



Problems of Criminal Law Enforcement Against Social Media-Based Prostitution

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Abstract

Prostitution remains a complex issue influenced by social, cultural, and legal values, with roots extending back through history. In Indonesia, the rise of online prostitution has introduced new challenges in law enforcement due to rapid technological advancements. This study examines the Yogyakarta Police's efforts to combat online prostitution on social media platforms, focusing on their strategies and the obstacles they encounter. Employing a normative-juridical research method, this study analyzes the enforcement of positive legal provisions and the practical application of electronic transaction laws in addressing online prostitution in Yogyakarta. Findings reveal that the Yogyakarta Police employ comprehensive tactics, including Cyberpatrol operations and undercover investigations, to identify, infiltrate, and apprehend perpetrators. They further engage in community outreach and legal education initiatives aimed at preventing the social normalization of online prostitution. However, the study highlights significant obstacles, including challenges with digital evidence, the adaptability of offenders, and reporting barriers for victims. These insights underscore the importance of advanced technical skills and a deep understanding of digital crime dynamics for effective enforcement.

I. Introduction

In society, it is inevitable that social problems always arise and continue to develop along with the times. One problem that often arises is prostitution. Prostitution has etymological roots from the word "prostitutio" which refers to the act of placing oneself, exposing oneself, or offering oneself. This reflects how the phenomenon of prostitution involves individuals selling their sexual services, often in exchange for money or goods. Prostitution is a complex and controversial issue in many societies, and views and approaches to the issue may vary based on the social, cultural and legal values prevailing in different places.¹

Prostitution has existed throughout history in every period. It is not a new phenomenon, including in Indonesia. The practice of prostitution can be traced back to the days of

¹ Islamia Ayu Anindia and R.B Sularto, "Kebijakan Hukum Pidana Dalam Upaya Penanggulangan Prostitusi Sebagai Pembaharuan Hukum Pidana," *Jurnal Pembangunan Hukum Indonesia* 1, no. 1 (2019): 19.

concubines for male aristocrats, nyai for officials of the Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC) which was a company owned by the Dutch colonial government, even to the sex slavery carried out by Japanese soldiers against local women in Japanese colonized countries. History proves that prostitution emerged due to economic, political factors, as well as a patriarchal mindset that restrained women and made them sexual objects and servants. After independence, the problem of prostitution in Indonesia became more complex. Between the 1960s and 1970s, there was a significant wave of urbanization. Prostitution then became a problem specifically associated with cities. Many large prostitution establishments emerged and persist to this day. This phenomenon reflects the social and economic dynamics that have influenced prostitution trends in Indonesia over time.²

Prostitutes recognize that they are engaging in degrading acts by selling themselves. By selling themselves, prostitutes hope to make a greater profit than if they were to use the services of a pimp or pimps. However, most prostitutes also often rely on the services of pimps or pimps to find guests or customers, which in this case are men looking for sex. These pimps or pimps act as intermediaries between prostitutes and potential customers, assisting in providing customers and arranging transactions.³

The involvement of these pimps or pimps shows the complex dynamics of the prostitution industry, where prostitutes often choose to sell themselves for greater profit, but also need the help of others to get customers. In addition, it also reflects how there is a network or system that supports and facilitates the continuation of prostitution practices.⁴

Rapid advances in technology and information have had profound implications for social change, forming the basis for the creation of an increasingly complex modern society. This concept is in line with the views expressed by Satjipto Raharjo, who indicates that many factors trigger changes in society, with the role of modern technology being a significant reason for the social changes that occur today. The increased use of modern technology has contributed greatly to the transformation of people's values and behavior. In the increasingly advanced digital era and globalization, the phenomenon of prostitution has undergone a significant shift with the emergence of a new form, namely online prostitution. The development of technology and the internet has changed the traditional landscape of prostitution, bringing new challenges and considerations in a legal perspective. Online prostitution refers to the practice of

² Apriliani Kusumawati and Nur Rochaeti, "Memutus Mata Rantai Praktik Prostitusi Di Indonesia Melalui Kriminalisasi Pengguna Jasa Prostitusi," *Jurnal Pembangunan Hukum Indonesia* 1, no. 3 (2019): 367; Appridzani Syahfrullah, "Seks Dan Modernitas: Transformasi Tempat Prostitusi Di Jawa Pada Abad XX," *Jurnal Wanita & Keluarga* 1, no. 1 (2020): 17.

³ Oksidelfa Yanto, "Prostitusi Sebagai Kejahatan Terhadap Eksploitasi Anak Yang Bersifat Ilegal Dan Melawan Hak Asasi Manusia," *Jurnal Legislasi Indonesia* 12, no. 4 (2018): 3.

⁴ Ismail Syam, Andi Ima Kesuma, and Nurlela, "Peran Germo Terhadap Eksistensi Pekerja Seks Komersial Di Kota Parepare," *Alliri: Journal Of Anthtropology* 3, no. 2 (2021): 3; Ahmad Taufiq Siregar, "Sanksi Hukum Bagi Mucikari Dan Fasilitator Dalam Praktik Prostitusi Menurut Hukum Pidana Islam (Analisis Pasal 506 Dan 296 KUHP)" (Medan, Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, 2020), 6; Mauliadi Ramli, Ernawati S.K, and Abdul Rahman, "Germo Dan Prostitusi Online Di Kota Watansoppeng," *E-Journal Jurnal Pendidikan Sosiologi* 4, no. 1 (2022): 55.

providing sexual services that are organized, offered, or performed through online platforms, such as websites, mobile phone applications, and social media.⁵

The first traces of online prostitution were revealed in a historical context in 2003 through an investigation by the cybercrime section of the Jakarta Police's Special Criminal Investigation. In this case, it was revealed that prostitution transactions were carried out through an online page or website. This site displays photos of women who are offered to men seeking sexual services. If the transaction is successful, the pimp will deliver the selected commercial sex worker (PSK) to the customer's hotel room. This incident became a milestone in the emergence of online prostitution as a new mode and style of providing services to fulfill sexual desires.⁶

In response to the phenomenon of online prostitution, the Indonesian government took a serious step by formulating Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 19 of 2016 concerning Amendments to Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions. The purpose of this step is to provide a legal framework that regulates electronic transactions, including transactions related to online prostitution practices, in the hope that it can bring various benefits, one of which is to prevent information technology-based crimes.

