

## Criminological Review Of The Phenomenon Of Verbal Sexual Harassment Against Women In Indonesia

*Vevti Al Putriana. A<sup>1</sup>; Herlita Eryke<sup>2</sup>.*

Faculty of Law, University of Bengkulu, Indonesia<sup>1,2</sup>.

Email: (vevtialputriana@gmail.com, herlitaeryke@unib.ac.id)

Manuscripts received : 15/04/2026. Revision and Review : 15/06/2026. Approved 29/06/2026

### *Abstract*

*Verbal sexual harassment against women is a common phenomenon in Indonesia and is often considered trivial by some, despite its significant impact on women's psychological well-being, sense of security, and freedom to engage in activities in both public and private spaces. This study aims to examine the phenomenon of verbal sexual harassment against women in Indonesia from a criminological perspective, emphasizing the causal factors, perpetrators' behavioral patterns, and the impacts experienced by victims. This research uses a normative legal research type with a criminological approach through a literature study method of various legal sources, books, and relevant scientific journals. The results of the study indicate that the occurrence of verbal sexual harassment is influenced by patriarchal social construction, low public awareness and understanding of forms of sexual harassment, weak law enforcement, and the existence of social stigma against victims, which causes many victims to be reluctant to report their experiences. Therefore, needed through increasing public education, strengthening the legal framework, and providing adequate support for victims to create a safer and more equitable environment for women in Indonesia.*

**Keywords:** *Criminology, Verbal Sexual Harassment, Women, Gender-Based Violence, Social Norms, Victimology, Sexual Harassment, Social Control Theory*

### **A. Introduction**

Verbal sexual harassment of women is a form of gender-based violence that still often occurs in people's lives in Indonesia. This phenomenon is often considered as normal behavior or just a joke by some circles, so its existence is often ignored and not taken seriously. In fact, verbal sexual harassment such as whistling, sexually nuanced comments, inappropriate calls, and demeaning remarks on women can cause significant psychological impacts, such as fear, embarrassment, discomfort, and decreased confidence in the victim.<sup>1</sup>

This condition shows that verbal sexual harassment is not only a social ethical issue, but also a form of violation of human rights that must receive serious attention from various parties, especially in order to create a safe and just social environment for women.

The phenomenon of verbal sexual harassment against women cannot be separated from the social construction that develops in society, especially the patriarchal culture that is still quite strong in Indonesia. In the patriarchal system, men are often placed in dominant

---

<sup>1</sup> Soerjono Soekanto, *Sociology of an Introduction*, Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2012.

positions, while women are considered as<sup>2</sup> inferior parties . This condition encourages the formation of a mindset that views women as objects, both socially and sexually, so that behaviors such as comments on women's bodies or jokes with sexual nuances are considered commonplace. In fact, from the perspective of modern criminology, this behavior is included in the category of deviant behavior that has the potential to have a negative impact on victims and society at large.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to patriarchal cultural factors, low public legal awareness is also one of the causes of the still rampant verbal sexual harassment against women. Many individuals do not understand that verbal abuse is included in the form of sexual violence that has legal consequences. The lack of understanding of the boundaries of behavior that can be categorized as sexual harassment causes people to often not realize that the actions taken or accepted are against the law.<sup>4</sup> This is also exacerbated by the lack of socialization related to legal protection for victims of sexual violence, so victims tend to choose to remain silent and not report the incidents they experienced.

In the context of national law, Indonesia already has various legal tools that aim to provide protection for women from all forms of sexual violence. One of the important regulations is Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning the Crime of Sexual Violence (TPKS) which provides a more comprehensive definition of various forms of sexual violence, including verbal sexual harassment.<sup>5</sup> The presence of the law is a step forward in the Indonesian legal system because it focuses not only on the punishment of the perpetrators, but also on the protection, recovery, and fulfillment of the rights of victims. However, the implementation of the law still faces various challenges, such as limited understanding by law enforcement officials, lack of support facilities for victims, and strong social stigma that tends to blame victims.<sup>6</sup>

