Public Perceptions and Sentiments on Sexual Violence against Women by Educators and Healthcare Providers

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Abstract. This study investigates public responses and sentiments on social media concerning two high-profile cases of sexual violence involving authoritative figures: a Professor at Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) and a Specialist Medical Education Program (PPDS) physician at Hasan Sadikin Hospital (RSHS). Employing a descriptive qualitative design and utilizing the Brand24 digital analytics tool, the research examines the dynamics of online public discourse between April and May 2025. The study seeks to elucidate how public opinion is constructed in cases of sexual violence perpetrated by individuals with structural authority, and how digital expressions of support reflect shifting societal perspectives toward victims and perpetrators. Particular attention is given to the declining prevalence of victim blaming and the emergence of greater empathy and solidarity with victims, as well as the function of social media as a platform for advocacy in confronting psychological, legal, and social barriers. The findings demonstrate a predominance of neutral sentiments (87%), alongside a notable increase in negative sentiments (11.6%), which signify public discontent with institutional responses. The study underscores the dual role of social media as both a communicative arena and a mechanism of social control that contributes to cultural transformation in the understanding of sexual violence.

Keywords: *Social Media, Public Sentiment, Power Relations*

Abstrak. Penelitian ini menelaah respons dan sentimen publik di media sosial terkait dua kasus kekerasan seksual berprofil tinggi yang melibatkan figur otoritatif, yakni seorang Guru Besar di

Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) dan seorang dokter Program Pendidikan Dokter Spesialis (PPDS) di Rumah Sakit Hasan Sadikin (RSHS). Dengan menggunakan desain kualitatif deskriptif dan memanfaatkan perangkat analitik digital Brand24, penelitian ini mengkaji dinamika wacana publik daring pada periode April hingga Mei 2025. Tujuan utama penelitian ini adalah untuk menjelaskan bagaimana opini publik terbentuk dalam kasus kekerasan seksual yang dilakukan oleh individu dengan otoritas struktural, serta bagaimana ekspresi dukungan di ruang digital merefleksikan pergeseran perspektif sosial terhadap korban dan pelaku. Kajian ini juga menyoroti menurunnya prevalensi praktik victim blaming dan munculnya gelombang empati serta solidaritas publik terhadap korban, di samping peran media sosial sebagai ruang advokasi dalam menghadapi hambatan psikologis, hukum, dan sosial. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan dominasi sentimen netral (87%) dengan peningkatan signifikan pada sentimen negatif (11,6%) yang mengindikasikan ketidakpuasan publik terhadap lemahnya respons institusional. Penelitian ini menegaskan peran ganda media sosial, tidak hanya sebagai arena komunikasi, tetapi juga sebagai mekanisme kontrol sosial yang berkontribusi terhadap transformasi budaya dalam memahami isu kekerasan seksual.

Kata Kunci: *Media Sosial, Sentimen Publik, Relasi Kuasa*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the growing public exposure of sexual violence cases in Indonesia's academic and healthcare sectors highlights that these are not isolated anomalies, but rather symptomatic of a systemic pathology embedded within institutional frameworks. Such cases are deeply rooted in entrenched hierarchies of power, wherein structural authority serves to protect perpetrators while simultaneously silencing victims. The persistence of these dynamics underscores not only the inherent fragility of institutional accountability and oversight mechanisms but also the glaring absence of secure, survivor-centered reporting systems—particularly in contexts where perpetrators exploit positional or structural authority to sustain a culture of impunity.

A concrete manifestation of this issue emerged in early 2025, when two cases of sexual violence involving prestigious educational institutions, Universitas Padjadjaran (UNPAD) and Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM), drew significant public attention. At UNPAD, a neurosurgery resident physician (PPDS) at Hasan Sadikin Hospital (RSHS) was named a suspect in an alleged rape of a patient's family member, while at UGM, a Professor from

the Faculty of Pharmacy was found guilty of committing sexual violence against his student within the context of an academic supervision relationship.

According to the 2024 Annual Report of the National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan), cases of Gender-Based Violence against Women (GBVAW) reached 330,097, marking a 14.17% increase compared to the previous year. Based on the type of violence, sexual violence accounted for the largest proportion of reported cases at 26.94%, in contrast to the previous year in which psychological violence was most frequently reported. These figures do not include the growing number of sexual harassment cases that have recently surfaced on social media, which have generated widespread public concern and underscored the urgency of examining the role of digital spaces in advancing women's rights issues.

