Victims of Online Based-Gender Violence Please Don't Keep Your Grief Alone

Sri Mustika*, Tellys Corliana

Communication Department

UHAMKA

Jakarta, Indonesia

*srimustika@uhamka.ac.id, corliana_t@uhamka.ac.id

Abstract—**The increasing use of social media hurts women. Many of them have experienced online gender-based violence (OGBV). This study examines the importance of family communication in assisting OGBV victims. The research approach is qualitative and the type of research is descriptive. Data were collected by observation, in-depth interviews with participants, and literature study. Data analysis using the Miles and Huberman model was carried out in three stages: data codification, data presentation, and concluding. This research was conducted in Jakarta and its surroundings within six months. The results showed that the participants who were victims of OGBV experienced violence in the form of doxing, harassment, and terror. Not all victims communicating their problems with their families. Only victims whose families have consensual communication patterns are willing to complain about their problems and receive moral or material support from their families. With family communication, they feel relieved because the family is very supportive and sympathetic. Those whose family communication pattern includes laisse-faire, who considers personal problems as privacy that must be respected, do not want to complain about their problems with their families. They are the most afraid of their parents find out about their problems.**

Keywords—*family communication, online gender-based violence, social media*

I. INTRODUCTION

Violence against women in the digital space is increasingly rampant during the Covid-19 pandemic that has hit Indonesia since March 2020. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Indonesian Women's Association for Justice Legal Aid Institute (LBH APIK) recorded the number of cases of online gender-based violence (OGBV) reaching 659 cases [1]. This number increased sharply compared to previous years. In 2017 there were only 16 cases, in 2018 it was 97 cases, and in 2019 it jumped to 281 cases. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the National Commission on Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan) received complaints of 649 cases of violence consisting of 341 cases of domestic violence (KDRT) and 318 cases of community domains.

OGBV occurs along with the increase in the use of social media. Based on the Hootsuite (We are Social) survey conducted regularly on trends in Internet and social media users, it was recorded that Internet users in Indonesia reached 175.4 million and active social media users 160 million [2]. Statistics (February 19, 2020) noted that social media users aged 25-34 years and 20.6% were male, while 14.8% were female. Users aged 18-24 years are 16.1% male and 14.2% female.

All of OGBV occurs in the digital space. The victims are generally women who actively use social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp. There are several types of OGBV, namely cyber stalking, cyber harassment, unwanted sexual e-mail messages, and hatred in sexually degrading words [3]. This violence started with friendship through social networks. Although there are more male social media users than women, women are more prone to experiencing OGBV. The results of the Plan International 2020 survey involving 500 girls in Indonesia with an age range of 15-20 years, found that 32% of girls had experienced OGBV, and 56% saw girls experiencing violence on social media [4]. This condition is very concerning and cannot be ignored.

In a family the bonds between its members are formed through communication. In a family, communication is a means to express attention and feelings, as well as affection. Therefore, if a family member has a problem, then with family communication he will get attention, support, and even a solution.

Family communication, according to John P. Caughlin and Allison M. Scot, is communication within the family that refers to repetitive interaction styles and behaviors; which can differ between single families and large families (with many members) and develop over a short or long period of time [5].

Through family communication we can emerge a sense of emotional security because at that time we can discuss our life's problems. In fact, the victims of OGBV actually refrained from keeping their case a secret from their families. They feel

192

ashamed and guilty about their experience what most people consider it as stupid act.

The issues in this research are about: 1. women as victims of online gender-based violence, 2. how they deal with this problem, 3. communication of the victims with their families.

II. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach and is descriptive in nature. Qualitative research methods are natural research. In this research, the meaning is constructed by the society in which we grew up. Values related to society are the development of historical and cultural experiences. Therefore, in qualitative research, the researcher looks for context and collects information that can be used as data. To obtain data, the researcher performed several procedures, such as observation, in-depth interviews, and a literature study. This research method is a case study. Data analysis was performed using data analysis techniques of pattern matching, making explanations, and time series [6]. This research was conducted in Jakarta and surrounding (online) for 6 months, from March 2021- August 2021.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Family

Family is the smallest unit of society. Individuals grow and develop in a family. Family in the online Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian Dictionary) has several meanings. 1. mother and father and their children, the whole house. 2. people in the house. dependents, 3. relatives, relatives. 4. A very basic kinship unit in society.

