

CRIMINOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF CYBERBULLYING CRIMES OCCURRING ON SOCIAL MEDIA (STUDY OF COMMENTS ON THE TIKTOK ACCOUNT ELYNAWA21)

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Article	Abstract
Keywords: Cyberbullying; Social Media; Virtual Ethnography; Criminology. DOI: 10.28946/scls.v2i2.4118	<p>This research aims to examine the phenomenon of crime in the social media landscape, particularly cyberbullying, which has become increasingly prevalent. The primary focus is on how the development of information and communication technology has facilitated bullying on social media platforms. Utilizing the social control theory by Travis Hirschi and Michael Gottfredson, this study emphasizes that individuals with weak attachments to social institutions, such as family, school, or community, are more susceptible to engaging in criminal behavior, including cyberbullying. This study analyzes comments targeting the physical appearance of individuals, where the lack of social supervision and weak self-control are identified as key factors contributing to cyberbullying behavior. Additionally, a low awareness of legal frameworks, such as the ITE Law governing online harassment, further intensifies this issue. The novelty of this research lies in applying social control theory within the context of cyberbullying on social media, highlighting the importance of strengthening social bonds and implementing social control mechanisms as preventive strategies. The study also provides valuable insights into the need for more effective law enforcement and educational efforts to mitigate and address the rising cases of cyberbullying in the digital age.</p>

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A. INTRODUCTION

Social media has become integral to everyday life in today's digital era. Through platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others, people can connect, share information, and interact with friends, family, and even strangers worldwide. Social media provides the ability to spread ideas, voice opinions, and build communities based on shared interests and values.

However, like a double-edged sword, social media also has negative impacts, such as spreading false information, deepening polarization, and increasing mental health risks due to social pressure and unhealthy comparisons.

On the other hand, social media has also become a platform for significant social and political change.¹ Additionally, social media provides a space for individuals and groups previously underrepresented in traditional media to voice their experiences and perspectives. By enabling broader participation in public discussions and information exchange, social media has become a powerful force in transforming how we communicate, interact, and behave online and in the real world.²

Cyberbullying is a form of aggressive behavior that uses digital technology to spread harmful messages, images, or information to someone.³ This can occur through social media platforms, text messages, emails, or online games. Victims of cyberbullying often experience intense psychological pressure, mainly because the attacks can spread quickly and reach a broad audience. Its impact can be severely damaging, triggering depression and anxiety and even leading to suicide attempts.

Cyberbullying, or online bullying, can be divided into several types based on the behavior and methods used. Generally, there are three commonly recognized types of cyberbullying:

1. Harassment or Defamation: This involves sending unwanted messages, comments, or images that emotionally harm someone. It can include threats, insults, or spreading false or embarrassing information about a person.
2. Flaming: This occurs when someone aggressively spreads offensive, demeaning, or provocative comments in online discussions, forums, or social media groups.
3. Impersonation or Outing: This happens when someone creates a fake account or steals someone's identity to demean or damage their reputation. Outing involves spreading personal or confidential information about someone without their consent.

Although these are the main types of cyberbullying, the behavior and methods used can vary depending on the context and the individual's ability to use technology. The role of parents, educators, and society at large is crucial in combating cyberbullying.⁴ Parents must be actively involved in their children's digital lives, providing guidance and supervision to help them understand the risks and consequences of unethical online behavior. In addition, schools and educational institutions should strengthen prevention efforts through training programs and initiatives that teach the importance of respecting others in digital spaces.⁵

The problem of cyberbullying involves several complex aspects. First, technological sophistication makes cyberbullying easier to carry out and more challenging to track. Messages posted anonymously or using fake accounts often make it difficult to identify cyber criminals. Second, there is a lack of awareness and understanding of the profound psychological impact of cyberbullying, both among teenagers and adults. This can lead to a lack of effective responses

¹ Andi Muhammad Agung Mulyana, M. Syukri Akub, and Hijrah Adhyanti Mirzana, "Tinjauan Kriminologis Terhadap Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Oleh Anak Dalam Bentuk Perundungan (Bullying)," *Jurnal Diskursus Islam* 11, no. 2 (2023): 83–95, <https://doi.org/10.24252/jdi.v11i2.34160>.