In a criminological perspective, verbal sexual harassment can be understood as deviant behavior influenced by the interaction between individual factors and the social environment. The social learning theory proposed by Ronald L. Akers explains that deviant behavior can be learned through the process of social interaction, in which individuals observe and imitate the behavior of others in their environment.<sup>7</sup> If verbal harassment behavior does not receive strict social sanctions, then individuals tend to consider this behavior as socially acceptable. In addition, the *social control theory* developed by Travis Hirschi emphasizes that weak social control in society can increase a person's potential to commit deviant actions due to a lack of social supervision and sanctions.<sup>8</sup>

The phenomenon of verbal sexual harassment against women is also closely related to the concept of victimization in criminology. Victimization describes a condition in which a person becomes a victim due to the inequality of social relations and power in society.

---

<sup>2</sup> Mansour Fakih, *Gender Analysis and Social Transformation*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Siswa, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Topo Santoso and Eva Achjani Zulfa, *Criminology*, Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Nursariani Simatupang and Faisal, *Criminology of an Introduction*, Medan: Pustaka Prima, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Republic of Indonesia, Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning the Crime of Sexual Violence.

<sup>6</sup> Komnas Perempuan, *Annual Record of Violence against Women in Indonesia*, Jakarta: Komnas Perempuan, 2022.

<sup>7</sup> Ronald L. Akers, *Criminological Theories: Introduction and Evaluation*, New York: Routledge, 2009.

<sup>8</sup> Travis Hirschi, *Causes of Delinquency*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969.

Women are often a vulnerable group that experiences repeated victimization, both in the form of verbal abuse and other forms of violence.<sup>9</sup>

In many cases, victims of verbal sexual abuse choose not to report the incident because of fear, shame, or concern about negative reactions from the social environment. This condition shows that the number of officially recorded cases of verbal sexual harassment is likely to be much lower than the number of incidents that actually occur in the community. The development of information technology and social media also provides a new dimension in the occurrence of verbal sexual harassment against women. Social media allows individuals to submit sexually nuanced comments anonymously, so that perpetrators feel freer to commit acts of harassment without fear of being subjected to social and legal sanctions.<sup>10</sup> This phenomenon shows that verbal sexual harassment does not only occur directly in public spaces, but also in digital spaces that are increasingly difficult to effectively supervise. Therefore, a comprehensive approach is needed to understand this phenomenon, both from a social, cultural, and legal perspective.

Furthermore, verbal sexual harassment of women also has an impact on the quality of life of victims in the long term. The impact is not only psychological, but can also affect the social and economic life of the victim. The insecurity experienced by victims can limit women's mobility in public spaces, potentially reducing women's opportunities to participate in various social and economic activities. In the long term, this condition can strengthen gender inequality in society and hinder efforts to realize gender equality which is one of the goals of national development.

Based on these various problems, an in-depth study from a criminological perspective is needed to comprehensively understand the phenomenon of verbal sexual harassment against women in Indonesia. The criminological approach is expected to be able to identify the factors that cause verbal sexual harassment, the characteristics of the perpetrators, and the pattern of victimization experienced by the victim. By understanding these factors, effective prevention strategies and legal policies that are more responsive to the protection needs of women can be formulated. Therefore, research on the criminological review of the phenomenon of verbal sexual harassment against women in Indonesia is important to make a scientific contribution in an effort to create a safe, fair, and free social environment from all forms of gender-based violence. Previous studies on verbal sexual harassment in Indonesia have mostly focused on purely juridical aspects or only described criminological concepts descriptively without applying them critically to the phenomenon being studied. In addition, the perspective of victimology, which is an important dimension in understanding the impact of verbal sexual harassment, has not been deeply integrated in existing normative studies. This research is here to fill this gap by using a more analytical and critical criminological approach, integrating a victimology perspective, and discussing a new dimension of verbal sexual harassment in the ever-evolving digital space. Thus, this research is expected to make a sharper scientific contribution in understanding the phenomenon of verbal sexual harassment and

---

<sup>9</sup> Mawar Safitri, "Legal Protection for Victims of Sexual Violence," *IUS QUIA IUSTUM Legal Journal*, Vol. 27 No. 2, 2020.

<sup>10</sup> Anastasia Powell and Nicola Henry, *Sexual Violence in a Digital Age*, London: Palgrave, 2017.

formulating a more comprehensive and responsive countermeasure strategy.

