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## THE IMPACT OF ONLINE MEDIA COVERAGE OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN TOWARDS WONOGIRI SOCIETY

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**Abstract** Sexual violence against women and children in Wonogiri Regency, especially in 2023, will experience a very high increase in cases. The occurrence of sexual violence made the mass media busy reporting it, especially on online media. This article aims to describe the impact of reporting on sexual violence against women and children in Wonogiri Regency in online media. The method used to answer the research questions in this article is descriptive qualitative, where researchers obtain data through direct observations and in-depth interviews with informants. The results of the research show that reporting in online media regarding sexual violence against women and children in Wonogiri Regency has several impacts. Among the positive impacts are: 1) increasing public knowledge regarding various sexual violence against women and children in Wonogiri Regency, 2) Due to increasing public knowledge, a sense of concern for the surrounding environment appears, people are more concerned and no longer indifferent to the incidents that occur around, 3) Furthermore, a sense of mutual protection among members of the community grows, this is because the community does not want similar incidents to occur in the environment where they live. However, reporting via online media also turns out to have a negative impact on society, namely: 1) Excessive fear, excessive fear because people get information from online media regarding sexual violence against women and children. Especially in families with school-age children, it is normal for fear to arise. Apart from that, the negative impact is 2) becoming restless and always suspicious.

**Keywords** *Online Media, Sexual Violence, Wonogiri Society*

### INTRODUCTION

In 2023, Wonogiri Regency experienced a significant increase in sexual violence against children, whereby in mid-2023, more than 30 children had been recorded as victims (Praditia & Suharsih, 2023). This is quite a large number for a small city like Wonogiri Regency. The Head of the Wonogiri Regency Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Division further explained that in the period January to July 2023, there were 18 cases of child violence with a total of 31 children victims. Of the 18 cases, 17 cases were sexual violence.

The perpetrator of sexual violence against children was not someone the victim did not know, as reported on detik.com on October 23, 2023, where the teacher and principal of a Madrasah school in Wonogiri molested 12 female students (Munandar, 2023). Where this depraved act occurred in one of the sub-districts in Wonogiri Regency, namely Baturetno District. This means that perpetrators of sexual violence are not only people who are seen as bad people or people who are unknown, but the perpetrators of crimes are, in fact, people who are considered by the general public to have position and honor in society, such as teachers and school principals.

The rise in cases of bullying, rape, and sexual violence among children and women in Wonogiri Regency certainly cannot be separated from the media reporting. It is certain that mass media, especially online media, will create news by creating titles in such a way that invites people to open the news link and read the news. In this research, the researcher specifically limited it to reporting on online media, namely Solopos.com, Radar Solo, Harianjogja.com, Tribunjateng.com, and Detik.com, as well as Suara Merdeka Online.

Where in these online media, news about cases of sexual violence against women and children is reported, especially in 2023. This article will discuss in more depth the impact of news related to sexual violence against women and children in Wonogiri Regency on society and the younger generation in particular. In order to analyze more deeply the impact that emerged among the community with the emergence of news about sexual violence against women and children in Wonogiri Regency, researchers used several communication theory approaches.

Discussing news cannot be separated from the word News. News, in the constructionist view, is the result of social construction, which involves the intervention of ideology and values from journalists or the media. News construction begins with the selection of facts, determining the news value contained in the course of a news story. The process of selecting facts is based on assumptions; journalists cannot see events without perspective. In selecting facts, there are two possibilities, namely, what is selected (included) and what is excluded (excluded). In the selected (included) option, emphasizing certain aspects is done by selecting certain angles and facts and forgetting other aspects. As a consequence, the understanding and construction of an event are very likely to differ from one media to another (Eriyanto, 2011).

Reporting, or what can also be called reportage, also has the meaning of reporting, reporting, and reporting (Abdullah, 1992). Reporting includes reporting activities, collecting facts about various news elements, from various sources/informants, then writing them in the form of news (products).

In essence, the main function of news is to report or inform the public about something. Selecting, processing, and publishing news is the task of the press media. All information reported must take into account its useful value for the benefit of society. The following are two things that press media need to pay attention to in fulfilling their use value or benefits for the public. First, news must be able to be used as general knowledge. Knowledge is dynamic, meaning that knowledge develops over time. For this reason, the need for knowledge does not just stop at a certain moment. Second, news must be used as a tool for social, political, health, educational control, and much more. News not only conveys pleasant information but also unpleasant information, often called "bad news" (Cahya,

2012). Discussing related news, this article is limited to news in online media, where online media is included in the object of study of "new media" theory. The definition of new media is a term that refers to pathways for accessing content (content/formation) anytime, anywhere, on any digital device, as well as interactive user feedback, creative participation, and community formation around media content, as well as aspects of "real-time" generation. ". According to Chun, in his book entitled *New Media, Old Media* says that new media is a simplification of terms for forms of media outside the five conventional mass media, namely television, radio, magazines, newspapers, and films.