In a family, communication is very important, but communication cannot happen by itself. Parents who are in the family structure at the top level should initiate good family communication. Through communication, each family member can create a strong inner bond, so that closeness is formed.

Hanurawan [7] also explains that the family is a primary group that is bound physically and mentally, has a very close or personal relationship. This primary group has three main functions, namely as agents of socialization. The family is tasked with introducing all kinds of norms and rules and values that apply in society. Starting from how to deal with parents, how to talk and be kind to them. Another function is as an instrument to fulfill social needs. The primary group is tasked with providing the fulfillment of the social needs of its members. In additions there is a function of social control instruments. Primary group members have the right and obligation to express their opinions and attitudes about a social issue and at the same time receive feedback**.**

B. Family Communication

Family communication is basically a way to understand the family and build relationships within it. There are at least three reasons that experts put forward about the focus of the study of

family communication. In the Handbook of Family Communication [8] it is explained that first, the family is a mechanism for the socialization of the earliest experiences. By observing and interacting with family members most people learn to communicate and more importantly, when they learn to think about communication [9]. Second, communication is a means for family members to establish, maintain, or break their intimate relationship. People form their families through social interactions. Communication allows dating partners to meet and evaluate their relationship status (e.g. Berger, Gardner, Clatterbuck & Shulman) [10]. Third, family communication is communication that reflects the interpersonal relationships among family members. As such, this communication offers researchers and theorists a way to predict the quality and course of family relationships. For example, researchers have long suggested that communication is an indicator of the quality of a marital relationship. Depressed couples generally exert more negative influence, less positive influence, and more reciprocal negative influence than those who are not depressed [11–13].

C. Online Gender-Based Violence

Online gender-based violence (OGBV) is any form of violence that aims to attack gender and sexuality, either by people or other parties who facilitate Internet technology. Fadillah Adrikas, General Chairperson of the Student Union for Indonesia (Srikandi) at the Islamic University of Indonesia, stated that OG-B has several elements, attacks on gender, both have various types of violence and the perpetrators are diverse, even without space and time; the three expressions of unequal power relations expressions; and his actions are facilitated by the Internet.

Victim of OB-GV interacts and intertwines with layers of power and aspects of surrounding culture, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and location that produce different impacts on different bodies.

D. Types of Online Gender-Based Violence

N. Beran [3] explains that there are two forms of online gender violence, namely: (1). Cyber stalking, namely stalking actions carried out via the Internet, online messages carried out by the same person are usually in the form of comments, offensive online messages or in the form of intimate videos that are distributed. (2). Cyber harassment, in the form of bullying that focuses on intimidating sexual harassment behavior. Another form of sexual harassment that can be included in online violence is sexually explicit email messages that are intimidating. Including hate messages that contain insults to body shape (body shaming). The mechanism for distributing messages online that is so fast and widespread, of course, has a psychological impact on the victim.

Ika Ningtyas [14], Secretary General of the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI) said that KBGO activities include several actions, namely doxing, supervision or monitoring, reputational damage, harassment, and direct threats and violence. Doxing is digging and spreading someone's

personal info to give people access for malicious purposes. Surveillance can be done online or in person, using spyware without consent, or GPS or geo-locators to track someone. Damage to reputation can be done by manipulating social media content, creating fake accounts of victims to be shared with the public, distributing private photos and or videos, making comments or uploads that are offensive, disparaging to tarnish someone's reputation. Harassment can be done through unwanted messages or contacts, threats of sexual or physical violence, hate speech and online content that describes women as sex objects. Direct threats and violence, including trafficking of women through technology, sexual blackmail, identity theft, money or property.