## B. Research Methods

This study uses a type of normative legal research with a criminological and victimological approach. Normative legal research is carried out through the study of literature materials (secondary data) related to legal norms, laws and regulations, and criminological theories related to verbal sexual harassment of women. The criminological approach is used to critically analyze the causative factors, behavior patterns of perpetrators, and mechanisms of verbal sexual harassment based on social learning theory (Ronald L. Akers) and social control theory (Travis Hirschi). The victimological approach is used to analyze the impact of victimization experienced by victims as well as the factors that drive underreporting of cases. This research is descriptive-analytical, which is not only describing phenomena but also analyzing in depth the relationships between variables based on the theory used. The technique of collecting legal materials is carried out through document studies, namely by identifying, inventorying, and classifying legal materials from various sources. Primary legal materials include relevant laws and regulations, such as Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning the Crime of Sexual Violence, the Criminal Code, Law Number 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights, Law Number 23 of 2004 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence, and Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection. Secondary legal materials are in the form of books, national and international scientific journals, results of previous research, expert opinions, and reports of related institutions such as data from the Ministry of PPA SYMFONI PPA and the Annual Record of Komnas Perempuan. Tertiary legal materials include legal dictionaries, KBBI, encyclopedias, and other supporting references. The analysis method used is qualitative analysis with descriptive-analytical-critical techniques, namely by systematically examining all legal materials, applying criminology and victimology theories critically, and drawing conclusions and recommendations that are relevant to the research problem.

## C. Results and Discussion

### 1. Factors Causing Verbal Sexual Harassment Against Women in Indonesia

Verbal sexual harassment against women is a form of gender-based violence that has high complexity, both in terms of social, cultural, and legal. Based on the results of a study of various legal sources and criminological theories, it was found that there are several main factors that affect the occurrence of verbal sexual harassment against women in Indonesia. These factors are not only related to the individual behavior of the perpetrator, but are also influenced by the social environment and cultural norms that develop in society.

One of the main factors that causes verbal sexual harassment is the strong patriarchal culture in society. Patriarchal culture is a social system that places men in dominant positions in various aspects of life, while women tend to be placed in lower positions.<sup>11</sup> In patriarchal cultures, women are often seen as objects that can be judged physically or sexually, so there is an assumption that commenting on women's bodies is natural and harmless. In fact, from a criminological perspective, these actions are a form of deviant behavior that can harm victims both psychologically and socially.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Mansour Fakhri, *Gender Analysis and Social Transformation*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Siswa, 2013

<sup>12</sup> Topo Santoso and Eva Achjani Zulfa, *Op Cit*

In addition to patriarchal culture, social environmental factors also have a significant influence on the occurrence of verbal sexual harassment. A permissive social environment toward sexually abusive behavior can encourage individuals to imitate such behavior. In the *social learning theory* put forward by Ronald L. Akers, it is explained that deviant behavior can be learned through the process of social interaction, where individuals observe the behavior of others and imitate them if the behavior is considered to have no negative consequences.<sup>13</sup> This shows that if society does not give social sanctions to perpetrators of verbal abuse, the behavior will continue to repeat and even develop into habits that are considered normal.

Another factor that also affects the occurrence of verbal sexual harassment is the low level of legal awareness of the community. Many people do not understand that verbal sexual harassment is included in the category of sexual violence that has legal consequences. The lack of understanding of the legal rules governing the protection of women causes the perpetrator to not realize that his actions constitute a violation of the law.<sup>14</sup> In addition, low legal awareness also causes victims to be reluctant to report the incident they experienced because they feel that the act will not receive serious handling from law enforcement officials.

In the context of national law, the existence of Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning the Crime of Sexual Violence is an important step in providing legal protection for victims of sexual harassment, including verbal sexual harassment. However, in practice, there are still various obstacles in the implementation of the law, such as the lack of understanding of law enforcement officials regarding forms of verbal sexual violence and limited support facilities for victims.<sup>15</sup> This shows that the existence of regulations alone is not enough to overcome the problem of verbal sexual harassment if it is not followed by increasing the capacity of law enforcement officials and public awareness.