Particularly in the two cases that have recently attracted significant public attention—the sexual harassment committed by a specialist medical resident (*Program Pendidikan Dokter Spesialis*/PPDS) and the professor at Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM)—the perpetrators originated from professional environments that are expected to uphold moral and ethical values. Both cases reveal a similar pattern in which the perpetrators occupied positions of structural and social authority over the victims, thereby subjecting the victims to psychological pressure, uncertainty, and fear in reporting the acts they experienced. This situation has elicited diverse public responses and sentiments on social media, emerging from various societal groups and reflecting a broad spectrum of perspectives.

Previous studies have examined public perspectives on sexual harassment against men using qualitative methods. Other research has demonstrated that public sentiment analysis can be conducted through algorithmic comparisons of sexual harassment cases on YouTube. In contrast, this study provides an in-depth investigation of public responses toward both victims and perpetrators in the cases involving the UGM Professor and the PPDS physician. These cases represent a relatively recent and distinct context compared to prior research; therefore, further exploration is necessary to understand the narratives of sexual violence, particularly in relation to public responses toward victims and perpetrators.

According to Brescia et al. (2024), sexual harassment refers to acts committed by an individual involving coercion to engage in unwanted physical contact with the victim. Sexual harassment does not only target the victim's body but can also cause significant psychological harm. Sumera (2013) argues that sexual harassment is an appropriate terminology to conceptualize the

broader meaning of sexual violence. It encompasses a wide range of actions, from verbal expressions and indecent behavior to coercive or inappropriate acts intended to obtain sexual favors. Similarly, the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, as cited in Dewi (2019), defines sexual harassment as any unwelcome sexual conduct, whether verbal or physical—such as gestures or behaviors of a sexual nature—that causes the other party to feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated.

Sentiment analysis is a method of text data analysis used to classify public opinion expressed in written form based on the sentiments reflected in society (Nurrohmat & SN, 2019). In relation to cases of sexual harassment involving two prominent Indonesian universities as well as a healthcare institution, such incidents inevitably affect the level of public trust in the institutions concerned. Conducting sentiment analysis on social media is particularly important in this context, as it enables a broad and rapid understanding of public responses. This is closely linked to the pervasive presence of social media in everyday life, which has become the primary space for individuals to express their feelings and reactions.

A previous study on sentiment analysis by Chandra et al., entitled Comparative Analysis of Machine Learning Algorithms for Sentiment Analysis (Case Study: YouTube Comments on "Sexual Violence"), revealed that public opinion tends to be predominantly positive (74.9%) and negative (25.1%). These findings suggest that society is increasingly inclined to support victims; however, the negative proportion, which remains above 20%, also indicates that a considerable segment of the public continues to engage in victim-blaming. Among the algorithms tested, Random Forest demonstrated the highest accuracy rate at 78%, while also achieving the fastest computation time of 0.122 seconds.

A subsequent study by Lamsery et al. (2024), entitled Unveiling Sextortion: A Sentiment Analysis of @perempuanberkisah, found that followers of this digital community responded to cases of sextortion on Instagram with thoughtful and considerate approaches. The sentiment analysis revealed 10% positive, 17% negative, and 73% neutral responses. The sharing of real-life experiences within the platform has become a space for providing input and mutual support in accompanying victims of sexual violence.

A study by Tresna et al. (2022), entitled Text Modeling of Tweets on the Issue of Sexual Harassment Based on Sentiment and Emotion Lexicon Analysis, reported that the classification model developed using the Naïve Bayes method achieved an accuracy rate of 74%. The sentiment proportions obtained from the analysis showed that 72% of tweets expressed negative

sentiments, 18.8% positive sentiments, and 9.2% neutral sentiments. These findings indicate that negative opinions related to cases of sexual violence and harassment remain more prevalent compared to neutral or positive sentiments.

Previous research by Dhian Yuli Prasetyo (2020), entitled Juridical Analysis of Nursing Personnel Committing Sexual Harassment Against Patients, examined the various forms and locations of sexual harassment, as well as legal policies concerning criminal acts of sexual harassment committed by nurses against patients in private hospitals in Surabaya. Another study by Yusuf Ansori and Khadijah Fahmi Hayati Holle (2022), Comparison of Machine Learning Methods in Twitter Sentiment Analysis, analyzed public sentiment on Twitter regarding sexual violence using four machine learning classification algorithms—Support Vector Machine, K-Nearest Neighbor, Naïve Bayes Classifier, and Logistic Regression—in order to compare their performance. Furthermore, the study Michel Foucault's Power Relations Analysis: A Case Study of Sexual Violence in Higher Education by Sumintak and Abdullah Idi (2022) highlighted that when perpetrators of sexual harassment hold significant relational or structural power, victims often experience confusion and hesitation, making it difficult for them to report the abuse.