This approach is in line with Bambang Sunggono's view, which reveals that the law is not only used to regulate existing behavior in society or maintain existing customary patterns. More than that, the law can act as a tool that can be used to achieve predetermined goals, and direct society towards better conditions.⁷

The phenomenon of online prostitution in Yogyakarta City has become an issue that raises concerns in the community. In recent years, technological advances have brought the practice of prostitution into the digital realm, where perpetrators and bookers of sexual services can interact through online dating applications. This creates an environment that is more hidden and difficult to track by authorities, thus posing new challenges in handling and enforcing laws against practices that are not in accordance with prevailing norms and values. This phenomenon also draws attention to the social impacts that may arise, including issues of exploitation and protection of children and women's rights. Such as some of the cases below:

In the first case, on June 19, 2023, three perpetrators of sexual exploitation of underage girls in Yogyakarta City were uncovered by the police. NS (21), RA (18), and BA (14)

⁵ Ni Komang Ayu Gendis Saraswati and Made Subawa, "Pertanggungjawaban Pidana Pengguna Jasa Prostitusi Online Menurut Hukum Positif Di Indonesia" 7, no. 4 (2018): 3; Winda Hayu Rahmawati., "Pertanggungjawaban Pidana Pengguna Jasa Prostitusi Online," *Media Iuris* 3, no. 3 (2020): 370; I Putu Diland Agustya Sandika and I Wayan Suardana, "Pertanggungjawaban Pidana Terhadap Pelaku Prostitusi Secara Online Melalui Sosial Media Line Dan Whatsapp," *Kertha Wicara* 8, no. 8 (2019): 2.

⁶ I Made Agastia Wija Prawira and Made Subawa, "Pertanggungjawaban Pidana Terhadap Pekerja Seks Komersial Dalam Prostitusi Online Di Indonesia," *Kertha Wicara* 8, no. 7 (2018): 3; Putu Ayu Gayatri and I Wayan Novy Purwanto, "Pertanggungjawaban Pidana Para Pihak Yang Terkait Dalam Prostitusi Online," *Kertha Wicara* 8, no. 3 (2019): 3.

⁷ Subaidah Ratna Juita, Ani Triwati, and Agus Saiful Abib, "Reformulasi Pertanggungjawaban Pidana Pada Pelaku Prostitusi Online: Suatu Kajian Normatif," *Jurnal Dinamika Sosial Budaya* 18, no. 1 (2016): 147.

allegedly trafficked and exploited children through online dating apps. NS claimed to have taken the victims on vacation to Yogyakarta and then offered them on dating apps for Rp250,000 to Rp300,000 for one meeting. They moved between hotels to avoid police arrest. The perpetrators used the Michat app to find customers and arrange transactions. Police confiscated evidence such as condoms, cell phones, and money in denominations of hundreds of thousands of rupiah. This case was handled under the law on eradication of trafficking in persons (TPPO) and child protection, which carries a prison sentence of up to 15 years and a maximum fine of Rp120 million. Investigations continue to uncover further allegations of this criminal offense.⁸

In the second case, five children were victims of online prostitution who were sold through an application at a certain rate by a pimp. Ironically, the victims did not get paid because all the income from the tariff was taken by the pimp. These victims include AR (15 years old), AP (17 years old), AS (16 years old), DN (16 years old), HN (16 years old), and SOR (18 years old) from various regions. Jogja Police arrested five suspects in connection with this case, including WD, PNY, DDK, AH, and FAN. The case came to light when a housewife reported that her child had not returned home for three days. Police investigation revealed that the children were involved in online prostitution. The suspect WD acted as a liaison and pimp, PNY as a pimp, while DDK, FAN, and AH were social media operators looking for customers. The victims were introduced to the suspect by their boyfriends, and they did not realize that they would be used as commercial sex workers until they were forced into prostitution by the suspect. All victims of prostitution never received payment for their sexual services, only basic needs such as food. The suspects sold these victims for around Rp200,000 per one-hour dating session. The profit earned by the suspects is estimated to reach an average of Rp1 million per day.⁹

In the third case, the Jogja Police have uncovered two cases of Trafficking in Persons (TPPO) and online prostitution involving minors. In these two cases, three perpetrators from outside Yogyakarta were arrested. Although not the same network, they have a similar modus operandi. The first case involved RA (18 years old) from Bekasi, West Java, and the second case involved NS (21 years old) and BA (14 years old) from Palembang, South Sumatra. This case was revealed after a report to the police. During the investigation, the police managed to arrest the three perpetrators in different locations. The perpetrators acted as online messaging application operators looking for customers and often moved between hotels in Yogyakarta. The two victims in this case, aged 15 and 16, are from Palembang and Bekasi. Both are currently secured at the Women's Social Protection and Rehabilitation Center (BPRSW) Sidoarum, Godean, Sleman. The perpetrators were charged with Article 2 paragraph 1 of Law Number 21 of 2007 concerning Eradication of Trafficking in Persons and Article 88 jo 761 of Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection. The perpetrator RA (18 years old) admitted that he knew the victim through a friend's acquaintance and charged around

⁸ Miftahul Huda, "Tarif Sekali Kencan Prostitusi Online Di Jogja Terbongkar, Ditawarkan via Michat," *TribunJogja.Com*, June 20, 2023, <https://jogja.tribunnews.com/2023/06/20/tarif-sekali-kencan-prostitusi-online-di-jogja-terbongkar-ditawarkan-via-michat?page=3>.

⁹ Triyo Handoko, "Lima Korban Prostitusi Online Di Jogja Dijajakan Rp200.000 Sekali Kencan," *Harian Jogja*, April 15, 2023, <https://jogjapolitan.harianjogja.com/read/2023/04/15/510/1132307/lima-korban-prostitusi-online-di-jogja-dijajakan-rp200000-sekali-kencan>.

Rp300,000 per meeting. Meanwhile, NS (21 years old) charged around Rp250,000 per meeting and had changed hotels five times within six days in Yogyakarta. These two cases raise serious concerns about online prostitution and child protection in the region.¹⁰

The fourth case of online prostitution and trafficking in persons (TPPO) in Yogyakarta City was successfully uncovered by the local police. The perpetrators of this online prostitution sexually exploit underage girls, offering their victims through dating apps for around Rp 250,000 to Rp 300,000 per date. One of the perpetrators, NS, from Palembang, took the victims on vacation to Yogyakarta, then marketed them through online dating applications to serve masculine men. The three TPPO perpetrators secured are RA (18 years old) from Bekasi, West Java; NS (21 years old) from Palembang, South Sumatra; and BA (14 years old) from South Sumatra. They allegedly trafficked underage girls and sexually exploited them, with victims KL and YF. The investigation began after information from the public revealed sexual transactions in hotels in the Nagmpilan and Pakualaman areas of Yogyakarta. The suspects used social media apps to peddle the victims, and after a vacation, the girls were offered on online dating apps. In the disclosure of this case, the police confiscated several pieces of evidence including contraceptives, the perpetrators' cellphones, and hundreds of thousands of rupiah in bills.¹¹

These cases indicate that the Yogyakarta Police has shown a high level of seriousness in addressing the problem of social media-based online prostitution. By uncovering and taking decisive action against cases of online prostitution involving minors, the Yogyakarta Police demonstrated their commitment to protecting the younger generation from sexual exploitation and trafficking. The quick and efficient investigations and arrests of the perpetrators demonstrate concrete efforts to eradicate this illegal practice. By applying the applicable laws and coordinating well with various related parties, Yogyakarta Police plays an active role in maintaining the social and moral integrity of society and creating a safe and equitable environment for all citizens. However, in law enforcement there must be obstacles and constraints in this matter so that in overcoming the criminal act of online prostitution.