² Valentina Pinky Kristinawati and Edi Pranoto, "Tinjauan Yuridis Terhadap Tindak Pidana Bullying Di Sekolah," *Concept: Journal of Social Humanities and Education* 2, no. 1 (2023): 241–59.

³ Sendy Agus Setyawan, Mu'amar Gustaf, Muhammad Akbar Maulana Pambudi, Enggar Dias Fatkhurrozi, and Syaiful Anwar, "Pergaulan Bebas Di Kalangan Mahasiswa Dalam Tinjauan Kriminologi Dan Hukum," *Law Research Review Quarterly* 5, no. 2 (2019): 135–58, <https://doi.org/10.1027/1016-9040/a000314>.

⁴ Ismail Ismail and Andi Maysarah, "TINJAUAN KRIMINOLOGI TINDAK KEKERASAN BULLYING TERHADAP ANAK DI KABUPATEN ASAHAN (Studi Di Komisi Perlindungan Anak Daerah Kabupaten Asahan)," *Warta Dharmawangsa* 18, no. 1 (2024): 9–23, <https://doi.org/10.46576/wdw.v18i1.4253>.

⁵ Nur Fadilah Al Idrus and Yeni Widowati, "Cyberbullying Di Media Sosial Dalam Prespektif Kriminologis Dan Viktimologis," *DIVERSI : Jurnal Hukum* 8, no. 2 (2022): 217, <https://doi.org/10.32503/diversi.v8i2.2233>.

from authorities or individuals involved. Third, there are barriers to reporting cases of cyberbullying, either due to fear of further retaliation from the perpetrator or a lack of trust in the legal system or the technology companies responsible. Fourth, regulatory challenges are also an issue, as cyberbullying laws are still relatively new and inconsistent across different countries. This complicates the process of law enforcement and delivering justice to victims. Understanding and addressing these issues, we can develop more effective approaches to prevent and handle cyberbullying holistically.

This research aims to explore criminological studies in the context of cyberbullying, involving an analysis of the behavior of perpetrators, the dynamics of crime, and its impact on victims and society as a whole. The focus includes understanding the factors that influence someone to commit cyberbullying, such as motivation, social environment, and psychological characteristics. Criminology also examines the effectiveness of the legal system in dealing with cyberbullying cases, including the challenges in law enforcement and victim protection. Through a holistic criminological approach, we can develop more effective prevention and management strategies to address cyberbullying comprehensively.⁶

The novelty in criminological research on the crime of cyberbullying involves a deeper understanding of the dynamics of cyberbullying on social media platforms. Recent studies highlight how comments on social media can serve as a means to intimidate, harass, or spread harmful content toward individuals or specific groups. Criminological analysis also traces the motives and behavioral patterns of cyberbullying perpetrators on this platform while exploring effective responses and handling by authorities as well as the social media platform itself.⁷ As previously discussed, advances in communication and information technology have made it easier for individuals to interact with others, thereby contributing to the growth of cyberbullying behavior and the development of new forms of cyberbullying. The novelty in criminological research also includes efforts to identify gaps in regulations and legal protections related to cyberbullying and provide proactive policy recommendations to prevent and address these crimes in the digital realm effectively. By updating this criminological research, it is hoped that we can develop more adaptive and responsive strategies for the ever-evolving phenomenon of cyberbullying in the digital era.⁸

The author chose this title because of a desire to delve deeper into the factors that contribute to the occurrence of cyberbullying crimes and explore the efforts that law enforcement agencies can take to combat them. Cyberbullying is a serious and harmful phenomenon in today's digital age.⁹ First and foremost, cyberbullying can have severely damaging psychological effects on victims. Degrading or intimidating messages or content can cause stress, anxiety, and depression and may even lead to serious mental health issues. Additionally, cyberbullying has the potential to disrupt victims' social and academic lives, impairing their focus and performance in various aspects of life. Beyond that, cyberbullying often has long-term effects, with some victims experiencing traumatic impacts even after the cyberbullying has ended.¹⁰ Second, the crime of cyberbullying also creates an unsafe and dangerous digital environment

⁶ Emilia Susanti and Eko Rahardjo, *Kriminologi* (Bandar Lampung: Aura Publishing, 2015).

