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Consumer Protection of Girls from Cybercrime in a Gender Perspective

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Abstract

Cybercrime covers a wide range of illegal acts carried out through the Internet or other digital devices, including fraud, identity theft, hacking, the spread of malware, to sexual exploitation of children. Girls are often the primary targets of these various forms of cybercrime. This is due to several factors, such as higher emotional vulnerability, still strong gender stereotypes, as well as a lack of education and awareness about cybersecurity among girls. Therefore, special protection that takes into account a gender perspective is essential to reduce the risk and impact of cybercrime against girls. In addition to the above cases, there are many more cases of cybercrime against girls in Indonesia that have not been or received public attention. Cybercrime is a serious

threat that needs to be addressed seriously and urgently. So it is necessary to study further the impact of cybercrime on girls and to analyze gender perspectives in protecting girls' consumers as vulnerable consumers. Education on cybersecurity should start early, with a special focus on girls. Strict regulations and policies are needed to protect girls from sexual exploitation and other cybercrimes. Using protective technologies such as antivirus software and parental monitoring apps can help reduce the risk of girls becoming victims of cybercrime. Psychological and social support is crucial in helping girls who are victims to cope with the negative impact of cybercrime. Collaboration between various institutions and communities is essential to creating a secure and supportive digital environment for girls.

Keywords Consumer Protection, Cybercrime, Gender

Introduction

The digital age¹ brings many significant changes in various aspects of life, including how we communicate, learn, and work. However, along with the benefits that digital technology offers, there are also threats that cannot be ignored, one of which is cybercrime². Children, especially girls, are a vulnerable group to these various forms of crime. Protection of consumer girls from cybercrime is an important issue that needs to be discussed and addressed seriously. The gender perspective in this protection plays a crucial role, given the different needs and risks faced by girls compared to boys. This article will outline various aspects related to consumer protection of girls from cybercrime, covering

Tommi Imanuel, and Indra Fauzan. "Analysis of Freedom of Expression in the Digital Age in the Issue of Electronic Information and Transaction Law in Indonesia." *PERSPEKTIF* 12, no. 4 (2023): 1117-1126; Amira Rahma Sabela, and Dina Wahyu Pritaningtias. "Study of Freedom of Speech and Expression in Legal Protection for Demonstrants in Indonesia." *Lex Scientia Law Review* 1, no. 1 (2017): 81-92.

² Kadek Devina Ellyona Putri, Mariano Wawan Latbin, and Gerald Aldytia Bunga. "Phenomenom Cyber Crime in Indonesia in the Digitalization Era." *Journal of Digital Law and Policy* 3, no. 2 (2024): 99-109.

definitions, forms of cybercrime, impact, and protective measures that can be taken.

In an era of globalization driven by advances in information and communication technology, the Internet has become an integral part of everyday life. From education to entertainment, children are spending more and more of their time in the virtual world. However, behind the huge benefits offered by digital technology³, there are serious threats, especially to girls. Cybercrime⁴ is one of the major threats to children on the Internet, and the protection of girls from these threats is an urgent issue to pay attention to. This article will discuss the protection of girls from cybercrime in a gender perspective, as well as some cases that occur in Indonesia as an illustration.

Cybercrime covers a wide range of illegal acts carried out through the Internet or other digital devices, including fraud, identity theft, hacking, the spread of malware, to sexual exploitation of children. Girls are often the primary targets⁵ of these various forms of cybercrime. This is due to several factors, such as higher emotional vulnerability, still strong gender stereotypes, as well as a lack of education and awareness about cybersecurity⁶ among girls. Therefore, special protection that takes into account a gender perspective is essential to reduce the risk and impact of cybercrime against girls.

The fact that today, even though regulations on the use of technology and the protection of children have been enforced, there is still a lot of incidents that have arisen in connection with technology use against crimes committed against children. One of them is online sex crimes against children with operandi mode using the intermediary game "grooming" war-free fire. minors who become the victim of sexual

³ Sascha Kraus, et al. "Digital transformation: An overview of the current state of the art of research." *Sage Open* 11, no. 3 (2021): 21582440211047576.

⁴ Uning Lestari, Amir Hamzah, and Muhammad Sholeh. "Sosialisasi Fenomena Cyber Crime dan Penanggulangannya Bagi Pengelola Informasi Publik Kapanewon Mlati Sleman Yogyakarta." NEAR: Jurnal Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat 1, no. 2 (2022): 100-106.