This research was conducted in Yogyakarta for scientific reasons. From the preliminary research that the researchers have conducted, the phenomenon of online prostitution in this city turns out to have a unique pattern. Yogyakarta, which is famous as a student city and also a tourist city, presents a unique situation. There are thousands of student migrants, a never-ending flow of tourists, and increasingly massive use of social media. This combination has allowed online prostitution to grow covertly, utilizing instant messaging applications or social media accounts with fake identities. The impact of this cannot be taken lightly, ranging from the risk of exploitation of women and children, threats to social order, to conflicts with the cultural and religious values that have long been ingrained in Yogyakarta society.

¹⁰ Adji G Rinepta, "Polisi Bongkar 2 Kasus Prostitusi Online Anak Di Bawah Umur Jogja," *Detikjateng*, June 19, 2023, <https://www.detik.com/jateng/hukum-dan-kriminal/d-6781103/polisi-bongkar-2-kasus-prostitusi-online-anak-di-bawah-umur-jogja>.

¹¹ Suhamdani, "Yogyakarta Police Station Bongkar Kasus Prostitusi Online, Sekali Kencan Rp 300 Ribu," *joglosemarnews.com*, 21 Juni 2023, <https://joglosemarnews.com/2023/06/polresta-yogyakarta-bongkar-kasus-prostitusi-online-sekali-kencan-rp-300-ribu/2/>.

2. Research Method

This research adopts an empirical legal research method, also known as socio-legal research, as introduced by Peter Mahmud Marzuki. In this perspective, law is regarded as a social phenomenon, meaning that law is not merely examined through its normative texts, but through how it functions and operates within society. This study emphasizes the behavior and practices of law enforcement officers, particularly the Yogyakarta City Police, in addressing social media-based prostitution. This method allows the researcher to explore how law actually works in society and the practical obstacles faced by authorities.¹²

The research employs a sociological legal approach, which seeks to examine law in its social context. In this approach, law is viewed not as an isolated normative system, but as part of a broader social system that interacts with individuals and communities. The study aims to explain the implementation of formal law by law enforcement in handling online prostitution cases in Yogyakarta. Law is thus seen as a tool of social control and a means of guiding community behavior in accordance with legal norms.¹³

The data used in this study are as follows¹⁴ Primary data, obtained through in-depth interviews with members of the Yogyakarta City Police, particularly Mr. Cahyo Nugroho, S.H., who is directly involved in handling online prostitution case. Secondary data, obtained through literature review of reputable national and international scientific journals, legal textbooks, previous studies, and relevant official documents.

The data analysis technique used in this study follows qualitative analysis methods based on social sciences. Once all data have been collected, they are processed through several stages:¹⁵ Editing, which involves reviewing the interview notes and collected materials to ensure completeness, clarity of responses, and consistency of information. Coding, which is the classification of respondents' answers and field data into specific categories based on predetermined criteria. This step ensures the data are organized, systematic, and suitable for further interpretation. Interpretation, where the coded data are analyzed to draw meaning and insights related to the efforts and challenges faced by the Yogyakarta City Police in enforcing laws against online prostitution.

3. Result And Discussion

3.2 Yogyakarta Police Station Efforts in Enforcing Online Prostitution Crimes

According to Soerdjono Soekanto, law enforcement is an activity that harmonises the relationship of values that have been described in existing rules and attitudes as a series of elaborations of the final value of values, to create, maintain, and maintain peace in

¹² Muhaimin Muhaimin, *Metode Penelitian Hukum* (Mataram: Mataram University Press, 2020), 82.

¹³ Nur Solikin, *Pengantar Metodologi Penelitian Hukum* (Pasuruan: Qiara Media, 2021), 68.

¹⁴ Sigit Sapto Nugroho, Anik Tri Haryani, and Farkhani, *Metodologi Riset Hukum* (Surakarta: Oase Pustaka, 2020), 60.

¹⁵ Muhammad Siddiq Armia, *Penentuan Metode & Pendekatan Penelitian Hukum* (Banda Aceh: Lembaga Kajian Konstitusi Indonesia, 2022), 26.

life. The law is made by the authority of power as a system of supervision of human behaviour. As a norm it is binding for everyone to submit and follow all the rules contained therein. The existence of cyber law, in this context, also applies to citizens who often interact in cyber space. For this law to function, it must fulfil several legal requirements as follows:¹⁶

- a) A juridically applicable rule of law, i.e., if its stipulation is based on a higher or superior rule stipulated under applicable law;
- b) The rule of law that applies sociologically, that is, if the rule can be effective. This means that the rules can be enforced by the authorities even if they are not acceptable to the citizens (power theory) or the rules can be applied because of the recognition of the wider community; and
- c) The rule of law that applies philosophically, which is in accordance with legal ideals that have the highest positive value.

The operational strategy of law enforcement agencies in dealing with online prostitution is strongly influenced by the dynamic relationship between the structure of society and the authorities. The development of cultural practices in this context is not only determined by legal norms, but also by various social elements that have considerable influence on all stakeholders involved in law enforcement. The effective implementation of the measures taken relies heavily on the establishment of a level of trust that aligns with the overall trust among the different entities in the law enforcement domain, including law enforcement agencies, the underworld, and the general public. This trust not only includes adherence to established regulations, but also extends to government bodies that serve as watchdogs, ensuring the maintenance of legal principles.¹⁷

Based on Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 2 of 2002 concerning the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia, Article 13 explains the main tasks of the National Police which include three main points: 1) Maintaining security and public order; 2) Enforce the law; and 3) Provide protection, protection, and services to the community. By referring to the duties and authorities possessed by the police, the police have an obligation to enforce the law as an important step in creating security and order in society. Professionalism in the actions or behaviour of police members is reflected in their ability, responsibility, effectiveness, efficiency, discipline and future orientation in addressing the dynamics of domestic security developments. All these actions are carried out in compliance with the police code of ethics.¹⁸ Efforts made by Yogyakarta Police to prevent online prostitution include:

¹⁶ Verania Hedi Permata, "Online Prostitution Amidst the Rapid Technological Advances: Legal and Social Aspects," *Semarang State University Undergraduate Law & Society Review* 1, no. 1 (2021): 21.

¹⁷ Vladimir Mikhailovich Zolotukhin et al., "Sociocultural Aspect of Criminal Law Enforcement in the Russian Mentality," in *RUDN Conference on Legal Theory, Methodology and Regulatory Practice*, vol. 118 (SHS Web of Conferences, Moscow: EDP Sciences, 2021), 2.