⁷ Hardianto Djanggih and Nurul Qamar, "Penerapan Teori-Teori Kriminologi Dalam Penanggulangan Kejahatan Siber (Cyber Crime)," *Pandecta: Research Law Journal* 13, no. 1 (2018): 10–23, <https://doi.org/10.15294/pandecta.v13i1.14020>.

⁸ Liano Rovi Frederick Rumbay, "TINDAK PIDANA CYBERBULLYING DALAM MEDIA SOSIAL MENURUT UU NO. 11 TAHUN 2008 TENTANG INFORMASI DAN TRANSAKSI ELEKTRONIK," *Jurnal Akuntansi* 11, no. 7 (2017): 142–50.

⁹ Agustin Pratama Sihotang et al., "Tinjauan Hukum Terhadap Tindakan Cyberbullying Oleh Remaja Dan Pencegahan Dalam Konteks Undang-Undang ITE," *Jurnal Komunikasi* 1, no. 6 (2023): 285–93.

¹⁰ Anggraini and Gunawan Bambang Indra, "UPAYA HUKUM PENGHINAAN (BODY SHAMING) DIKALANGAN MEDIA SOSIAL MENURUT HUKUM PIDANA DAN UU ITE," *Lex Justitia* 1, no. 2 (2019): 114–124.

for the broader community. Cases of cyberbullying that are not handled firmly can set a dangerous precedent and reinforce unethical behavioral norms in online spaces.¹¹ This can seriously threaten the integrity and safety of individuals in the digital world and may also lead to greater polarization and conflict within society. Moreover, cyberbullying can trigger distrust in legal institutions and social media platforms due to their inability to protect users from crimes occurring within them. Therefore, the crime of cyberbullying must be taken seriously by society, authorities, and digital platforms to create a safer, more inclusive, and empathetic online environment for everyone.

B. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a normative juridical research type based on facts, analysis results, and existing theories grounded in legislation (law in books). The author adopts formal and material legal approaches for the approach used in this research, with a writing basis of the statute approach and applicable doctrines. This approach connects existing laws and regulations with the realities of the cases.¹²

The data collection in this research involves both primary and secondary data. Primary data refers to information obtained directly from sources. The secondary data utilized in this research includes electronic news, books, articles, journals, religious scholars' opinions, and other scientific writings related to the substance of this study in both hard and soft copy formats.¹³ Furthermore, the data collection technique used in this writing is library research, a study of relevant sources to find solutions or constructive views regarding the issue or case under investigation.¹⁴

C. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In this article, the researcher discusses the issue of crime in the social media world, specifically cyberbullying, which has become increasingly prevalent. This study is supported by relevant theories addressing the issue. The theory used in this article is the social control theory, developed by renowned criminologists Travis Hirschi and Michael Gottfredson.

One of their significant works introducing social control theory is the 1990 book *A General Theory of Crime*, where they developed the relationship between social control, weak self-control, and the tendency to engage in criminal behavior. This theory's central concept is that individuals with strong ties to social institutions, such as family, school, and community, are more likely to adhere to existing social norms and avoid criminal behavior. Conversely, when these ties are weak or broken, individuals are more likely to feel free to engage in criminal acts due to the absence of adequate social control to inhibit their behavior. Therefore, social control theory emphasizes the importance of non-criminal factors in preventing crime, focusing on the role of social supervision and individuals' attachment to social norms.¹⁵

In the context of criminological research, social control theory provides essential insights into the factors influencing societal crime rates. Research shows that individuals with strong ties to social institutions tend to have lower crime rates, while those who feel isolated or have

¹¹ Yulianis Safrinadiya Rahman, "Kejahatan Kekerasan Dan Brutalisme Massa (Perspektif Kriminologi)," *Al-Adl : Jurnal Hukum* 14, no. 2 (2022): 269, <https://doi.org/10.31602/al-adl.v14i2.6284>.

