent phenomenon that provides a medium for victims of sexual violence to recount their experiences of sexual violence on their social media to deliver widespread awareness to the community and provide support from the people towards the victims. But it turns out that the phenomenon makes victims frequently meet certain insecurities and revictimization on a broader scale. This study aims to find and analyze how the process of victimization of sexual violence obtained by victims straight through spill the tea phenomenon. The method used in this study is a qualitative case study using in-depth interview techniques towards victims of sexual violence who have been victimized for spilling out of the tea on their social media. The results of this study showed that victims get revictimization by the perpetrators by providing threats and intimidation, it's also transcribed as unsatisfactory by the broader community of social media users who are scattered who tend to give victim-blaming responses towards victims. This happens because of people's lack of understanding of the form of sexual violence suitably.

Keywords: Gender-based violence, Revictimization, Spill the tea

1. INTRODUCTION

Building a gender-just society and free from sexual violence is the ideal of every nation. This has also become one of the agenda of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) as a global development agreement [1]. The state must be present and ensure that no one in the community is left behind and experiences discrimination and violence based on gender. One of the efforts of the state and society is to be able to become a safe space for victims of sexual violence. In addition, it needs to be harmonized with regulations that favour victims of sexual violence. Also, the state's efforts to socialize to the broader community about the importance of sexual violence issues that are around us [2]

However the plan for sustainable development that is gender-just and free of sexual violence still needs better efforts. Because considering the cases of sexual violence, especially in children and women in the last decade, has experienced a significant increase [2]. In addition, it was found that the data that contributed to the highest number of violence, both victims and perpetrators were in the age range of 19-40 years which was included in the productive age category [3]. This becomes a massive challenge for the state to guarantee the security and safety of the people in the present and the future because the younger generation should be able to prepare and build the nation well in the future. However, they are trapped in a circle of sexual violence. Moreover, considering the impact that will be felt by victims of sexual violence, namely psychological disorders, which are called post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), nightmares, suspicion of others for a long time, limiting oneself to the surrounding environment and affecting relationships with other people, even likely to feel a strong urge to commit suicide [4]–[6]. Previous research data have shown that victims of sexual violence have a tendency to become perpetrators in the

future. As in several cases regarding paedophilia which causes children who are victims of sexual violence to become perpetrators when they grow up [7]. In addition, most victims of sexual violence are likely to be re-victimized, and about two out of three individuals who are victims of sexual violence will later on be victimized in the future [8].

Hence, in overcoming these problems, nowadays, many social movements in society have started campaigning and socializing issues of sexual violence in various structures of society with a grassroots system and massive on social media [9]. This at least allows increasing public awareness about how important the issue of preventing sexual violence is. This is also marked by the start of many narratives and the delivery of experiences of victims of sexual violence on social media, which are expected to provide examples and experiences to the broader community to avoid forms of sexual violence that have been experienced by victims [10]. Moreover, the digital space has become a justice site as an informal space for victims to give witnesses to perpetrators of sexual violence. Online justice can contribute to social justice for victims that is not available in real terms. Therefore, this can allow victims to receive collective support and recognition [11].

This phenomenon is known as 'spill the tea' widely used on Twitter social media. However, instead of using social media as a medium to provide broad awareness to the community and provide support to victims of sexual violence with the experience gained, this makes the victim re-bullying or re-victimized of sexual violence by the wider community. Public awareness about the importance of preventing sexual violence is not accompanied by sound knowledge and understanding of the forms of sexual violence itself, thus causing many people to take sides with victims of violence still not.

Therefore, researchers are interested in digging deeper into the forms of sexual violence revictimization obtained by victims, especially in the 'spill the tea' phenomenon. This study aims to find and analyse how the process of re-victimization of sexual violence is obtained by the victim. Furthermore, it is hoped that this research can provide considerations regarding efforts to minimize the form of revictimization of sexual violence.

2. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with the type of case study research that aims to learn everything related to the form of 'spill the tea' victims of sexual violence on social media that gives rise to forms of revictimization of victims by digging up data through in-depth interview techniques [12]. The subject of this study focused on three victims of sexual

violence who had received a form of revictimization for 'spilling the tea' on social media. In addition to using primary data, this research uses secondary data through literature studies related to research problems.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Forms of Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is an act of humiliating, attacking, controlling and manipulating someone into unwanted sexual activity without consent and resulting in harm to the victim [13]. The forms of violence that victims get are very diverse, ranging from mild categories such as verbal abuse to forms of sexual violence that fall into severe categories such as rape. Categorization in sexual violence does not make normalization exist in society because sexual violence is still an act of crime against humanity [14].