IV. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The patriarchal culture is still very dominant in our society resulting in inequality in gender relations. The imbalance of gender relations can lead to various forms of relationships, such as subordination, marginalization, overload, stereotypes and also violence against women. There are various forms of inequality, such as subordination, marginalization, overload, and stereotypes [15]. In addition, the most common thing is violence (violence) against women. In general, the violence that is often experienced by women is domestic violence (KDRT), but along with the increasing use of gadgets and social media, violence against women also occurs in the virtual realm. This gender-targeted violence through the Internet or social media is referred to as online gender-based violence (OGBV).

In this study, participants experienced OGBV for different reasons, but it all started through social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Of the four participants, only one participant experienced OGBV due to a tweet on his Twitter containing social criticism. Three other people became victims of OGBV due to friendship with the opposite sex through social media. The forms of OGBV they experience vary. Some were doxed, cyber-harassed were threatened and spread their vulgar photos, asked for money, terrorized, and their reputations were damaged and harassed on social media. In all these cases, one of the causes is the leakage of the victim's digital data.

"At this time securing digital devices is a must," said Ellen Kusuma, Head of At-Risks Digital Subdivision at SAFEnet, a non-profit organization based in Bali, Indonesia, which advocates for digital rights issues as human rights in the Southeast Asia region.

She further revealed the need to manage digital bodies, both physical and non-physical. What is meant by digital bodies are digital devices that store our personal data, such as laptops, computers, flash drives, and mobile phones. Meanwhile, non-physical digital bodies are social media, digital data, Google Drive, e-mail, and cloud storage.

"Securing the physical digital body can prevent people from accessing our work devices. Meanwhile, we can secure non-physical digital bodies with two-step verification, two-

factor authentication, lock accounts, and install passwords," explained Ellen.

From the OGBV cases above, A whose naked photo suddenly appeared on social media, or M whose photo was uploaded through his personal account on his FB with obscene words, all could happen because they did not protect his digital body. For that, Ellen provides eight steps of risk mapping tips. First, count the number of our digital accounts, both social media, e-mail, and cloud storage. After that, we try to find our name on Google. If information such as phone numbers and e-mail addresses appear, it means that our personal data has been leaked and needs to be secured.

In addition to the efforts above, another thing that is no less important in dealing with cases of OGBV is communicating with families,

"OBGV is not an easy matter, so it is impossible for us to solve it alone. We need the help of other people, be it parents, spouse, or legal experts," said Nisrina Nadhifah Rahman, a human right activist. He admits that discussing the issue of OGBV with his family is not an easy thing. Especially if the family is not used to communicating the problems of its members.

Nisrina's opinion is right, because there are informants who are reluctant to open up their problems with their families. In fact, if you look at the consequences, OGBV can make victims go into shock, feel down, lose self-esteem, and sometimes are also economically affected. Therefore, those who are not open with their families are more depressed than those who are quite open. M, for example, it has been more than a year the case is still ongoing. Unlike N and C, who are very open with their families. In addition to feeling more relieved, the problem can be unraveled and reach a solution. Victims often feel fear to discuss problems with their parents.

Family communication is formed from the beginning of marriage and continues after the children are born until they are adults. If you follow the Fritzpatrick model of family communication, the researcher sees that each informant has a different pattern of family communication. There are informants whose family communication is in the consensual category.

Like families of N and C. In these families, communication between members has been well established. Therefore, when a family member has a problem, it will be discussed openly without feeling afraid or shy. Parents also want to listen to the problems faced by their children with full understanding. They do not blame or regret the KBGO incident that happened to their child. This makes children feel relieved, because they get support and protection from their parents. It didn't even stop there the parents were also trying to find a way out so that this case was brought to the realm of law. The warm relationship between children and parents makes the problems experienced by children can be resolved properly.

V. CONCLUSION

The more women who use the Internet, the more likely they are to experience OBGV cases. OBGV is an act that violates a person's right to feel safe and comfortable, and makes her suffer and lose materially or immaterially. In dealing with OBGV cases, family communication is very important. Apart from being a means of releasing tension, family communication makes victims feel supported, protected, and warm. This makes them more able to survive facing severe problems that have an impact on the victims' physical, psychological, social, economic, and functional impacts. Consensual family communication patterns are the most ideal to assist victims of OGBV. OGBV victims must speak up and not keep their suffering to themselves.

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