¹² Mukti Fajar and Yulianto Achmad, *Dualisme Penelitian Hukum Normatif Dan Empiris* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2010).

¹³ I Made Pasek Diantha, *Metodologi Penelitian Hukum Normatif Dalam Justifikasi Teori Hukum* (Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Group, 2016).

¹⁴ Achmad Zainal Abidin and Ida Rachma, "Etnografi Virtual Sebagai Teknik Pengumpulan Data Dan Metode Penelitian," *The Journal of Society & Media* 2, no. 2 (2018): 130–45, <https://journal.unesa.ac.id/index.php/jsm/index>.

¹⁵ M. Wahid Nur Tualeka, "Teori Konflik Sosiologi Klasik Dan Modern," *Al-Hikmah : Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama* 3, no. 1 (2017): 32–48, <https://journal.um-surabaya.ac.id/Ah/article/view/409>.

weak bonds are more vulnerable to criminal behavior. By understanding the factors affecting an individual's social control, law enforcement, educators, and policymakers can develop more effective crime prevention and intervention strategies.¹⁶

Based on findings from studies like *A Criminological Review of Cyberbullying Crimes*, it is evident that social media has become a primary platform for bullying activities in the digital era. With easy access and frequent anonymity, individuals can quickly target and harm others verbally, emotionally, and even physically through platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Cyberbullying can take forms such as harassment, threats, spreading rumors, or creating fake accounts to embarrass someone. Victims of cyberbullying often face serious mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and, in extreme cases, suicidal thoughts. Therefore, raising awareness and prevention efforts is essential in promoting a safer, more inclusive, and empathetic online culture.¹⁷

Based on the analysis, netizen comments mocking the physical appearance of individuals and comparing them to items such as soy sauce bottles constitute bullying. The primary cause of unavoidable cyberbullying is the advancement of information technology. As previously discussed, advancements in communication and information technology have facilitated easier interactions among individuals, contributing to the growth and evolution of cyberbullying behavior. Another contributing factor is that perpetrators do not understand how social media functions and are unaware that there are rules that social media users must follow to avoid harming others. Younger generations do not understand laws regulating specific criminal acts, such as Law No. 11 of 2008 on Information and Electronic Transactions (ITE). This law states that hate speech and insults are crimes punishable by law. This lack of knowledge contributes to the increase in cyberbullying crimes.

Based on the comments, this falls into physical harassment or defamation. The comment was intended to mock the individual's small body size, implying that an animal could consume their stature. The individual responded to the comment with a smiling emoticon, showcasing resilience in the face of physical bullying.¹⁸

In Indonesia, physical bullying on social media networks is generally regulated by the Information and Electronic Transactions Law (UU ITE) Number 19 of 2016. Several articles in UU ITE are relevant to addressing cases of physical bullying on social media, particularly in the context of cyberbullying. One applicable article is Article 27, paragraph (3) of UU ITE, which prohibits the creation and/or dissemination of information or electronic documents containing insults or defamation of someone. Violations of this provision may result in criminal penalties, including a maximum prison sentence of six years and/or a fine of one billion rupiah. This article aims to protect individuals from cyberbullying and defamation on social media or other online platforms that could harm their reputation and psychological well-being.¹⁹

Based on the comments, the indirect bullying category applies. Comments referring to the individual as "unpleasant to look at," as expressed by phrases such as "no wonder the bitterness is here," fall under harassment or defamation, intended to insult someone's physical

¹⁶ Ni Putu Suci Meinarni, "Tinjauan Yuridis Cyber Bullying Dalam Ranah Hukum Indonesia," *Ganayaya: Jurnal Sosial Dan Humaniora* 2, no. 1 (2019): 299–308, http://scioteca.caf.com/bitstream/handle/123456789/1091/RED2017-Eng-8ene.pdf?sequence=12&isAllowed=y%0Ahttp://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.regsciurbeco.2008.06.005%0Ahttps://www.researchgate.net/publication/305320484_SISTEM_PEMBETUNGAN_TERPUSAT_STRATEGI_MELESTARI.