Gourav Kumar Shaw, and Anoop Kumar. "Adjudication Process of Cyber Offenses & Cyber Crimes with Women in India". Educational Administration: Theory and Practice 30, no. 1 (2024): 4086–4092.

⁶ Penggalih Mahardika Herlambang, et al. "Cyber Security Behavior Model on Health Information System Users During Covid-19 Pandemic." *Cyber Security dan Forensik Digital* 3, no. 2 (2020): 27-33.

crimes "grooming" with the suspect initially S or Reza, a 21-year-old male. Suspect S commits child sexual crime by exploiting one of the games "grooming free fire" where the target is a minor girl. So the operation mode, the suspect playing games together and cheating will give the victim a "diamond". The suspect promised to give 500-600 diamonds, where the price of one diamond was bought using pulses worth Rs, 100,000,-. The victim was attracted, then the victim exchanged a "Whatsapp" number. The suspect sent his porn video to his victim and asked him to send his photos and videos⁷.

The above threat that girls often face in the virtual world is online grooming. Online grooming is the process in which criminals build emotional ties with girls with the aim of sexually exploiting them. The perpetrators often disguise themselves as peers or use false identities to approach the victim.

In addition to the above cases, there are many more cases of cybercrime against girls in Indonesia that have not been or received public attention. Cybercrime is a serious threat that needs to be addressed seriously and urgently. So, it is necessary to study further the impact of cybercrime on girls and to analyze gender perspectives in protecting girls' consumers as vulnerable consumers.

This study adopts a qualitative approach, focusing on the analysis of relevant literature and legal documents. The method employed is content analysis to evaluate various laws and regulations related to the protection of children from cybercrime, particularly from a gender perspective. Secondary data were gathered through a review of regulations such as the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE), the Child Protection Law, and international policies on child protection in the digital space.

The literature sources used include academic journals, reports from international organizations, and previous research on cybercrime and the protection of girls. Through this literature review, the study aims to identify existing legal protection patterns, reveal gaps in the

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⁷ Laily Rahmawaty, "Bareskrim Polri ungkap kejahatan seksual anak melalui game online". ANTARA News, November 2021. Retrieved from https://www.antaranews.com/berita/2555369/%20bareskrim-polri-ungkap-kejahatan-se

implementation of laws, and connect these findings to the specific protection needs of girls who are vulnerable to cyber threats.

Using content analysis, the legal documents were examined in depth to assess the extent to which existing regulations cover gender aspects and how their implementation can be improved to provide more comprehensive protection for girls in the digital world. The study also compares Indonesia's child protection policies with international standards to develop more effective and actionable policy recommendations.

The Impact of Cybercrime on Girls as Consumers

Cybercrime covers a variety of illegal activities carried out through the Internet or other digital devices. These include hacking, fraud, identity theft, cyberbullying, and sexual exploitation. Girls are often the main targets of this cybercrime due to several factors, such as higher emotional vulnerability, ignorance of online risks, and still strong gender stereotypes.

The sexual exploitation of girls in the cyberspace is one of the most worrying forms of cybercrime. The perpetrators often use social media and instant messaging platforms to approach the victims, build trust, and then manipulate them to send explicit content. In some cases, the perpetrators even blackmailed the victims with threats of disseminating the content if they did not comply with further requests.

One of them is online sex crimes against children with operandi mode using the intermediary game "grooming" war-free fire. minors who become the victim of sexual crimes "grooming" with the suspect initially S or Reza, a 21-year-old male. Suspect S commits child sexual crime by exploiting one of the games "grooming free fire" where the target is a minor girl. So, the operation mode, the suspect playing games together and cheating will give the victim a "diamond." The suspect promised to give 500-600 diamonds, where the price of one diamond was bought using pulses worth Rs.100,000. The victim who was also a consumer interested then the victim exchanged the number Whatsapp. The suspects sent their porn videos to the victim and asked the victims to send their photos and videos of their porn. The suspect forced their victim to invite a video call sex (VCS) to the suspect. The impact of

cybercrimes against girls⁸ is very varied and can be very harmful. Psychologically, girls who become victims of cybercrime can experience a variety of problems⁹ such as stress, anxiety, depression, and insecurity. These traumatic experiences can have a long-term impact on their mental well-being, interfering with their emotional and social development. In some cases, the trauma the victims experience can affect them to adulthood, affecting their interpersonal relationships and their ability to trust others.