In addition to social and legal factors, the development of information technology is also one of the factors that expands the space for verbal sexual harassment to occur. Social media and digital communication platforms make it easy for individuals to convey sexually nuanced comments without having to meet face-to-face. This condition makes the perpetrator feel freer to commit acts of harassment because of the sense of anonymity and the low likelihood of being directly subjected to social sanctions. This phenomenon shows that verbal sexual harassment does not only occur in public spaces directly, but also in digital spaces that are increasingly difficult to effectively supervise.

From a criminological perspective, these factors show that verbal sexual harassment of women cannot be viewed as a mere individual act, but rather as a social phenomenon influenced by various structural conditions in society. The *social control theory* put forward by Travis Hirschi explains that weak social control in society can increase the potential for deviant behavior. If society does not have strong social norms to reject verbal sexual harassment behavior, then the perpetrator will feel free to do such

---

<sup>13</sup> Ronald L. Akers, *Criminological Theories: Introduction and Evaluation*, New York: Routledge, 2009.

<sup>14</sup> Nursariyani Simatupang and Faisal, *Criminology of an Introduction*, Medan: Pustaka Prima, 2017.

<sup>15</sup> Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning the Crime of Sexual Violence.

actions without fear of social or legal consequences. By applying social control theory more critically, it can be identified that the weakness of the four elements of social bond, namely attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief, directly contributes to the normalization of verbal sexual harassment. Perpetrators who do not have a strong emotional attachment to the values of respect for women, do not have adequate social commitments, and do not believe that verbal abuse is wrong, will be more likely to commit such behavior. The synergy between Akers' social learning theory and Hirschi's social control theory in the context of this study shows that verbal sexual harassment is the result of a learning process of deviant behavior that occurs in a social environment with weak social control: the perpetrator learns that the behavior is not sanctioned (*social learning*), and ineffective social control makes the perpetrator have no internal or external barriers to stop his behavior (*social control*).

In addition, educational factors also have an important role in shaping individual behavior. Low levels of education about gender equality and women's rights can cause individuals to not understand the boundaries between socially acceptable behavior and behavior that falls under the category of sexual harassment. Therefore, increasing education about gender equality and legal awareness is one of the important steps in preventing verbal sexual harassment of women in Indonesia. Statistical data from the Online Information System for the Protection of Women and Children (SIMFONI PPA) of the Ministry of PPPA reinforces how serious this phenomenon is. Throughout 2024, there were 35,533 reports of violence against women, an increase of 2.4% compared to 2023 which recorded 34,682 victims. Of all reported forms of violence, sexual violence is the most dominant type with 12,398 cases in 2024, or equivalent to 34.8% of the total recorded gender-based violence. Specifically, online gender-based violence (KBGO), including verbal harassment through digital media, recorded 1,801 victims in 2023 based on joint data from SIMFONI PPA, Komnas Perempuan, and the Service Provider Forum (FPL). These figures need to be read critically because, as the Minister of PPPA emphasized, the data is an iceberg phenomenon; Many cases go unreported due to victim blaming culture and social stigma. The 2024 National Women's Life Experience Survey (SPHPN) confirmed this by finding that 1 in 4 women aged 15-64 years had experienced physical and/or sexual violence, while in the campus environment, 77% of lecturers admitted that sexual violence had occurred but 63% of cases were not reported. From a victimization perspective, this data illustrates a systemic pattern of victimization, in which women do not only experience verbal sexual harassment as a single event, but as part of a recurring and layered pattern of gender-based violence. Victims experience double victimization: first as direct victims of verbal abuse, and second as victims of social systems that blame and silence them through the stigma of victim blaming. This condition makes underreporting a major challenge in law enforcement against verbal sexual harassment in Indonesia.