Building upon these studies, the present research is directed at examining public responses and sentiments on social media, particularly in relation to cases of sexual violence involving a Professor at Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) and an anesthesiology resident physician (PPDS). It also aims to explore how public support on social media reflects shifting perspectives on sexual violence, as well as to investigate the responses of government and institutional authorities once these cases went viral. Accordingly, this study seeks to analyze public reactions and sentiments concerning the two cases, while also examining how expressions of solidarity reflect broader changes in societal perspectives on sexual violence. Employing a critical discourse analysis approach and drawing on Jürgen Habermas's theory of the public sphere, this research explores shifts in social perceptions of victims and perpetrators, the role of social media as both a platform for support and a space for deliberation, and the ways in which public responses are shaped through digital forums and beyond.

According to Brescia et al. (2024), sexual harassment refers to acts committed by an individual involving coercion to engage in unwanted physical contact with the victim. Sexual harassment not only causes direct physical

harm but can also inflict significant psychological damage. Sumera (2013) further asserts that sexual harassment is the appropriate terminology to conceptualize the broader meaning of sexual violence. It encompasses a wide range of behaviors, from verbal expressions and indecent conduct to coercive or improper acts intended to obtain sexual favors. Similarly, the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, as cited in Dewi (2019), defines sexual harassment as any unwelcome sexual act, either verbal or physical—such as gestures or behaviors of a sexual nature—that cause others to feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated.

Sentiment analysis, on the other hand, is a text data analysis method used to classify public opinion expressed in written form based on prevailing sentiments in society (Nurrohmat & SN, 2019). In relation to cases of sexual harassment involving two major universities in Indonesia, which also implicated a healthcare institution, such incidents have inevitably affected public trust in the institutions concerned. Conducting sentiment analysis on social media in this context is crucial, as it enables a broad and rapid understanding of public responses. This is closely related to the pervasive role of social media in everyday life, which has become the primary space for individuals to express their experiences and emotions.

Several studies have previously explored sentiment analysis in this domain. A study by Chandra et al., entitled Comparative Analysis of Machine Learning Algorithms for Sentiment Analysis (Case Study: YouTube Comments on "Sexual Violence"), revealed that public opinion tended to be predominantly positive (74.9%) and negative (25.1%). These findings suggest that society is generally inclined to support victims; however, the negative proportion, which remains above 20%, also demonstrates that a significant portion of the public continues to blame victims. Among the algorithms tested, Random Forest achieved the highest accuracy rate (78%) and demonstrated the fastest computation time (0.122 seconds).

Another study by Lamsery et al. (2024), Unveiling Sextortion: A Sentiment Analysis of @perempuanberkisah, found that followers of this digital community responded to sextortion cases on Instagram thoughtfully and with careful consideration. The sentiment analysis indicated that 10% of responses were positive, 17% negative, and 73% neutral. The sharing of lived experiences within the platform served as a medium for providing constructive input and fostering mutual support in assisting victims of sexual violence.

A study by Tresna et al. (2022), Text Tweet Modeling on the Issue of Sexual Harassment Based on Sentiment and Emotion Lexicon Analysis, demonstrated that the Naïve Bayes classification model reached an accuracy

of 74%, with sentiment distribution showing 72% negative, 18.8% positive, and 9.2% neutral tweets. These findings highlight that negative sentiments dominate public discourse on sexual harassment, reflecting a strong tendency toward critical and unfavorable reactions in online platforms.

Complementing this computational approach, Prasetyo (2020), in Juridical Analysis of Nursing Staff Committing Sexual Harassment Against Patients, examined the legal aspects of sexual harassment in healthcare settings. The study documented the various forms and locations of harassment and analyzed existing legal frameworks, thereby emphasizing the importance of policy enforcement in cases involving healthcare professionals.

Expanding on sentiment analysis, Ansori and Holle (2022) conducted a comparative study, Comparison of Machine Learning Methods in Twitter Sentiment Analysis, which evaluated the performance of four algorithms—Support Vector Machine, K-Nearest Neighbor, Naïve Bayes Classifier, and Logistic Regression—in classifying sentiments related to sexual violence on Twitter. This work not only confirmed the utility of machine learning in sentiment detection but also provided insights into algorithmic strengths and limitations in processing public opinion data.