With mass media, humans fulfill their needs for various things. One of them is online media, which is classified as the newest media. Online mass media never eliminates old mass media but substitutes it. Online media is a new type of journalism because it has a number of features and characteristics of traditional journalism. Unique features emerge in the technology, offering unlimited possibilities in processing and disseminating news (Septiawan, 2005). In the *International Communication Journal* Mass Society, Mass Culture, and Mass Communication: The Meaning of Mass, by Kurt Lang and Gladys Engel Lang (Lang & Lang, 2009), the new media have also affected culture. There has been a far-reaching transformation of the general way of life, particularly in how people spend their leisure hours and how they take part in celebratory occasions. Traditional folk art and customary recreational activities have been partly replaced by an unprecedented flood of symbolic goods produced for the market or sold to media organizations for dissemination to their audiences. The viability of artistic creations today is less dependent on aristocratic or state patronage than the so-called "high" culture had been in the past. Without momentous advances in communication technology, such a transformation would have been inconceivable.

Apart from discussing news, this research also discusses sexual violence against women and children. According to Law Number 35 of 2014, violence is any act against a child that results in physical, psychological, sexual, and/or neglect, misery, or suffering, including threats to commit acts, coercion, or unlawful deprivation of liberty. Sexual violence is defined as any sexual act, attempt to commit a sexual act, comment, or suggestion of sexual behavior that is unintentional or vice versa, an offense of committing sexual intercourse by forcing someone.

Sexual violence is any activity consisting of sexual activity carried out forcibly by an adult on a child or by a child on another child. Sexual violence includes the commercial use or involvement of children in sexual activities, solicitation or coercion of children to engage in sexual activities, involvement of children in audio-visual media, and child prostitution.

Sexual harassment occurs due to several underlying factors. (Yatimin, 2007) suggests that the factors that cause sexual harassment are as follows: 1) Psychological factors, namely: This is one of the factors related to a person's psychology, which can feel happy or not, which is caused by the background of the sufferer because they have experienced it. Sexual abuse in childhood. 2) Sociocultural factors (social culture) are factors that can influence a person's behavior. The rapid progress of science and technology means that we cannot contain good and bad information. So that negative and positive information can be accessed easily, including pornographic sites that are not worth watching but are very easy to access by various groups. 3) Education and Family Factors. Education in the family

greatly influences a person's development and formation. Because the family is the first place where the foundation of a child's personality is laid. Any attitudes and actions carried out by parents are used as examples for children in their attitudes and behavior.

## **METHODS**

This research is a qualitative descriptive study, where the researcher obtained data through direct observations and in-depth interviews with informants. The research was conducted in Wonogiri Regency over 7 months from March to September 2024. In order to find out the public's opinion regarding online news about sexual violence against women and children.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Positive impact of reporting on sexual violence against women and children in Wonogiri Regency through online media**

#### *Increased knowledge*

Basically, Indonesian society, in particular, and Wonogiri society, in particular, can no longer be separated from gadgets or smartphones. This tool can help the public obtain new information, including news or information related to sexual violence against women and children in Wonogiri Regency. This is in line with what was conveyed by the Broadcasting Institution with Online Media, namely *Harian Jogja*, which stated that basically, the aim of writing news is to provide understanding to the public and avoid and reduce hoaxes or untrue news circulating in society.

The opinion of community leaders supports this opinion that by reading news related to sexual violence against women and children in Wonogiri Regency via online media, the public becomes more understanding. "If there is no online media that reports, then people tell events that happen by word of mouth, and it is not necessarily true that the news conveyed is true, so through online media, especially media that have legal entities, then people have an understanding regarding certain news" (interview with GS dated May 4, 2024).

Based on the results or findings of this research, it can be explained that, basically, the purpose of reporting is to provide accurate and correct information to the audience (Abdullah, 1992). So, reporting regarding sexual violence against women and children in Wonogiri Regency through Online Media has properly provided knowledge or understanding to the community, especially in Wonogiri. The expected understanding and knowledge is correct knowledge regarding information or news broadcast through online media.