Based on the results of the analysis of these various factors, it can be concluded that verbal sexual harassment of women is a phenomenon influenced by various interrelated factors, ranging from patriarchal culture, social environment, low legal awareness, to the development of information technology. Therefore, efforts to prevent

verbal sexual harassment must be carried out comprehensively by involving various parties, including the government, the community, and law enforcement officials

## 2. Efforts to Prevent and Overcome Verbal Sexual Harassment Against Women in a Criminological and Legal Perspective

Efforts to prevent and address verbal sexual harassment against women are an important step in creating a safe and free social environment from gender-based violence. Based on the criminological and legal studies that have been carried out, efforts to overcome verbal sexual harassment must be carried out comprehensively by involving various parties, including the government, law enforcement officials, educational institutions, and the community in general. The approach used is not only repressive through law enforcement, but also preventive through education and changes in people's mindset.<sup>16</sup>

Preventive efforts are an important first step in preventing verbal sexual harassment of women. One form of preventive efforts that can be carried out is through increasing education and socialization regarding gender equality and respect for women's rights. Education about gender equality can be started from an early age through the family environment and formal educational institutions. With a good understanding of gender equality, it is hoped that individuals can respect the rights of others and avoid harmful behavior, including verbal sexual harassment of women.

In addition, socialization about forms of verbal sexual harassment is also an important part of prevention efforts. Many people do not understand that actions such as making sexually nuanced comments, whistling, or calls that demean women are included in the category of verbal sexual harassment. Therefore, a socialization program is needed that is carried out on an ongoing basis by the government and related institutions to increase public legal awareness. The socialization program can be carried out through mass media, social media, and legal counseling activities in the community.

Another preventive effort is to create a social environment that supports the protection of women. A safe and supportive environment can help prevent verbal sexual harassment and provide a sense of security for women in carrying out their daily activities. In this context, the role of the family and society is very important in shaping social values that respect the dignity of women. If the community has a high awareness of the importance of protecting women, then verbal sexual harassment behavior can be significantly minimized. In addition to preventive efforts, repressive efforts also have an important role in overcoming verbal sexual harassment against women. Repressive efforts are carried out through law enforcement against perpetrators of verbal sexual harassment in accordance with the provisions of applicable laws and regulations.

Law enforcement is one of the important aspects in efforts to overcome verbal sexual harassment of women in Indonesia. The success of law enforcement is greatly influenced by the quality of law enforcement officials, the applicable legal system, and public legal awareness. In the context of verbal sexual harassment, law enforcement not only aims to sanction the perpetrator, but also to provide protection and a sense of

---

<sup>16</sup> Topo Santoso, *Op Cit*

justice for the victim. The role of law enforcement officials in handling cases of verbal sexual harassment greatly determines the success of the law enforcement process. Law enforcement officials, such as the police, prosecutors, and courts, must have an adequate understanding of the forms of verbal sexual harassment and its impact on victims.

This understanding is important so that law enforcement officials can handle victim reports sensitively and professionally, and not ignore reports that are considered minor or trivial problems. The lack of understanding of law enforcement officials on the issue of gender-based violence can lead to errors in the case handling process, which can ultimately harm victims. In addition, the professionalism of law enforcement officials is also an important factor in ensuring the success of the law enforcement process. Law enforcement officials must be objective and impartial to certain parties in handling cases of verbal sexual harassment. This professional attitude is very necessary to maintain public trust in the applicable legal system. If the public has high trust in law enforcement officials, then victims will be more courageous to report the incident they experienced.

In practice, there are still various obstacles in law enforcement against cases of verbal sexual harassment. One of the main obstacles is the low level of case reporting by victims. Many victims choose not to report the incident because they feel embarrassed or afraid of getting negative stigma from society.<sup>17</sup>

In addition, victims also often feel pessimistic about the possibility of the success of the legal process that will be undertaken, especially if the perpetrator has a higher social position or has certain powers. This condition shows that social factors have a great influence on the success of law enforcement in cases of verbal sexual harassment. Another obstacle in law enforcement against verbal sexual harassment is the difficulty in collecting sufficient evidence. Unlike criminal acts involving physical violence, verbal sexual harassment often leaves no evidence that can be used directly in the evidentiary process in court. Therefore, law enforcement officials need to develop more flexible methods of proof, such as the use of voice recordings, digital messages, and witness testimony as legitimate evidence. The use of information technology in the evidentiary process can also help strengthen the victim's position in the legal process. However, proving verbal sexual harassment in the digital space faces its own challenges that have not been fully accommodated in the Indonesian legal system. First, digital verbal abuse content can be easily deleted by the perpetrator before it is reported, thus shifting the burden of proof to the victim. Second, anonymity in the digital space makes it difficult to identify perpetrators, especially in the case of online catcalling, anonymous sexual comments on social media, and sexually nuanced messages through encrypted communication platforms. Third, multinational digital cross-platform jurisdictions make it difficult to coordinate law enforcement. In this context, the ITE Law that applies together with the TPKS Law needs to be optimized for its use, including coordination with digital platforms for the preservation of electronic evidence. Law enforcement officials also need to be equipped with adequate digital forensic competence to