¹⁸ Dewi Sartika, Rina Khairani Pancaningrum, and Joko Jumadi, "Penyuluhan Hukum Tentang Peran Bhabinkamtibmas Dalam Penyelesaian Tindak Pidana Dengan Mekanisme Restorative Justicedi Gunung Sari Lombok Barat," in *Komunikasi, Literasi Digital, Manajemen Risiko, Dan*

a. Carry out cyberpatrols on social media

To prevent online prostitution, it is crucial to consider the role of cyberpatrols in dealing with cybercrime, particularly cases related to social media. Investigators use two main methods to conduct investigations aimed at identifying tools and evidence, determining suspects, and establishing *tempus* and *locus delicti*, namely by two methods. Firstly the online method where this approach involves using computers connected to the internet to collect evidence and identify perpetrators. The online method also includes conducting computer forensic tests to obtain evidence and material through the use of computers or conventional technology. The second is computer forensic testing where this method involves conducting forensic tests on computers to gather evidence. This test uses both computer and conventional technology to obtain the necessary information.¹⁹

Cyberpatrol is a patrol activity carried out by the police in cyberspace, similar to patrols in the real world, but using internet technology as a medium. If in the real world the police conduct surveillance by directly investigating the movements of individuals suspected of committing criminal offences, in cyberspace, the police face limitations because they cannot directly see the suspect, the scope is wider, and there are no jurisdictional boundaries. Therefore, it can be concluded that Cyber Patrol is a police action in monitoring the activities of internet or social media users. If indicated to have committed a crime, then action will be taken.²⁰ The main task is to conduct cyber patrols to prevent and identify online prostitution information.²¹²²²³

The Cyberpatrol operation successfully conducted by Yogyakarta Police is a concrete step in dealing with the problem of online prostitution that is increasingly troubling the community. In an interview with Mr Cahyo Nugroho, S.H., a Yogyakarta Police investigator, it was revealed that the strategy of posing as potential customers of commercial sex workers (CSWs) has proven effective. The process begins with the investigating team creating false identities and interacting online with online

Pemulihan Ekonomi Global, vol. 4 (Prosiding Semnaskom-Unram Vol.4 No.1 Tahun 2022, Mataram: UNRAM, n.d.), 268.

¹⁹ Feri Vernando Situngkir and Siti Rodhiyah Dwi Istinah, "The Enforcement of Criminal Laws of Hate Speech in Social Media," *Law Development Journal* 2, no. 4 (2020): 2020.

²⁰ Jenny Iffanny Harahap, H. Nuriyanto Rahmand Soepadmo, and Ida Bagus Anggapurana Pidada, "Bali Police's Efforts in Minimizing Hate Speech Crimes Through Social Media," *Formosa Journal of Sustainable Research(FJSR)* 1, no. 1 (2022): 28.

²¹ Daniel Darusman Napitupulu, "Implementasi Kebijakan Hukum Pidana Terhadap Penanggulangan Prostitusi Di Wilayah Kabupaten Gresik," *Jurnal Kawruh Abiyasa* 2, no. 1 (2021): 7.

²² Edi Saputra Hasibuan, "The Role Of Indonesian Police Through 'Cyber Patrol' In Preserving And Maintaining Cyber Room Security," *International Journal Of Social Service And Research* 2 No. 8 (2023): 726; Francoise Dauce et al., "From Citizen Investigators to Cyber Patrols: Volunteer Internet Regulation in Russia," *Laboratorium: Russian Review of Social Research* 11, no. 3 (2019): 57; Ahadi Fajrin Prasetya and Astri Rahayu, "Penegakan Hukum Terhadap Perjudian Online Berdasarkan Undang-Undang Nomor 19 Tahun 2016 Tentang Informasi Dan Transaksi Elektronik," *Justicia Sains: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 8, no. 1 (2023): 23.

²³ Putu Diah Wiska Sasmita, I Nyoman Gede Sugiarta, and I Nyoman Subamia, "Efektivitas Cyber Patrol Dalam Mengungkap Kasus Pornografi Di Polresta Denpasar," *Jurnal Analogi Hukum* 4 No. 3 (2022): 280.

prostitutes. After an agreement was made on the price and venue, POLRESTA immediately made the arrest. Every stage of the Cyberpatrol operation was carefully and professionally executed. The operation plan not only covers the undercover aspect, but also includes arrest procedures that ensure safety and order in the raid. The arrest process is not only aimed at enforcing the law, but also provides an opportunity for the authorities to better understand the motives and background of the perpetrators. In the context of handling online prostitution cases, Yogyakarta Police's approach reflects a combination of prevention and enforcement. Cyberpatrol is not only an arrest attempt, but also a proactive response to prevent the spread of online prostitution practices within the Yogyakarta community. This shows that the police do not only focus on prosecuting criminal offences, but also on prevention and education as a form of community protection. Mr Cahyo Nugroho emphasised that in handling online prostitution cases, Yogyakarta Police understands the importance of providing fair legal treatment in accordance with the applicable rules. The perpetrators caught in Cyberpatrol operations are given the right to be questioned further, making the legal process a means to reveal the truth and gain a more comprehensive understanding of the case at hand. The implementation of Cyberpatrol operations in the region has been supported by adequate facilities and infrastructure. The facilities include various technologies and facilities used to strategise, carry out disguises, and involve special tactics in cracking down on online prostitution offenders. According to Mr Cahyo Nugroho, Yogyakarta Police Station has endeavoured to ensure that the Cyberpatrol team is equipped with adequate equipment to support the success of the operation. Digital communication and monitoring facilities are one of the main focuses, allowing investigators to effectively interact with online prostitution offenders in an online environment.

Cyberpatrol is one of the most effective strategies in dealing with online prostitution cases in the region. In an effort to crack down on perpetrators and reduce the practice of online prostitution, Cyberpatrol operations that have been carried out by Yogyakarta Police are considered successful and efficient. Mr Cahyo Nugroho said that Cyberpatrol involves technological approaches and online disguises to infiltrate prostitution networks. In this operation, Yogyakarta Police investigators actively monitored and interacted with online prostitutes through various digital platforms. This strategy allows the police to detect and identify offenders more quickly and accurately. The success of Cyberpatrol lies not only in its technical aspects, but also in the expertise of the investigating team in running the operation with meticulous care and discipline. According to Mr Cahyo Nugroho, the operation involved careful planning, including the selection of social media or online platforms used by prostitutes. An in-depth understanding of the online world and the latest developments in the practice of online prostitution is key in the implementation of Cyberpatrol. In addition, Mr Cahyo Nugroho highlighted that Yogyakarta Police's Cyberpatrol operation does not only focus on arrests, but also on further investigation into the offender's network. This allowed the police to identify the role and involvement of each offender in the chain of online prostitution practices. This holistic approach helps create stronger evidence and strengthens the legal basis for handling cases. Cyberpatrol in tackling online prostitution in Yogyakarta demonstrates Yogyakarta Police's commitment in facing the challenges of cybercrime. The success of this operation creates a positive impact, both in providing a deterrent effect to perpetrators and in providing a sense of security to the community. By continuing

and improving such operations, Yogyakarta Police can continue to play an active role in maintaining safety and morality in the ever-evolving digital environment.