Meanwhile, addressing the sociological dimension, Sumintak and Idi (2022), in Power Relations Analysis of Michel Foucault: A Case Study of Sexual Violence Phenomena in Higher Education, revealed that victims are often silenced when perpetrators possess strong power relations. The study illustrates how hierarchical structures and power asymmetry exacerbate victims' reluctance to report incidents, thereby reinforcing systemic barriers to justice in academic institutions.

Together, these studies demonstrate the multifaceted nature of sexual harassment research, spanning computational modeling, legal analysis, machine learning applications, and sociological perspectives. They collectively underscore the importance of integrating technological, juridical, and sociocultural approaches to fully capture the dynamics of sexual harassment in both online and offline contexts.

According to Brescia et al. (2024), sexual harassment is an act committed by an individual involving coercion to engage in unwanted physical contact with the victim. Such acts not only harm the victim physically but also inflict significant psychological damage. Similarly, Sumera (2013) argues that the term sexual harassment is an appropriate conceptual framework for understanding the broader meaning of sexual violence. Sexual harassment encompasses a wide spectrum of behaviors, ranging from verbal expressions

and indecent gestures to coercive assaults intended to obtain sexual gratification. The Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, as cited in Dewi (2019), further defines sexual harassment as any unwelcome sexual conduct—verbal, nonverbal, or physical—that includes gestures or behaviors of a sexual nature, which may offend, humiliate, or intimidate the targeted individual.

Sexual harassment can occur at any time, in any place, and may be perpetrated by anyone. This crime is not exclusively tied to gender, as both men and women may become victims or perpetrators. However, it is undeniable that women remain disproportionately vulnerable to sexual harassment. This is evident in the prevalence of sexual harassment and violence cases in which the majority of victims are women. The 2023 Annual Report of the Indonesian National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) highlights that the persistence of patriarchal culture in Indonesian society—where women are often perceived as sexual objects—exacerbates and perpetuates the cycle of violence.

Social media has become a central platform for disseminating information to a wide audience. Beyond its role in information sharing, it also functions as a medium through which individuals articulate their emotions, attitudes, and evaluations—whether positive, neutral, or negative—toward issues or events that circulate online. This form of expression, commonly referred to as sentiment, reflects how individuals communicate their feelings, emotions, or opinions in written form, typically through posts, comments, or reviews. Public sentiment, therefore, can be understood as the collective expression of such opinions and emotions by the wider community, particularly within comment sections and discussion threads on platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter), and Facebook.

The use of social media extends beyond the distribution of content, news, or entertainment; it also provides an interactive space for exchanging messages and opinions among users. These interactions frequently manifest as positive, neutral, or negative expressions, depending on the users' perspectives. Public sentiment on social media often emerges as a response to various triggering factors, including the spread of viral news, the implementation of new public policies, ongoing social or political events, celebrity controversies, or provocative statements made by influencers. Such dynamics generate active discourse among users, producing sentiments that not only reflect individual opinions but also capture broader societal attitudes within the digital public sphere.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to provide an in-depth account of public responses and sentiments on social media regarding cases of sexual violence perpetrated by a Professor at Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) and a Specialist Medical Education Program (PPDS) doctor at Hasan Sadikin Hospital (RSHS) in Bandung. The research specifically focused on the meanings and narratives that emerged in digital spaces, particularly concerning public support for victims and the shifting societal perceptions of perpetrators who occupy positions of structural authority.

Data were collected through three primary methods. First, social media observation was conducted by monitoring posts, tweets, and user comments that discussed the two cases of sexual harassment. The observation period spanned from April to May 2025 to capture the dynamics of public opinion in real time. Second, documentation studies were carried out by compiling institutional reports (e.g., Komnas Perempuan, SIMFONI PPA), online news coverage, and relevant prior research addressing issues of sexual violence, social media, and power relations. Third, the digital tool Brand24 was utilized to facilitate digital observation and sentiment analysis.

Data analysis employed the method of triangulation, combining and comparing findings from social media observations, documentary sources, and Brand24 analytics to ensure accuracy and consistency of results. The analysis proceeded through three key stages: (1) data reduction, (2) data display, and (3) conclusion.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research data were obtained using Brand24, a digital analytics platform that facilitates the automatic collection of social media content through a crawling process. This process enables the systematic identification and categorization of user-generated posts across multiple digital platforms. In this study, data were extracted from X (Twitter), TikTok, online video content, and digital news portals.