The next case regarding child grooming¹⁰ that has been widely discussed recently is the case involving Mario Dandy and his underage girlfriend, referred to as A. Mario, who is 20 years old, was in a relationship with A¹¹, who is only 15 years old, making A a minor. This case reflects the significant challenges in understanding and addressing the issue of child grooming in Indonesia. Unfortunately, many cases involving minors entering into relationships with adults are often not taken seriously by society.

The majority of Indonesian society still normalizes child grooming. This is evident in the prevalence of marriages between adults and minors that are often justified in the name of love. Meanwhile, Indonesian law establishes a minimum marriage age of 19 for both men and women. However, the mentality that legitimizes relationships between adults

⁸ Aloisius Arizendy Nugraha, et al. "Cybercrime, Pancasila, and Society: Various Challenges in the Era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0." *Indonesian Journal of Pancasila and Global Constitutionalism* 1, no. 2 (2022): 307-390.

Salomon AM. Babys, "Ancaman Perang Siber Di Era Digital Dan Solusi Keamanan Nasional Indonesia." Oratio Directa (Prodi Ilmu Komunikasi) 3, no. 1 (2021): 425-442.

Marijska Naia Savitri, "Maraknya Kasus Child Grooming, Modus Pelecehan Seksual pada Anak", *Kompasiana*, May 2023. Retrieved from https://www.kompasiana.com/marijska/645c73004addee5d73506602/maraknya-kasus-child-grooming-modus-pelecehan-seksual-pada-anak

Noval Sulaiman, and Hudi Yusuf. "Analisis Kasus Mario vs David Ozora Kajian Kerangka Hukum dan Implikasi Putusan 297/Pid.B/2023/PN.JKR.SEL Terhadap Isu Pelecehan." *Jurnal Intelek dan Cendikiawan Nusantara* 1, no. 2 (2024): 1844-1855. *See also* Jeremya Chandra Sitorus, "Victims of Sexual Abuse: How Does the Law Protect Her?." *Unnes Law Journal* 5, no. 2 (2019): 255-270; Bachtiar Adi Prastyawan, "Juridical Review of Legal Protection for Victims of Sexual Harassment as a Form of State Responsibility." *Journal of Creativity Student* 5, no. 2 (2020): 129-148.

and minors remains deeply rooted in society, influenced by cultural norms that consider marrying at a young age acceptable.

In reality, the negative impacts of child grooming¹² are severe and can persist into adulthood. Victims often experience significant psychological effects, such as anxiety, anger, sadness, confusion, and self-blame. As a result, they may grow into withdrawn individuals and struggle with social interactions, affecting their daily lives.

The case of Mario Dandy and A underscores the urgent need for attention to the issue of child grooming in Indonesia. Society, especially parents, must recognize the dangers of child grooming and stop trivializing it. Adequate sexual education should be provided to children to ensure they understand the boundaries in relationships and what constitutes sexual violence. By creating a space for children to discuss these topics, parents can help them recognize and avoid dangerous situations, thereby minimizing cases like what A experienced.

This case also highlights that the legal system in Indonesia needs to be more responsive in addressing issues related to child protection¹³. Existing regulations should be clearer and more stringent in defining and tackling child grooming practices so that perpetrators can be effectively prosecuted and victims receive adequate protection.

From a social perspective, victims of cybercrime often feel isolated and embarrassed to talk about their experiences¹⁴. Girls who become victims of cyberbullying, for example, may withdraw from social interaction and have difficulty building healthy relationships with others. This social isolation can worsen the psychological impact they're experiencing and impede their recovery processes.

Anna Maria Salamor, et al. "Child Grooming Sebagai Bentuk Pelecehan Seksual Anak Melalui Aplikasi Permainan Daring." Sasi 26, no. 4 (2020): 490-499. See also Indah Sri Utari, Ridwan Arifin, and Diandra Preludio Ramada. "Exploring Child Grooming Sexual Abuse through Differential Association Theory: A Criminological and Legal Examination with Constitutional Implications." Volksgeist: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum dan Konstitusi 7, no. 1 (2024): 69-88; Go Lisanawati, "Cyber Child Sexual Exploitation dalam Perspektif Perlindungan atas Kejahatan Siber." Pandecta Research Law Journal 8, no. 1 (2013): 1-17.

¹³ Taufik Hidayat Simatupang, et al. "Paradox of state authority in supervision of child trust assets in Indonesia." *Cogent Social Sciences* 9, no. 1 (2023): 2209992.