#### *Concern for the Surrounding Environment*

Through news in online media, broadcasting institutions basically hope to grow a sense of concern for the surrounding environment; based on the news available so far, the sexual violence against women and children in Wonogiri Regency is not a foreigner but someone close to the victim's environment. , such as teachers, school principals, and even the victims' parents. Based on this, it is hoped that reporting in online media can foster a

sense of concern for the surrounding environment, especially in families with school-aged children.

As stated by one of the journalists from the Broadcasting Institution (Jogja Daily), one of the aims of broadcasting news related to sexual violence against women and children is to foster a caring attitude towards the surrounding environment, especially the environment or families who have school-age children, because they are vulnerable to becoming victims of violence.

In line with the aim of reporting through online media, people who read news through online media realize that the perpetrators of sexual violence against women and children are people who are close to the victims and people who have power in society, such as teachers or school principals, religious leaders and even some are the victims' parents. Based on this, the community becomes more concerned about the surrounding environment, so it is hoped that sexual violence against women and children will no longer occur. The community is concerned, especially with school-age children who only live with grandparents because their parents have migrated.

People are also more careful, especially with suspicious people, but do not become afraid. The government, together with religious leaders, took preventive action by conducting outreach to the community through RT activities and religious activities in places of worship. Outreach activities related to preventing sexual violence against women and children are a form of concern for the surrounding environment.

### ***Growing Sense of Protecting Each Other in Community Members***

After growing a sense of concern for the surrounding environment, religious leaders, community leaders, and the community agreed to foster a sense of mutual protection among members of the community. "The hope is that the community will have a sense of *Handarbeni lan Hangrungkebi* with the surrounding environment" (interview with Pr on June 6, 2024). By seeing the large number of news related to sexual violence against women and children in the Wonogiri district, basically, the community has become more concerned; deep in their hearts, there is a feeling of wanting to take part in protecting it; this is what is called *Handarbeni*.

The average Wonogiri community migrates, resulting in school-age children living in their hometowns only with their grandparents. Even middle and high school-age children are used to living in their own homes, with online media reporting about sexual violence against women. and community children become more concerned about children left behind by their families.

### **Negative impact of reporting about sexual violence against women and children in Wonogiri Regency via online media**

#### ***Excessive fear***

Apart from having a positive impact on reporting in online media regarding sexual violence against women and children, it also has a negative impact, namely excessive fear. This fear not only appears among teenagers or children but also parents. People in Wonogiri

Regency, especially those who have school-aged children, are afraid that their daughters will experience violence, whether in the play area or the school environment.

This was conveyed by one of the community members who said, "We are also afraid that if the child has to be separated from his parents, we as parents will not be able to supervise him 24 hours a day" (Interview with DP, 6 May 2024). Considering that parents cannot accompany their children for a full day and night, fear arises. Not only is there fear that their children will become victims of sexual violence, but there is also fear that the news in online media will motivate their children to follow in my footsteps. This is as conveyed by (UM, Interview on 6 May 2024), who said: "I am actually afraid that my child becomes evil too because he is motivated by the news he reads." Based on this, it can be explained that the news in online media regarding sexual violence against women and children in the Wonogiri Regency makes people afraid.

### ***Become restless and always suspicious.***

Reading the news in online media, it turns out that the perpetrators of crimes of sexual violence against women and children are not new people but old and familiar people such as teachers, school principals, and even parents; it is certain that the public will always be wary and suspicious. Parents feel suspicious if their children become closer to teachers or school principals. Because parents become restless and always suspicious, the consequences also have an impact on teenage children. Children do not have the freedom to play because their parents always suspect them.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the discussion above, it can be explained that reporting in online media regarding sexual violence against women and children in Wonogiri Regency has several impacts. Among the positive impacts are: 1) increasing public knowledge regarding various sexual violence against women and children in Wonogiri Regency, 2) Due to increasing public knowledge, a sense of concern for the surrounding environment appears, the community is more concerned and no longer indifferent to the incidents that occur around, 3) Furthermore, a sense of mutual protection among members of the community grows, this is because the community does not want similar incidents to occur in the environment where they live. However, reporting via online media also turns out to have a negative impact on society, namely: 1) Excessive fear, excessive fear because people get information from online media regarding sexual violence against women and children. Especially in families with school-age children, it is normal for fear to arise. Apart from that, the negative impact is 2) becoming restless and always suspicious. This is because, based on information via online media, the perpetrators of crimes are not new people but people who have been known and close for a long time and have power in society.

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