The crawling process was directed toward discussions surrounding two specific cases of sexual violence, namely the case of a PPDS doctor at RSHS Bandung and a professor at Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM), both of whom were revealed to have committed acts of sexual misconduct. To ensure data relevance, the hashtag #KekerasanSeksual was employed as the primary keyword filter during the crawling procedure. The selection of this hashtag

was based on its strong representational capacity to capture public discourse related to the core issue under investigation.

Through the use of the hashtag #KekerasanSeksual, the data collected provided comprehensive insights into online discussions regarding the cases as mentioned earlier. The results of the analysis are presented under four main categories: (1) Data Findings on Sexual Violence Issues in Social Media, (2) Public Sentiment, (3) Key Actors in the Dissemination and Influence of Public Opinion, and (4) Peaks of Public Opinion Crisis.
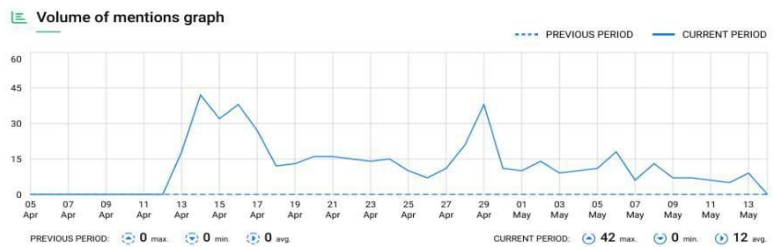
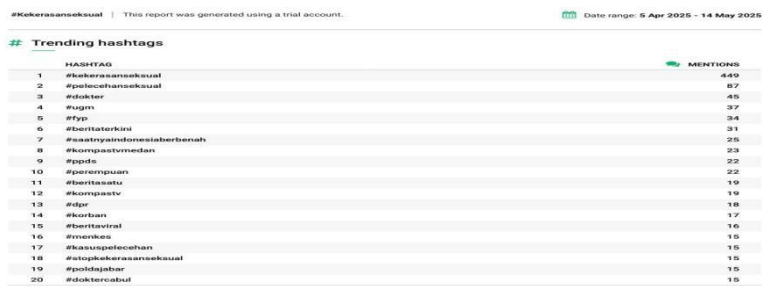**Figure 1. Social Media Data Findings on Sexual Violence Issues**

Figure 2 Hashtag #kekerasanseksual

Based on the analysis presented in Figures 1.1 and 1.2, using the Brand24 analytics tool within the observation period from April 5 to May 14, 2025, the hashtag #KekerasanSeksual demonstrated an intensive and significant pattern of dissemination across social media platforms. A total of 481 mentions were recorded during this timeframe, with the peak of activity occurring on April 14, 2025. Notably, a sharp increase in mentions began on April 12, 2025, indicating that a triggering event or piece of content had circulated widely in the days leading up to mid-April.
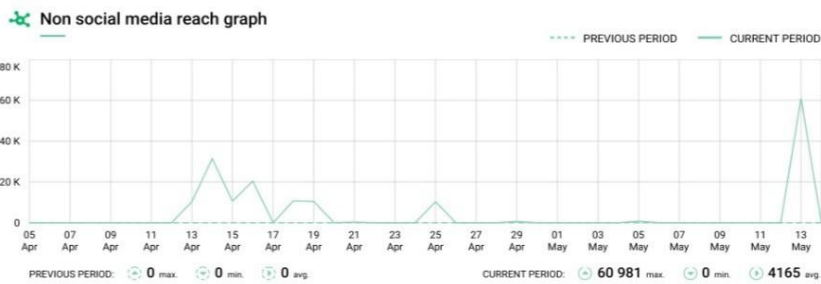
Figure 3 Social media reach graph

Figure 4 Non-Social media reach graph

Public Sentiment Analysis

Figure 5 Summary of mentions

The resulting sentiment analysis shows the following proportions:
- Neutral Sentiment: 419 mentions (87%)
- Negative Sentiment: 56 mentions (11.6%)
- Positive Sentiment: 6 mentions (1.2%)

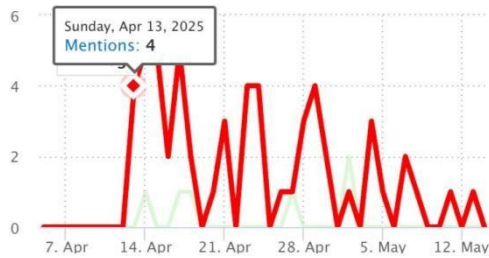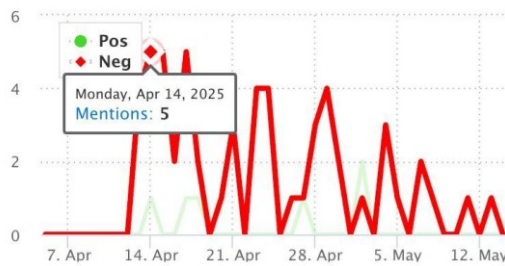**Figure 6** Negative sentiments began to be detected on April 13, 2025