¹⁷ B M Nastiti and L Primasari, "KAJIAN KRIMINOLOGI TINDAK PIDANA KEKERASAN MELALUI MEDIA ELEKTRONIK (CYBER BULLYING) MENGGUNAKAN MEDIA SOSIAL FACEBOOK (STUDI PUTUSAN PN KLATEN NOMOR: 23/PID.SUS/2015/PN KLN)," *Recidive: Jurnal Hukum Pidana Dan Penanggulangan Kejahatan* 5, no. 1 (2015): 1–10, <https://jurnal.uns.ac.id/recidive/article/view/47756>.

¹⁸ Tofik Yanuar Chandra, *Hukum Pidana* (Yogyakarta: Sangir Multi Usaha, 2015).

¹⁹ Susanti and Rahardjo, *Kriminologi*.

appearance or behavior. In Indonesia, physical harassment can fall under criminal and civil law, depending on the context and its impact. However, for physical harassment occurring in social settings or on social media, the most relevant legislation is the Information and Electronic Transactions Law (UU ITE) Number 19 of 2016. While UU ITE is commonly used in the context of cyberbullying or verbal harassment on social media, its provisions can also be applied to cases of physical harassment conducted online.

Article 27, paragraph (3) of Law Number 19 of 2016 on Information and Electronic Transactions (UU ITE) states that every person is prohibited from intentionally and without authority distributing information or electronic documents containing insults or defamation. Violations of this provision may be subject to criminal penalties with a maximum prison sentence of six years and/or a maximum fine of one billion rupiah. This article is intended to protect individuals from acts of cyberbullying and defamation on social media or other online platforms that could harm their reputation and psychological well-being

In criminal law, several articles in the Indonesian Criminal Code (KUHP) relate to acts of physical harassment, such as Article 351 of KUHP, which deals with assault. These articles can be applied in cases where the victim suffers injury or bodily harm as a result of the perpetrator's actions. In addition to criminal law, in civil law, victims of physical harassment can file a lawsuit against the perpetrator based on principles of legal protection outlined in the Civil Code (KUHPerdata). The enforcement of laws and protection for victims of physical harassment, both online and offline, requires cooperation from various stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, government institutions, and the general public. Furthermore, educational, preventive, and advocacy efforts are crucial to reducing incidents of physical harassment and providing better protection for victims.

1. Factors Causing Bullying Behavior

Several complex factors influence bullying on social media. One significant factor is the anonymity provided by social media platforms, allowing perpetrators to act without accountability or fear of consequences. When individuals hide behind fake or anonymous accounts, they often feel empowered to engage in harmful and demeaning behavior without considering the impact of their actions on others.

Furthermore, social and cultural pressures present on social media can reinforce bullying behavior. As popularity and validation are often measured by the number of followers, likes, or comments, individuals may feel compelled to gain attention at any cost – sometimes by demeaning or attacking others. This competitive and toxic environment fosters a culture where bullying is seen as a means to enhance social status or attract attention, creating an unhealthy cycle of negative interactions.²⁰

Lastly, the lack of awareness regarding the psychological and emotional impacts of bullying contributes significantly to its prevalence. Many individuals may not fully understand that their words and actions on social media can profoundly affect others' mental and emotional well-being. Without proper understanding, some individuals may unintentionally engage in bullying without considering its consequences. Therefore, increasing awareness about the effects of bullying and promoting a more positive and inclusive social media culture is essential in mitigating its occurrence.

²⁰Ari Cahyo Nugroho, "TEORI UTAMA SOSIOLOGI KOMUNIKASI (FUNGSIONALISME STRUKTURAL, TEORI KONFLIK, INTERAKSI SIMBOLIK)," *MAJALAH SEMI ILMIAH POPULER KOMUNIKASI MASSA*, 2022, 185–94.

2. Criminal Sanctions Against Perpetrators of Bullying

Criminal sanctions against perpetrators of bullying on social media in Indonesia can be applied following Article 45A of Law Number 19 of 2016 concerning Amendments to Law Number 11 of 2008 on Information and Electronic Transactions (UU ITE). This article outlines penalties for anyone who intentionally and without authority disseminates information aimed at inciting hatred or hostility toward individuals or specific community groups based on ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup relations (SARA), which can result in a maximum prison sentence of 6 (six) years and/or a fine of up to Rp 1 billion.