- b. Socialising the legal consequences and impacts of online prostitution to the community

To address and prevent the practice of online prostitution, Yogyakarta Police Station conducts socialisation efforts to the community as an integral part of the prevention strategy. This programme includes the delivery of comprehensive legal information, providing the public with an understanding of the legal consequences that can be faced by perpetrators and users of online prostitution. In addition, counselling was conducted along with risk awareness campaigns that focused on explaining the negative impacts and risks associated with engaging in online prostitution. Within this framework, counselling is specifically aimed at groups that are considered vulnerable to the crime of online prostitution, such as teenagers or individuals who are in a more vulnerable age range. Through these efforts, the police aim to create better awareness in the community about the risks and consequences of online prostitution, so that people can make wiser and more responsible decisions when engaging in online activities.²⁴

Legal counselling conducted by Yogyakarta Police Station has an important relationship with efforts to build and create a legal culture in the community. Through legal counselling, Yogyakarta Police Station provides general legal education to all levels of society. This counselling process is the foundation for a better understanding of the law among the community. By providing information on the rule of law, including aspects related to criminal acts such as online prostitution, Yogyakarta Police Station opens up space for the community to understand the legal consequences of such acts. Legal counselling is an effective means to increase the level of legal awareness among the community, so that they can be more active and responsive to the development of applicable legal regulations and norms. Thus, the linkage of legal counselling by Yogyakarta Police Station directly supports the process of forming a stronger and more responsive legal culture in the community.²⁵

The legal counselling conducted by Yogyakarta Police Station has an important relationship with the principle of communication approach used to convey legal information to the public regarding online prostitution. Through this approach, Yogyakarta Police Station aims to gain a deeper understanding of the problems that may be faced by the community around, including online prostitution. The communication approach used in this counselling is not only informative, but also dialogical. By gaining an understanding of the problems faced by the community, Yogyakarta Police Station can present legal information in a way that is more relevant and appropriate to the local context. Moreover, this communication approach allows for dialogue with the community, listening to the problems they face, and jointly seeking appropriate solutions. Therefore, the link between legal counselling and this

²⁴ Yolla Fitri Amilia, Haryadi, and Dheny Wahyudi, "Penyidikan Tindak Pidana Prostitusi Secara Online," *PAMPAS: Journal Of Criminal* 2 1 (2021): 532.

²⁵ Yul Ernis, "Implikasi Penyuluhan Hukum Langsung Terhadap Peningkatan Kesadaran Hukum Masyarakat (Implication Of Direct Legal Education To The Improvement Of Public Legal Awareness)," *Jurnal Penelitian Hukum de Jure* 18 No. 4 (2018): 481.

communication approach is important, as it not only provides legal information, but also creates a participatory space that allows communities to contribute to problem solving and the establishment of a stronger legal culture in their neighbourhoods.²⁶

Based on the results of the interview with Mr Cahyo Nugroho, S.H., the socialisation efforts towards the community have been carried out well. Yogyakarta Police Station has realised the importance of providing an understanding to the community regarding the existence and negative impact of online prostitution. Through various socialisation activities, the police have tried to explain that online prostitution is not only a violation of the law, but can also damage social morality and harm society as a whole. Socialisation efforts are conducted with a comprehensive approach, touching on sensitive aspects related to the practice of online prostitution. Mr Cahyo Nugroho explained that people need to understand the dangers and long-term impacts that online prostitution can cause. Therefore, through the socialisation campaign, Yogyakarta Police Station seeks to form a shared understanding of the urgency of social control over community members in the region. The importance of social control was emphasised in every socialisation session. Mr Cahyo Nugroho emphasised that the community has a key role in preventing and tackling online prostitution in their neighbourhood. By increasing community understanding, Yogyakarta Police Station hopes to create a safer environment free from the negative impacts of online prostitution practices. The socialisation conducted by Yogyakarta Police Station not only educates, but also opens a space for dialogue and collaboration between the police and the community. Thus, this effort is not just about providing information, but also forming a positive bond between the authorities and the community. Through this approach, it is hoped that the community can be more proactive in maintaining morality and common welfare, creating a safer and more conducive environment in Yogyakarta.

c. Conduct socialisation to schools

Legal counselling is an important initiative in disseminating information and understanding of legal norms and regulations to the public. Legal counselling efforts by Yogyakarta Police on the issue of online prostitution can be interpreted as a concrete form of such activities. In the context of school counselling on online prostitution, the direct and indirect approaches described in the paragraph can be an important foundation for detailing the counselling strategies applied by the police. Direct legal counselling methods, such as integrated legal counselling lectures, socialisation of laws, and legal counselling exhibitions, can be adopted by Yogyakarta Police in interacting directly with students. The application of these methods can create a space for dialogue and interaction between extension workers and the community, facilitating a deeper understanding of the issue of online prostitution. In contrast, indirect legal counselling methods, such as through print and electronic media, including online legal counselling, legal culture stage performances, and media talk shows, can provide a broader dimension in reaching a larger audience, including students who are connected online. The use of print and electronic media

²⁶ Teguh S Prakarsa, Muzakkir, and Yuhdi Fahrimal, "Strategi Komunikasi Bhabinkamtibmas Dalam Meningkatkan Kesadaran Hukum Masyarakat Di Kabupaten Nagan Raya," *JIMSI: Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Komunikasi* 1, no. 1 (2021): 25.

can extend the reach of counselling, create awareness at a broader level, and provide accessibility for communities that may be difficult to reach directly. Combining direct and indirect legal counselling methods can achieve optimal effectiveness in conveying information about online prostitution among school students. This approach is in line with the aim to build a legal culture among the younger generation, equipping them with sufficient knowledge to avoid the risks and negative impacts of online prostitution practices.²⁷

Collaboration with educational institutions is an important aspect in delivering this preventive message, where the police can organise counselling sessions in schools to educate students on the dangers of online prostitution. The use of social media and online platforms are also leveraged as effective outreach tools, disseminating information through visualisations, infographics and short videos to reach a wider audience. Community engagement is a hands-on approach to interact with the public, answer questions, and build awareness through open discussions in community forums.²⁸

To develop understanding and legal awareness among the younger generation, especially in the school environment, legal counselling conducted by Yogyakarta Police on the issue of online prostitution has great significance. In accordance with the legal regulations governing police duties, specifically the Law of the Indonesian National Police Number 2 of 2002, legal counselling is the main foundation for realising the objectives of the National Police, namely maintaining security, enforcing the law, and providing protection and services to the community. Legal counselling in schools has great relevance in preventing and tackling the practice of online prostitution. By providing a good understanding of the legal aspects related to the act, Yogyakarta Police Station proactively contributes to building a legal culture among students. The counselling process is not only informative but also educative, enabling the younger generation to understand the risks and negative impacts of online prostitution on themselves and society.