Figure 7 Highest negative sentiment on April 14, 2025

Negative sentiments began to emerge on April 13, 2025, and reached their peak on April 14, 2025. This surge correlated with the growing public concern regarding the inadequate handling of the cases and the mounting criticism directed toward the institutions affiliated with the perpetrators. The negative sentiments predominantly reflected tones of anger, disappointment, and demands for justice for the victims. This pattern illustrates a collective emotional response from the public, condemning the actions of the perpetrators while simultaneously criticizing the educational and healthcare institutions perceived as failing to safeguard the victims.
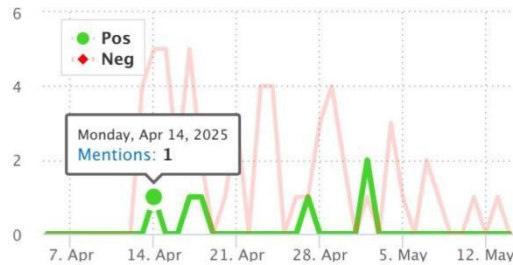
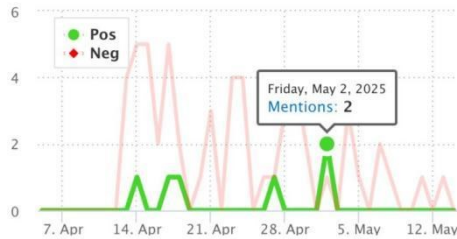**Figure 8 Positive sentiments began to be detected on April 14, 2025**

Figure 9 Highest positive sentiment on May 2, 2025

Positive sentiments, although relatively limited in number, began to surface on April 14 and reached their peak on May 2, 2025. These sentiments primarily stemmed from expressions of moral support for the victims and appreciation toward individuals and institutions engaged in providing education, protection, or advocacy. In contrast, neutral sentiments dominated the discursive space, reflecting the prevalence of informative conversations and narratives grounded in news reports, quotations, and the dissemination of factual content.

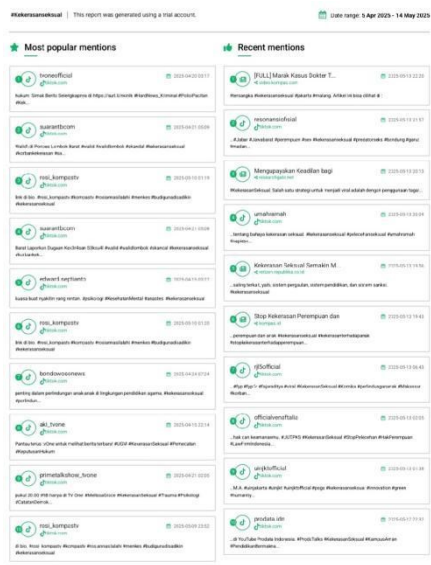## *Key Actors in the Spread and Influence of Public Opinion*

Figure 10 most active public profiles

Based on the analysis presented in Figures 1 and 2, mainstream media accounts and public figures played a crucial role in amplifying the reach of this issue. Among the most influential accounts, as measured by the number of mentions and potential audience reach, were: @tvoneofficial, @kompascom, @rosi_kompastv, @suarantbcom. These accounts functioned as initial opinion shapers as well as catalysts in mobilizing public discourse surrounding cases of sexual violence perpetrated by individuals from academic and professional elites.

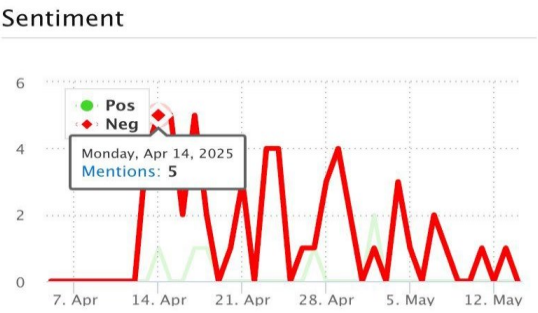The peak of the public opinion crisis was observed on April 14, 2025.