> "I have been a victim of sexual violence several times, but the most traumatic was when I was 14 years old when I was harassed by my teacher at the infirmary by massaging my breasts and touching other body parts."-IP-1.

When the victim receives a form of sexual violence, the victim should receive protection. Ironically, the victim is asked to keep her mouth shut. The only way out is an apology from the perpetrator of sexual violence. This of course, often happens, especially in an educational institution under the pretext of "maintaining the good name of the school". Instead of providing a safe space for students, it makes school a scary area. Of course this excludes the trauma experienced by the victim. When the perpetrator should be given a sanction, it is precisely with the word "sorry" as if everything has been completed and is back fine.

> "Very often also get a form of sexual harassment, starting from catcalling which most often occurs either by stares, being called out, being pulled by the hand, being grabbed by an unknown person's buttocks, even when someone wants to hold their back and touch their breasts even though they can be knocked off. . Then he often gets comments that are sexual in nature, both by academics (university students)"-IP-2.

In addition to the different forms of sexual violence experienced by victims, perpetrators of sexual violence can be found anywhere, whether people have a kinship with the victim or people who are not known at all. Not to mention the factor of power relations, unequal power relations can be caused by several causes such as the relationship

between students and their teachers, work matters, even the role of men who feel more dominant and have power. From the experiences of sexual violence experienced by victims, we can see together that the space for perpetrators of sexual violence is expansive from personal, public space, to even targeting the digital area. The extent of the perpetrator's space to intensify their actions is inversely proportional to the victim's safety, where the victim feels vulnerable to being targeted by perpetrators of sexual violence.

Talking about situations that do not show their side with the victim, some victims have the desire to get legal protection. Some victims began to dare to report cases of sexual violence they had experienced. Talking about the law, it is clear that the victim must have strong evidence so that the report can be processed. Unfortunately, many victims do not have strong evidence for the forms of sexual violence they have experienced. When the victim receives a form of sexual violence, of course there is no response given because the victim feels shocked at what happened to them, not to mention if the sexual violence occurred in a quiet place, even in a public space, it does not guarantee that the victim will receive strong evidence. From research conducted by HollaBack Jakarta, as many as 91% of respondents do not understand how to help victims of sexual violence [15].

> "For self-reporting efforts, there are already existing but again there is no strong evidence, and when it comes to rape in sexual violence at least we must have a visa and that is not facilitated."-IP-3.

Regarding legal protection in dealing with sexual violence is a reality that is difficult to obtain for victims. The victim's interests often fail to get protection, where the victim becomes a victim again. Moreover, speaking of law in Indonesia, it is clear that there is no solid legal umbrella to provide a sense of security to victims, plus policymakers and the authorities seem to have standardized "ideal victims" whose claims will be processed through a highly complex process.

3.2 *'Spill The Tea'* Sexual Violence on Social Media

Recently, a new phenomenon emerged where victims dared to share their experiences of sexual violence through social media accounts. This phenomenon is called "Spill The Tea". Spill The Tea is a familiar term, especially for Twitter social media users. The meaning of the term spill the tea in social media is used for offensive actions by implicitly leaking about an individual who has a bad reputation. The indicator of the importance of workers leads to lewd behavior in the interaction of the opposite sex. The spill the tea phenomenon shows that the tradition of talking about someone or gossiping is a reality that has often penetrated digital society [16].

In addition, spilling the tea is usually done by someone to make a thread to tell a problem that occurred, one of which is the problem of sexual violence experienced [17]. This shows that social media is currently a way to overcome the problem of sexual violence cases. Many victims of sexual violence prefer to spill the tea of the issues they get to social media because so far it is difficult for them to get protection either by law because they have not taken sides with victims of sexual violence or the surrounding community who do not view that the cases of violence they get are a crime. This is a big problem, even society tends to normalize forms of sexual violence and instead blame victims [18].

Therefore, social media is considered a safe space for victims because it is hoped that the efforts they convey on social media will get support from various kinds of people digitally. This is also found in several studies which state that social media provides space for victims to get justice informally by the digital community for the cases they get [11]. In addition, forth wave of feminist movement which is currently voicing gender issues, especially sexual violence on social media, often provides support to victims to be brave to speak up [9], [19]. In addition to getting permission from the community digitally, this spill the tea effort by victims of sexual violence is to make the wider community aware that sexual violence is actual and can be obtained by anyone and anywhere.