Additionally, Article 27, paragraph (3) of the UU ITE is relevant to cases of bullying on social media. This article prohibits disseminating information or electronic documents containing insults or defamation. Violations of Article 27 paragraph (3) of the UU ITE can lead to criminal penalties of up to 6 (six) years in prison and/or a fine of up to Rp 1 billion.²¹

Bullying actions on social media may also be subject to sanctions under Article 310 of the Indonesian Criminal Code (KUHP), which regulates defamation. This article states that anyone who intentionally disseminates news to incite hatred or hostility against others can face criminal penalties. Violations of Article 310 of the KUHP may result in a maximum prison sentence of 1 (one) year and 4 (four) months or a fine.

Furthermore, Article 315 of the KUHP addresses defamation and can be applied in cases of bullying on social media. This article states that anyone who accuses another person of committing a specific criminal act that may lead to punishment and cannot prove the truth of the accusation is subject to a maximum prison sentence of 1 (one) year and 4 (four) months or a fine.²² Therefore, various articles in Indonesian legislation provide mechanisms for addressing perpetrators of bullying on social media. It is crucial to enforce these laws fairly and proportionally to deter offenders and ensure justice for victims of bullying.²³

The theory of social control in criminology is highly relevant to bullying actions, including bullying on social media. This theory posits that individuals are more likely to engage in criminal behavior when they lack social supervision or possess weaknesses in self-control. In the context of bullying, individuals involved in such behavior may have weak social bonds or feel unrestrained by social norms that discourage aggressive actions. For example, if someone perceives limited oversight or can bully without appropriate sanctions, they may feel emboldened to continue such behavior. Furthermore, individuals with weak self-control may be more inclined to express dissatisfaction or tension through aggressive actions like bullying as a means of emotional or frustration release.²⁴

Additionally, the theory of social control highlights the importance of social bonds and supervision in preventing bullying actions. Individuals with strong ties to social institutions such as family, schools, and communities are likelier to adhere to social norms that discourage bullying. Strong social bonds provide oversight and exert positive social pressure on individuals to avoid harmful actions. Consequently, fostering strong social connections and implementing effective social control measures through education, awareness, and appropriate interventions is essential to reducing bullying incidents.

²¹Sudaryono and Natangsa Surbakti, *HUKUM PIDANA DASAR-DASAR HUKUM PIDANA BERDASARKAN KUHP DAN RUU KUHP* (Surakarta: Muhammadiyah University Press, 2017).

²²Widodo, *Kriminologi Dan Hukum Pidana* (Semarang: Universitas PGRI Semarang Press, 2015).

²³Ni Kadek Nisa Alfiyana, "TINJAUAN KRIMINOLOGI TINDAK KEKERASAN BULLYING DI KALANGAN PELAJAR," *Jurnal Interpretasi Hukum* 2, no. 1 (2022): 269–274.

²⁴Sunarko Kasidin and Refaldy Wiragama, "Kebijakan Uu Ite Dalam Mengatasi Tindak Pidana Pelaku Cyber Bullying (Perundungan Dunia Maya) Di Social Media," *FOCUS: Jurnal of Law* 2, no. 2 (2022): 118–26, <https://doi.org/10.47685/focus.v2i2.305>.

D. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the growing issue of cyberbullying within the realm of social media, particularly on platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok. Using social control theory, as introduced by criminologists Travis Hirschi and Michael Gottfredson, the research examines how weakened social bonds contribute to the rise of cyberbullying. The findings suggest that perpetrators often lack awareness of legal consequences, such as those outlined in Indonesia's Information and Electronic Transactions Law (UU ITE), and that effective crime prevention requires the collaboration of law enforcement, educators, families, and communities. The study's novelty lies in its use of virtual ethnography to explore cyberbullying behavior and emphasizes the importance of a multisectoral approach to address this social issue comprehensively.

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