Figure 11 The peak of negative sentiment was recorded on April 14, 2025

The peak of negative sentiment recorded on April 14, 2025, represents a critical juncture in the amplification of this issue. This moment served as the primary marker of public reaction, triggered by legal proceedings, institutional statements, and the viral circulation of testimonies from victims.

Importantly, this momentum illustrates that the public is not merely a passive consumer of information, but rather an active agent in the process of social legitimation. The strength of public sentiment holds the potential to drive policy reform, institutional accountability, and cultural transformation in the way sexual violence is perceived and addressed.

Figure 12 Related News to the Public Opinion Crisis: April 15, 2025

Based on the crawling results, a crucial point in the spread of the sexual violence issue occurred on April 15, 2025, marked by the emergence of a popular mention from the TikTok account @edward.septianto. This post ranked fifth among the most popular mentions on the issue. Date: April 15, 2025. Posting Time: 3:27 AM WIB. Account: @edward.septianto (TikTok). Status: Included in the Top 5 Most Popular Mentions based on interaction performance. The content reads: "Power to hurt the vulnerable. #psychology #MentalHealth #anesthesia #sexualviolence"

This content highlights sexual violence from the perspective of power and mental health, a new form of framing amidst public upheaval. It not only presents the incident but also discusses power relations and the psychological well-being of the victim and perpetrator.

The Platform That Raised the Case

Based on the data collected through crawling using the Mentionlytics platform (https://www.mentionlytics.com/), the two cases under investigation were initially disseminated through different platforms. Despite variations in the platforms used, the primary purpose of these reports remained consistent: to inform the public about the incidents while simultaneously imposing social sanctions on the perpetrators. Among the platforms that covered the cases—such as YouTube, Facebook, TikTok,

Bluesky, X, and independent websites—two platforms emerged as the earliest contributors to the viral spread of the issue.

In the case of the sexual harassment committed by a UGM Professor, identified by the initials EM, the issue was first reported by Bluesky Mentions on April 9, 2025, at 08:50 WIB, through the online news portal Holopis.com. This initial coverage generated public sentiment primarily characterized by anger, marking the beginning of wider public engagement with the case. At the time of reporting, the coverage had been viewed by 34 individuals, serving as an early indicator of the case's potential to escalate within the digital public sphere.

In contrast, the case of sexual harassment involving a PPDS doctor, identified by the initials PAP, first surfaced through the TikTok platform via content produced by BALA PURIK (@balapurik). The post elicited strong public anger and quickly gained traction, having been viewed by 5,703 individuals and shared by approximately 478,000 users. This viral dissemination not only amplified the visibility of the case but also underscored the pivotal role of social media in shaping collective outrage and mobilizing digital activism against sexual violence.

Understanding and Analyzing Public Support on Social Media and the Response of the Government and Related Agencies

The phenomenon of victim blaming in cases of sexual violence, particularly against women, remains prevalent. Victim blaming occurs when responsibility for the crime is unjustly shifted onto the victim rather than the perpetrator. According to Campbell and Raja, as cited in Erikan and Hetty (2020), individuals who engage in victim blaming may come from diverse backgrounds, including friends, family members, and professionals working in institutions such as the police, judiciary, or even healthcare providers. With the advancement of technology, particularly in digital communication, the dissemination of news about sexual violence has become increasingly rapid and widespread. This exposure subsequently generates diverse public reactions, including narratives of victim-blaming.

Victim blaming is not a new experience for survivors of sexual violence. The circulation of sexual violence cases on social media often reveals comments that hold victims accountable for the crimes committed against them. Historically, sexual violence was stigmatized as a social disgrace (aib), which fostered derogatory and dismissive attitudes toward victims. However, contemporary societal perspectives have begun to shift. Increasingly, survivors have demonstrated courage in speaking out and reporting their experiences,

which has, in turn, encouraged more empathetic and supportive public responses. These positive reactions provide validation for survivors and contribute to empowering other victims who may previously have felt silenced by fear or trauma.

This shift in public discourse is particularly evident in the social media responses to high-profile cases of sexual violence involving a Professor at Gadjah Mada University (UGM) and a PPDS Doctor at Hasan Sadikin Hospital (RSHS). As illustrated in Figures 2.1 and 2.2, social media users demonstrated heightened awareness and solidarity with the victims. The digital audience not only acknowledged the injustices experienced but also expressed admiration for the victims' courage in disclosing their stories, thereby fostering a culture of support and advocacy in online spaces.

erikaratna13 6 minggu

Yg nyalahin korban please dipikir lagi, yg bermasalah itu otak dan tindakan pelakunya, dia gak bisa mengendalikan diri napsunya. Mau agama apapun, kalo individunya gak bisa nahan diri dan menghargai orang lain ya gitu jadinya walopun pendidikan dan jabatan tinggi.