---

<sup>17</sup> Mawar Safitri, "Legal Protection for Victims of Sexual Violence," *IUS QUIA IUSTUM Legal Journal*, Vol. 27 No. 2, 2020.

effectively handle cases of verbal sexual harassment in the digital space.

In the context of national law, the existence of laws and regulations governing sexual violence is an important legal basis in law enforcement efforts against perpetrators of verbal sexual harassment. Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning the Crime of Sexual Violence provides a clear legal basis regarding the protection of victims and the enforcement of perpetrators.<sup>18</sup>

The law also emphasizes the importance of protection for victims, including in terms of recovering the psychological condition of victims after experiencing sexual harassment. In addition to the aspect of taking action against the perpetrator, law enforcement must also pay attention to the aspect of protecting victims. Protection of victims is an important part of the modern criminal justice system, which focuses not only on the punishment of the perpetrator, but also on the recovery of the victim. Forms of protection for victims can be in the form of providing legal assistance, psychological assistance, and ensuring the confidentiality of the victim's identity. With adequate protection, victims are expected to be able to undergo legal proceedings without experiencing additional pressure from the social environment.

The role of legal aid agencies is also very important in supporting the law enforcement process against cases of verbal sexual harassment. Legal aid institutions can provide assistance to victims from the reporting stage to the trial process. This assistance not only helps victims in understanding legal procedures, but also provides the necessary moral support during the legal process. With adequate assistance, victims are expected to get proper justice and feel protected in facing the legal process. In addition, the role of the community in supporting law enforcement cannot be ignored. The community has a responsibility to create a social environment that supports victims and does not give a negative stigma to victims of verbal sexual abuse.

Community support is essential in encouraging victims to report their experiences and provide the necessary testimony in the legal process. Therefore, increasing public awareness of the importance of protecting victims is one of the important steps in supporting the success of law enforcement. From a criminology perspective, law enforcement against perpetrators of verbal sexual harassment must be carried out consistently and firmly in order to provide a deterrent effect to the perpetrators. Strict sanctions against perpetrators are expected to prevent similar actions in the future. However, law enforcement does not only focus on providing sanctions, but also on efforts to rehabilitate perpetrators so that they do not repeat their actions. This rehabilitative approach is important to change the behavior pattern of the perpetrator and prevent recidivism in cases of verbal sexual abuse.

Based on this discussion, it can be concluded that law enforcement has a very important role in tackling verbal sexual harassment of women in Indonesia. The success of law enforcement is highly dependent on cooperation between law enforcement officials, the government, women's protection institutions, and the community in

---

<sup>18</sup> Komnas Perempuan, *Annual Record of Violence against Women in Indonesia*, Jakarta, 2022.

general. With good cooperation between various parties, it is hoped that the legal system can provide optimal protection for victims and create a sense of justice in society.