Based on an interview with Mr Cahyo Nugroho, S.H., an investigator at Yogyakarta Police Station, it was revealed that socialisation efforts towards the community, especially teenagers, have been well implemented by the PPA (Protection of Women and Children) unit. The PPA unit actively conducts socialisation in schools to provide understanding to teenagers about the dangers of online prostitution that can damage the morals of society.

To prevent this, Bp. Cahyo Nugroho emphasised that the socialisation activities should be conducted routinely and intensively. The PPA Unit of Yogyakarta Police Station explains to teenagers in schools the negative impact of online prostitution,

²⁷ Esti Aryani and Triwanto, "Penyuluhan Hukum Tentang Kenakalan Remaja Dan Penanganannya," *Empowerment : Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 4, no. 3 (2021): 249.

²⁸ Wirandi and Rahman Syamsuddin, "Tinjauan Yuridis Terhadap Prostitusi Online Melalui Aplikasi Daring Di Kota Makassar," *Alauddin Law Development Journal (ALDEV)* 4, no. 3 (2022): 5; Indra Muchlis Adnan, Muannif Ridwan, and Vivi Arfiani Siregar, "Penyuluhan Hukum Tentang Pemahaman Siswa SMK Terhadap Bullying Dalam Perspektif Hukum Pidana Dan Perdatadi SMK Dr. Indra Adnan Indragiri College Tembilahan," *KANGMAS: Karya Ilmiah Pengabdian Masyarakat* 1, no. 3 (2020): 172.

especially in terms of moral damage and the psychological impact that can affect their personal development. The socialisation aims to build teenagers' awareness of the dangers of online prostitution and provide them with sufficient knowledge to avoid falling into the practice. According to him, special emphasis was placed on understanding that the perpetrators of online prostitution are not limited to adults, but also involve teenagers. This awareness is considered important to provide protection to teenagers from the potential threat of online prostitution that can damage their future and morality. Socialisation in schools is conducted with an interactive approach and touches on aspects of adolescents' daily lives. The socialisation materials are designed to be in line with the understanding and language of teenagers, so that the information conveyed can be absorbed and have a positive impact. Through socialisation activities in schools, Yogyakarta Police Station not only provides information, but also opens up space for discussion and questions and answers. This aims to create an open dialogue between the organisers and the teenagers, build a trusting relationship, and provide space for teenagers to express any questions or concerns they may have.

d. Prosecution of perpetrators as a deterrent

The punishment of online prostitution offenders by Yogyakarta Police can be seen as an implementation of the deterrence approach, which is basically a repressive law enforcement strategy. This approach involves the use of criminal and administrative sanctions to prevent future criminal acts. As discussed earlier, repressive law enforcement becomes relevant when an offence has already occurred, and the deterrence approach is key in reducing the likelihood of recurrence. In the context of online prostitution, the conviction of perpetrators by Yogyakarta Police reflects the criminal sanctions imposed in response to the crime that has occurred. The deterrence approach in this case indicates that the perpetrators of online prostitution will be faced with serious punitive consequences, including criminal penalties in accordance with the applicable statutory provisions. These criminal sanctions are expected to create a significant deterrent effect, both on the direct perpetrators and on the wider community.²⁹

Most discussions on deterrence mechanisms distinguish between "general" and "special" deterrence (Cook, 1980). General deterrence is the idea that the general public is influenced not to commit crimes when it sees that punishment inevitably follows the commission of a crime. Meanwhile, specialised deterrence involves punishments given to offenders with the aim of preventing them from committing crimes in the future. Most of the literature evaluating deterrence has focussed on the effects of changes in the certainty, speed, and severity of punishment associated with specific acts on the prevalence of those crimes. In the context of the sentencing of online prostitution offenders by Yogyakarta Police, deterrence theory becomes a relevant and significant framework. The general deterrence concept is reflected in the attempt to show the general public that the act of online prostitution will be followed by a definite punishment and in accordance with the applicable legal provisions.

²⁹ Hilda Swandani Prastiti, "Menakar Efektivitas Pendekatan Penaatan (Compliance Approach) Dan Pendekatan Penjeraan (Deterrence Approach) Dalam Penegakan Hukum Lingkungan," *Tanjungpura Law Journal* 6, no. 1 (2022): 7.

Through strict punishment, Yogyakarta Police Station hopes to shape social norms that reject and create disapproval of online prostitution practices among the public. Meanwhile, special deterrence is the focus in the direct punishment of online prostitution offenders. The punishment imposed aims to create a deterrent effect, i.e. to teach offenders a lesson so that they do not repeat similar criminal acts in the future. By exposing offenders to the serious and adverse consequences of punishment, Yogyakarta Police Station seeks to reduce individuals' incentives to engage in online prostitution.³⁰

The deterrence approach in the context of law enforcement against online prostitution offenders by Yogyakarta Police Station, plays a key role in preventing similar acts from occurring in the future. In this situation, the conviction of online prostitution offenders by Yogyakarta Police can be considered as a deterrence instrument that has a general effect. That is, the punitive measures implemented aim to provide a deterrent effect to the wider community, including potential offenders, so that they are not tempted to engage in online prostitution practices. The punishment creates knowledge and understanding among the public regarding the penalties they will face if they engage in such illegal activities. Specifically, the security education provided by Yogyakarta Police Station, such as legal counselling and providing information on the negative consequences of policy violations, plays a role in achieving the goal of general deterrence. Employees or the general public involved in online prostitution activities can be targeted by this education, and the knowledge they gain is expected to create a widespread deterrent effect. By detailing these concepts, it can be understood that the conviction of online prostitution offenders by Yogyakarta Police Station is not only a response to a crime that has already occurred, but also a prevention strategy that can shape social norms that reject the practice of online prostitution. The deterrent effect of conviction is expected to create significant behavioural change among the public, reduce the likelihood of recurrence of online prostitution, and overall, support more effective law enforcement efforts.³¹

Enforcement as an instrument of punishment applied by Yogyakarta Police Station does not only function as a response to violations of the law, but also as a means to provide a deterrent effect for those involved and can create concerns and also resistance to the practice of online prostitution among the community, especially among youth. Through a transparent and accountable legal process, these convictions are expected to send a strong signal that online prostitution will not be tolerated and will be heavily penalised. The importance of this deterrent effect lies in its potential to change people's behaviour and perceptions towards online prostitution. By emphasising strict punitive consequences in accordance with the applicable regulations, Yogyakarta Police Station can make a substantial contribution in shaping norms and values that reject the practice of online prostitution among youth.