❤ 7

Balas

Hydrogen @yggadaapa · 09/04/25 · · ·

Keren bgt korbannya bisa speak up dan proses ini kayanya butuh waktu yg ga sebentar. Hebat kakak" 🙋

💬 1   🔁 2   ♡ 26   ᴨᴨ 5,6rb   🔖   📤

Figures 13 and 14 Comments from social media regarding sexual violence.

Furthermore, as illustrated in Figures 2.3 and 2.4, the comments analyzed also demonstrate strong and explicit support for the victims. Beyond the physical harm experienced, victims of sexual violence also endure long-term trauma and mental health challenges. Thus, in addition to medical and psychological treatment, legal assistance is an equally crucial aspect of recovery and justice.

Interestingly, several users in the comment sections offered pro bono legal assistance, explicitly voicing their concern and willingness to support the victims in navigating the judicial process. This response reflects a form of public solidarity and empathy, particularly given the significant power imbalance between the victims and the perpetrators, who hold positions of authority. Such expressions of support reveal a broader societal awareness of

the systemic barriers that survivors of sexual violence frequently encounter, especially in terms of accessing adequate legal services.

The emergence of these responses underscores the critical role of digital platforms in fostering collective empathy and social solidarity, while simultaneously highlighting the inadequacies of institutional support systems. In this context, social media not only functions as a space for discourse but also as a medium through which communities mobilize resources and advocacy to bridge gaps in victim support.

Figures 15 and 16 audience and social media comments regarding sexual violence

The two sets of comments discussed above illustrate the high level of concern and empathy demonstrated by netizens. Online users were able to position themselves in the victims' perspective, thereby generating supportive and positive responses. This heightened degree of online concern significantly influenced public perceptions of the two cases and shaped expectations for firm institutional responses. Social media, in this regard, played a pivotal role in amplifying public discourse and pressuring relevant stakeholders to take decisive action.

Shortly after these cases went viral and triggered widespread online commentary, formal responses began to emerge. In the case involving the PPDS doctor, on April 8, 2025, Commission IX of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR) announced plans to summon the Ministry of Health and the Faculty of Medicine at Universitas Padjadjaran. The purpose was to seek clarification, evaluate the supervisory system for medical professionals, and ensure preventive measures against future occurrences. On the same day, the Directorate General of Advanced Health Services issued a lifetime blacklist

of the perpetrator from the PPDS program. Subsequently, both Universitas Padjadjaran and Dr. Hasan Sadikin General Hospital in Bandung confirmed that the perpetrator had been officially dismissed from the residency program. These actions were presented as institutional commitments to supporting the victim while simultaneously addressing the widespread public outcry voiced through social media.

Similarly, in the case of Edy Meiyanto, a professor at Universitas Gadjah Mada, institutional responses also followed soon after the case gained traction on various social media platforms and news outlets. Official statements released by the university and reported by multiple media portals confirmed the dismissal of the perpetrator from his academic post. This action was framed as a form of institutional sanction, demonstrating the university's attempt to address both the misconduct and the urgent demand for accountability raised by the public.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the crucial role of social media in shaping public discourse and institutional accountability in cases of sexual violence. Through the analysis of two high-profile cases—the PPDS doctor at RSHS Bandung and the UGM professor—data obtained via Brand24 and Mentionlytics revealed that online platforms not only amplified public outrage but also mobilized solidarity for survivors. The findings show that while neutral mentions dominated the digital sphere, negative sentiments reflecting anger and disappointment spiked during the crisis, driving stronger demands for justice and institutional reform. Meanwhile, the emergence of supportive and empathetic responses—such as offers of pro bono legal aid—illustrates how digital communities are increasingly positioning themselves as active agents of advocacy and victim empowerment.

Furthermore, the study demonstrates that viral dissemination of these cases pressured institutions to respond decisively, ranging from the dismissal of perpetrators to systemic evaluations by government bodies and universities. The rapid institutional responses following online mobilization underscore the transformative potential of digital platforms as tools for social accountability. Ultimately, this research confirms that public sentiment, when amplified through social media, not only raises awareness but also catalyzes tangible actions from policymakers and institutions, thereby fostering a more victim-centered approach to addressing sexual violence in Indonesia.

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