Then it turns out that in the process, when the victim dares to decide to retell the experience of sexual violence that has been experienced, it is certainly not an easy decision. So that when the victim manages to speak up, of course, it is expected to get a significant and positive response from this digital community. However, instead of trying to use social media as a medium to provide broad awareness to the community and provide support to victims of sexual violence with experiences that have been experienced. There are still many digital people who make comments that do not show their alignment with victims of sexual violence, starting from the closest people who are around the victim such as friends, family, relatives and even strangers intervene in the victim, especially if it is included in the mass news [18]. The experiences that victims of sexual violence get when they do 'spill the tea' on social media, are as follows:

> "There is a certain fear when I dare to speak up on this social media, because I can be watched by the perpetrators and even get threats if I tell this to other people. So it's quite difficult for me to share this on social media"-IP-2.

"On social media, I also speak up about the forms of sexual violence that I have experienced. While sharing sexual harassment, women's rights, what kind of position we are as victims and for our response, we can't control it, all of which must be supported, some give negative comments."-IP-3.

The responses were given by the surrounding environment undoubtedly varied, ranging from people who sided with the victim because they were educated and aware of the issue of sexual violence. However, the problem here is when the intention of the victim who previously told about forms of sexual violence to raise awareness and make the public more anxious has becomes a boomerang in itself. The validity of the victim's story is questioned and not infrequently many people victim blame. When the victim should have received support, the victim was victimized by the negative responses. Even victims get traumatized which also leads to more significant problems because of the reaction that attacks and blames victims of sexual violence.

This is in line with several studies which explain that the condition of society which tends to turn a blind eye to cases of sexual violence is a tangible form of the perpetuation of sexual violence that occurs in Indonesia [20],such as judging the victim by giving a negative label, blaming the victim to questioning the validity of the victim's story. The development of victim-blaming ideology is one of the products resulting from society's normalization of sexual violence [18]. Victim blaming is a reflection of the pollution of human civilization, because from this, we see that human themselves do not display their humanity. Victim blaming is done not only in the form of blaming the victim but can also change the community's perspective to do the same thing. The action taken by the community is a form of revictimization carried out by the surrounding community to the victim. When the victim should have received protection, the local community intervened against the sexual violence that happened to her, causing confusion and even trauma for the victim [21]. This turned out to show that social media cannot always be a safe space for anyone; one of them is a victim of sexual violence.

3.3 Social Media Is Not a Safe Space for Victims of Sexual Violence

This phenomenon or form of spill the tea turns out to be a boomerang for victims of sexual violence themselves. However, this happens if the victim is not ready for all the consequences of spilling tea on social media. Before spilling tea, victims must be aware that social media is not a safe space for them, so don't use

this form of spill tea as the main effort to get out of the sexual violence problem they have been experiencing so far. Victims must also realize that not all responses given by the digital community will always side with the victim. Considering that today's society is still attached to patriarchal cultural values, there are still many people who perpetrate or normalize forms of sexual violence [13], [14].

Spill the tea can still be a reasonable effort, especially to make the wider community aware that sexual violence is a fact that must be believed in its existence. Then this can be a trigger for perpetrators of sexual violence, that victims can speak up and defend themselves for the behavior they have received so far [22]. This can also be an effort to raise awareness for other victims of sexual violence, that with spill the tea other victims can realize that they are not alone and do not need to blame the cases they have received so far. This is an effort to eradicate gender inequality in sexual violence in society on a massive scale in the digital nature [23]. However, there need to be facts and concrete evidence so that what is conveyed on social media does not become a boomerang for victims. The effort that must be made is to identify first whether the action obtained is a form of sexual violence or not, then collect more valid evidence such as time, place, description of the perpetrator, and description of the incident of sexual violence experienced so that if the victim has strong evidence.

4. CONCLUSION

The impartiality of victims of sexual violence both legally and in conditions within the community makes the victims not provide a safe space for the problems they experienced. Social media is used as a medium to find a defense and support for the injustices that victims of sexual violence get by spilling tea. However, this form of spilling the tea has a very diverse impact. The negative implications are that it can become a medium for re-victimizing sexual violence, which shows that social media is not a safe space for victims of violence either. However, this also has a positive impact because spill the tea efforts can increase public awareness that forms of sexual violence are natural. They will get a candid picture of forms of sexual violence from the victim's point of view. This is also a form of resistance for victims of sexual violence.

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