³⁰ Anthony A. Braga, David Weisburd, and Brandon Turchan, "Focused Deterrence Strategies Effects on Crime: A Systematic Review," *Campbell Syst Rev* 15, no. 3 (2019): 5.

³¹ Bora Kim, Do-Yeon Lee, and Beomsoo Kim, "Deterrent Effects Of Punishment And Training On Insider Security Threats: Afieldexperiment On Phishing Attacks," *BEHAVIOUR & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY* 39, no. 11 (2020): 1159; Juste Abramovaite et al., "Classical Deterrence Theory Revisited: An Empirical Analysis of Police Force Areas in England and Wale," *European Journal of Criminology* 20, no. 5 (2023): 1675.

Consistent sentencing can also create a general deterrence effect, reducing the motivation of potential offenders to engage in such illegal activities.³²

3.3 Constraints Faced by Yogyakarta Police in Overcoming Online Prostitution

Yogyakarta Police Station has shown a strong commitment to preventing and tackling online prostitution in the region. However, there are still some obstacles faced in overcoming online prostitution in the region. The efforts that have been made by Yogyakarta Police need to be continuously developed and adapted to technological developments and changes in the behaviour patterns of online prostitution offenders. Strong synergy between the police, local government, and other related parties is needed to formulate firmer policies and regulations to effectively tackle online prostitution. In addition, public education campaigns also need to be strengthened to raise awareness of the risks and negative impacts of online prostitution. The barriers include:

a. Investigators must enter the online prostitution network

Based on the results of an interview with Mr Cahyo Nugroho, S.H., one of the main obstacles in the effort to overcome online prostitution is the difficulty to enter as a customer on certain social media. In handling online prostitution cases, Yogyakarta Police investigators must go undercover as potential customers of commercial sex workers (CSWs) through social media used by prostitution offenders. Through this approach, investigators can directly observe and monitor the practice of online prostitution, record evidence needed for case disclosure, and identify the main actors in the prostitution network. According to Mr Cahyo Nugroho, investigators must adapt to the various social media platforms where online prostitution transactions take place. They need to create fake accounts and investigate carefully to obtain enough information to conduct undercover operations. This process not only requires technical expertise in using social media, but also requires emotional and psychological resilience from investigators, given the nature of the activities undertaken.

According to him, one significant effort in tackling online prostitution is through undercover strategies. Disguise is an important and effective approach in operations against online prostitution offenders. Bp. Cahyo Nugroho emphasised that the undercover strategy is an effective way to respond to the increasingly complex dynamics of online prostitution. By directly investigating the online environment used by prostitutes, Yogyakarta Police Station can identify *modus operandi*, networks, and trends that can be used as a basis for designing more efficient enforcement strategies. These undercover efforts also create a deterrent effect and uncertainty among online prostitution offenders, as they cannot reliably distinguish between potential customers and investigators. Therefore, investigators need to

³² Anak Agung Gede Budhi Warmana Putra, Simon Nahak, and I Nyoman Gede Sugiartha, "Pemidanaan Terhadap Pelaku Tindak Pidana Korupsi Melalui Double Track System," *Jurnal Preferensi Hukum* 1, no. 2 (2020): 198; Muhammad Taufan Djafri et al., "Hukum Islam Dan Efek Jera Pemidanaan Di Indonesia," *Bustanul Fuqaha* 4, no. 1 (2023): 177.

continuously improve their undercover skills and techniques, in line with the development of technology and methods used by online prostitution offenders.

b. Obstacles related to transfer evidence and pimping

In its efforts to tackle the cybercrime of online prostitution, Yogyakarta Police Station has committed to overcoming the obstacles that arise in relation to evidence. One of the obstacles faced is the ease with which digital evidence can be removed if not handled quickly and in a timely manner. In practice, most online prostitution offences use electronic data or systems that can be easily altered, deleted, or hidden by the perpetrators. This has made it clear that digital evidence in online prostitution is often difficult to preserve its authenticity. The case involves sophisticated electronic instruments, which demands a fast and measured response from the investigators. Online prostitution offenders tend to utilise technological sophistication to eliminate traces, presenting significant challenges in the investigation process. Yogyakarta Police's efforts in dealing with online prostitution face complex challenges, especially in the context of cybercrime. In this case, the specific differences in characteristics between online prostitution, which is a cybercrime offence, and general criminal offences are a major obstacle, particularly in relation to evidence and the role of witnesses. One of the main obstacles is the difficulty in obtaining testimony from witnesses in these cases. Witnesses are often not in the same location as the victim or perpetrator, and can even be outside the region or abroad. The scattered presence of witnesses is a serious challenge in the investigation process, given the importance of witness testimony as valid evidence in accordance with the provisions of Article 184 paragraph (1) letter a of the Criminal Procedure Code.³³

Based on an interview with Mr Cahyo Nugroho, S.H., one of the main obstacles in prosecuting online prostitution offenders is related to the difficulty of collecting strong evidence. This main obstacle arises when pimps, who are intermediaries in the practice of online prostitution, are not in a physical location that can be reached by the authorities. According to him, often transactions in online prostitution are only done online, without any physical meeting between the perpetrator and the pimp. These transactions occur through electronic transfers or other non-cash payments. This situation makes it difficult for the police to collect physical evidence that can be used in the legal process. In addition, Mr Cahyo Nugroho said that after the transaction occurs, the online prostitution offender will provide information about the location and room number at a certain hotel. This adds to the difficulty of making an arrest in person, as the activity is often carried out in places that are difficult for the police to monitor or reach. The inability to physically present pimps in the investigation process is a serious obstacle to prosecution. Online evidence, such as text message conversations or electronic money transfers, is often not strong enough to substantially prove a case in the court of law.

Another obstacle is the ability of pimps to circumvent the law and operate outside the established boundaries. According to Mr Cahyo Nugroho, pimps are well aware of the laws governing online prostitution, and they tend to use various strategies to

³³ Prasetyo dan Mukhtar Zuhdy, "Penegakan Hukum oleh Aparat Penyidik Cyber Crime dalam Kejahatan Dunia Maya (Cyber Crime) di Wilayah Hukum Polda DIY," *Indonesian Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology (IJCLC)* 1, no. 2 (2020): 82.

evade law enforcement. This major obstacle arises because pimps have adequate knowledge of the legal framework governing online prostitution practices. With this understanding, they can take steps to stay out of the reach of law enforcement and avoid arrest. Some of them may evade arrest by using locations that are difficult to monitor or by utilising loopholes in existing laws. Mr Cahyo Nugroho emphasised that pimps' expertise in circumventing the law requires more adaptive and responsive law enforcement strategies. Investigators need to continue to develop their skills in understanding and anticipating tactics that may be used by online prostitution offenders. In addition, increased cooperation with other parties, such as financial institutions or social media service providers, can also help overcome these barriers by cutting off their financial and access channels.