#### D. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the results of research and discussion on the criminological review of the phenomenon of verbal sexual harassment against women in Indonesia, it can be concluded that verbal sexual harassment is a form of gender-based violence that still often occurs in society and is influenced by various factors, such as a strong patriarchal culture, low legal awareness of the community, a permissive social environment, and the development of information technology that opens up opportunities harassment through social media. This shows that verbal sexual harassment is not only an individual problem, but also a social phenomenon that is influenced by cultural conditions and the community's environment. In addition, the behavior pattern of the perpetrators is generally in the form of acts of degrading women through sexually nuanced words that are often considered as jokes. Women as victims often experience psychological and social victimization, such as fear, shame, anxiety, decreased confidence, and limited freedom in activities. In fact, victims often face social stigma and victim blaming that cause them to be reluctant to report their experiences. Efforts to prevent and overcome verbal sexual harassment need to be carried out comprehensively through preventive and repressive approaches. Preventive efforts can be carried out through gender equality education and legal socialization to the community, while repressive efforts are carried out through strict law enforcement based on applicable laws and regulations. Thus, cooperation between the government, law enforcement officials, and the community is needed to create a safe, fair, and respectful social environment for women in Indonesia. The 2024 SYMFONI PPA data, which recorded 35,533 reports of violence against women — with sexual violence as the highest type (12,398 cases) — confirms that this phenomenon is systemic and urgent to be addressed comprehensively. Akers' social learning theory-based criminological analysis shows that the normalization of verbal abuse in a permissive social environment is the main mechanism of learning and repetition of deviant behavior, while Hirschi's social control theory identifies weak social ties and the lack of sanctions as factors that allow perpetrators to act without barriers. From a victimization perspective, victims experience double victimization: as direct victims of verbal abuse and victims of social systems through victim blaming, which has an impact on the high rate of underreporting of cases.

Based on the findings of the study, concrete recommendations were formulated as follows. First, for the government: (a) to accelerate the issuance of implementing regulations of the TPKS Law, especially those that regulate the mechanism for reporting and proving verbal sexual harassment; (b) integrate comprehensive gender equality education and sexuality education into the national curriculum from primary to tertiary education levels; and (c) strengthen the SYMFONI PPA data collection system by adding specific categories of verbal sexual harassment, including those that occur in digital spaces (Online Gender-Based Violence / KBGO). Second, for law enforcement officials: (a) increasing the capacity and gender sensitivity of police, prosecutors, and courts in handling cases of verbal sexual harassment; (b) develop standard operating procedures (SOPs)

specifically for handling cases of verbal abuse that are sensitive to victims; and (c) build digital forensic capacity to collect and secure electronic evidence of online verbal abuse cases. Third, for educational institutions: (a) developing a zero tolerance policy against all forms of verbal sexual harassment in the campus and school environment; and (b) establish an effective and accountable task force to handle sexual violence. Fourth, for the community: (a) building a culture of bystander intervention, namely active intervention from witnesses or people around the harassment incident to stop the behavior; (b) stop the practice of victim blaming and replace it with a culture that supports and trusts the victim; and (c) improving digital literacy to recognize, report, and prevent verbal sexual harassment in the digital space.

## References

### A. Laws and Regulations

Indonesia. *Criminal Code*.

Indonesia. *Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning the Crime of Sexual Violence*.

Indonesia. *Law Number 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights*.

Indonesia. *Law Number 23 of 2004 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence*.

Indonesia. *Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Amendments to Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection*.

### B. Journal

Fitriani, Rini. "The Role of Child Protection Providers in Protecting and Fulfilling Children's Rights." *Jurnal Hukum Samudra Keadilan* 11, no. 2 (2016).

Sapphire, Rose. 2020. "Legal Protection for Victims of Sexual Violence." *IUS Legal Journal QUIA IUSTUM*, Vol. 27 No. 2.

Suryani, Luh Putu. "Verbal Sexual Harassment of Women in Legal and Criminological Perspectives." *Journal of Law* 15, no. 2 (2020).

### C. Books

Mertokusumo, Sudikno. 2007. *Getting to Know the Law: An Introduction*. Yogyakarta: Liberty.

Santoso, Topo, and Eva Achjani Zulfa. 2015. *Criminology*. Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada.

Simatupang, Nursariani, and Faisal. 2017. *Criminology An Introduction*. Medan: Pustaka Prima.

Soekanto, Soerjono. 2012. *Sociology of an Introduction*. Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada.

World Health Organization (WHO). 2021. *Violence Against Women Prevalence Estimates*. Geneva: WHO.

Yulia, Rena. 2010. *Victimology: Legal Protection of Crime Victims*. Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu

Zulfa, Eva Achjani. 2018. *Criminology*. Jakarta: Rajawali Press.

### D. Others

National Commission on Anti-Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan). 2022. *Annual Record of Violence Against Women in Indonesia*. Jakarta: Komnas Perempuan.