c. Obstacles related to victims reporting

One significant challenge stems from the victimless nature of crime, a concept that describes activities that are considered illegal but do not directly harm or violate the rights of others. In the context of online prostitution, the absence of a clear and direct victim creates difficulties in law enforcement. Unlike crimes with identifiable victims, such as theft or assault, victimless crimes often involve consenting adults engaging in activities that may be considered socially taboo but have no real injured party. In addition, law enforcement related to online prostitution faces hurdles due to the evolving and technology-driven nature of the crime. Offenders often exploit digital platforms, using sophisticated methods to evade detection and identification. This digital sophistication challenges traditional policing methods, requiring law enforcement agencies to continuously adapt and improve their technological capabilities. Additionally, the perception of harmlessness surrounding victimless crimes contributes to public attitudes that can undermine law enforcement efforts. Some argue that these offences are victimless because they involve consenting adults and cause no direct harm to non-participants. This perspective, coupled with limited public awareness of the potential negative consequences, can lead to reduced public support for strong enforcement measures.³⁴

The definition of victims, as expressed by Arief Gosita, refers to those who suffer both physically and mentally as a result of the actions of others that are contrary to the interests and human rights of the sufferer. Victims can be individuals or groups, including both private and government parties. Van Boven adds that victims can be defined as individuals or groups who suffer various losses, such as physical injury, emotional suffering, and economic loss, either due to acts or omissions. It is important to note that the concept of victims is not limited to individuals, but also includes groups and society at large. This definition encompasses the various forms of suffering experienced by victims, including economic loss, physical and mental disability, and emotional suffering such as trauma. In the context of criminal offences,

³⁴ Shah Mohammad Omer Faruqe Jubaer et al., "Victimless Crime And Victimology Under Different National Legal System: A Global Approach," *European Scholar Journal (ESJ)* 2, no. 5 (2021): 7; Meiliana Nurcahyani and Anang Dony Irawan, "Protection of Children Involved in Online Prostitution Cases in Terms of Law of Children Protection," *Indonesia Law Reform Journal* 2, no. 2 (2022): 163; Edward Helderop et al., "Hidden in Plain Sight: A Machine Learning Approach for Detecting Prostitution Activity in Phoenix, Arizona," *Applied Spatial Analysis and Policy*, 2018, 2.

including online prostitution, victims must experience suffering in various forms, such as physical injury, material loss, and psychological impact. The process of recovering from this suffering has different timescales, with recovery from psychological harm taking longer due to its impact on the victim's mental health. As a prevention-focused law enforcer, Yogyakarta Police needs to deeply understand these dynamics in order to devise effective strategies to tackle online prostitution and protect victims from its detrimental effects.³⁵

In addition, the lack of cooperation or willingness to report from those involved in online prostitution adds to the complexity. The perpetrators, who are often anonymous and scattered across different geographical locations, make it difficult for law enforcement to gather vital information and build a strong case against the perpetrators. In conclusion, although Yogyakarta POLRESTA has undertaken various initiatives to combat online prostitution, the inherent challenges of victimless crimes, technological advancements, public perception, and the elusive nature of perpetrators contribute to the ongoing struggle to effectively prevent and address this problem. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive and adaptive approach that considers the unique dynamics of online criminal activity.³⁶

Based on the interview with Mr Cahyo Nugroho, S.H., it was revealed that one of the obstacles faced by the police in overcoming online prostitution related to victim reports is the situation where the victim reports not related to online prostitution, but related to fraud. Mr Cahyo Nugroho gave an example of a case where a victim was initially interested in using the services of a commercial sex worker (PSK) and had further communication with the perpetrator. In this scenario, the victim pays an agreed amount of money after communicating with the perpetrator. However, after the money transfer is made and the victim gets information about the location of the hotel and room number, it turns out that the place does not exist. The perpetrator then threatens the victim by stating that the conversation between them has been saved and will be disseminated if the victim does not provide additional money. The obstacle that arises from this situation is the complexity of the case where the online prostitution offender uses fraud to gain financial benefits from the victim. In addition, the threat that the perpetrator makes to the victim by saving the conversation and threatening to spread the information is an intimidation strategy that can make the victim feel trapped and afraid to report the case to the authorities.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of this research, it can be concluded that the efforts made by Yogyakarta Police Station in tackling online prostitution is a comprehensive and effective strategy. In order to achieve the main objectives of the police, namely

³⁵ Ibnu Mardiyanto, "Tinjauan Viktimologi Terhadap Kejahatan Bunuh Diri (Victimless Crime)," *Jurnal Hukum Non Diskriminatif (JHND)* 1, no. 1 (2023): 38.

³⁶ Ummni Khan, "Homosexuality And Prostitution: A Tale Of Two Deviancies," *University of Toronto Law Journal* 70, no. 2 (2020): 284; Shah Mohammad Omer Faruqe Jubaer et al., "Victimless Crime And Victimology Under Different National Legal System: A Global Approach," 7.

maintaining security, enforcing the law, and providing protection and services to the community, Yogyakarta Police Station carries out various actions that include prevention, law enforcement, and education. Firstly, through Cyberpatrol operations, Yogyakarta Police successfully identified, infiltrated, and prosecuted online prostitution offenders. The approach of posing as potential customers of commercial sex workers (CSWs) proved effective in responding to the dynamic development of cybercrime. The arrest process was carried out carefully and professionally, not only to enforce the law but also to better understand the motives and backgrounds of the perpetrators. Secondly, the socialisation efforts conducted by Yogyakarta Police Station, both to the general public and to schools, provide a better understanding of the negative impacts of online prostitution. Through legal counseling, Yogyakarta Police Station not only provides information but also creates a space for dialogue and community participation in prevention efforts. Third, the deterrence approach through prosecution of online prostitution offenders is an instrument used by Yogyakarta Police to create a deterrent effect. The punishment of perpetrators is not only a response to the violation of the law, but also a prevention strategy that creates social norms that reject the practice of online prostitution.

Yogyakarta Police Station has demonstrated a strong commitment to tackling online prostitution in its area. Nonetheless, the research identified a number of barriers faced in efforts to tackle this crime. These include difficulties in breaking into online prostitution networks, challenges related to digital evidence, the ability of pimps to circumvent the law, and problems with victims reporting. Social media disguise is the main strategy in tackling online prostitution, however, it requires high technical skills from investigators. In addition, the management of digital evidence is a serious challenge, especially as perpetrators tend to use technology to eliminate their traces. Obstacles also arise in terms of victims reporting, particularly due to the nature of online prostitution as a victimless crime. The absence of direct victims makes law enforcement difficult, while public understanding of the crime is also an important factor in formulating effective countermeasures. The emergence of fraudulent schemes used by online prostitution offenders for financial gain adds to the complexity of handling cases. Threats against victims by storing and disseminating information as a form of intimidation indicate the cunning tactics used by the perpetrators.

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