M. Umanailo, et al. "Cybercrime Case as Impact Development of Communication Technology That Troubling Society." *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research* 8, no. 9 (2019): 1224-1228.

The impact of cybercrime can also affect girls' academic achievements. Stress and stress they experience can interfere with their concentration at school, which can ultimately decrease academic performance. Girls who are victims of cybercrime may feel afraid or uncomfortable using technology at school, which can hinder their learning. Moreover, they may often be absent from school due to the psychological impact they experience, which may ultimately affect their academic achievement.

The personal safety of girls is also threatened when they become victims of cybercrime. Personal information stolen or disclosed without permission may pose a security risk for them. In some cases, the information disclosed can be used by the perpetrators to track down or abduct the victims, putting them in serious physical danger.

In Indonesia, consumer protection is regulated by the Consumer Protection Act No. 8 of 1999, which aims to protect consumer rights and ensure that there is fairness in the relationship between consumers and entrepreneurs. In the context of cybercrime, girls as digital consumers are also protected by the UUPK. This includes protection from various forms of cybercrime that can harm consumers. In this case, entrepreneurs who provide digital services have a responsibility to ensure the security of their platforms and protect the personal data of users, including children.

In addition to UUPK, Indonesia also has various other regulations¹⁵ related to child protection and cybersecurity. For example, the 2008 Act No. 11 on Electronic Information and Transactions (ITE Act) regulates various cybercrimes, including identity theft, hacking, and the dissemination of illegal content.

Child protection in Indonesia is also governed by various other laws and regulations, such as the Child Protection Act No. 23 of 2002, which governs the rights of children and the obligation of States, governments, families and communities to protect children from all forms of violence, exploitation and discrimination. In the context of cybercrime, the Child Protection Act provides special protection for children from threats in the cyber world. The Children's Protection Act also emphasizes the

Nurul Fibrianti, et al. "Legal Culture and Legal Consciousness of Consumers: The Influence on Regulation and Enforcement of Consumer Protection Laws." *Journal* of Indonesian Legal Studies 8, no. 2 (2023): 1267-1310.

importance of the role of parents and families in providing education and supervision to children in the use of information technology. Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children use the Internet and digital devices safely and wisely. Governments also have a responsibility to provide education and socialization on cybersecurity to the public.

In addition to the Child Protection Act, Indonesia also has various other regulations that support the protection of children from cybercrime. For example, the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology Regulation No. 20 of 2016 on the Protection of Personal Data in Electronic Systems regulates the protection of personal data of Internet users, including children. This regulation sets security and privacy standards that must be observed by digital service providers to protect user personal data. Although Indonesia has a variety of laws and regulations aimed at protecting consumers¹⁶ and children from cybercrime, implementation and enforcement of this law still faces many challenges. One of the major challenges is the lack of public awareness and understanding of consumer rights and child protection in the cyber world¹⁷. Many parents and children who are unaware of the risks and dangers of the Internet, so they do not take the necessary measures to protect themselves.

In addition, resource and infrastructure constraints are also an obstacle to the enforcement of consumer and child protection laws. Law enforcement and related agencies often lack adequate human resources and technology to handle cybercrime cases effectively. This could hinder the process of investigation, prosecution, and law enforcement of cybercrime perpetrators.

To address these challenges, more intensive efforts are needed in education and socialization on consumer rights and child protection in the cyber world. Governments, educational institutions, non-

Edy Budianto, and Diah Ayu Wulandari. "Critical study of criminal aspects of Law Number 8 of 1999 concerning consumer protection." *Journal of Law and Legal Reform* 1, no. 2 (2020): 333-352.

M. Syukri Akub, "Pengaturan Tindak Pidana Mayantara (Cyber Crime) dalam Sistem Hukum Indonesia." Al-Ishlah: Jurnal Ilmiah Hukum 21, no. 2 (2018): 85-93.

Ana Irawati, et al. "Urgensi Cyber Law dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat Indonesia di Era Digital." *Proceeding of Conference on Law and Social Studies.* 2021.

governmental organizations, and the mass media need to work together to raise public awareness of the risks of cybercrime and the importance of protecting personal data¹⁹. Education and training programmes on cybersecurity also need to be expanded, especially for children, parents, and educators.

In addressing cybercrime affecting children, it is crucial to incorporate perspectives from various stakeholders, including law enforcement, educators, parents, and the children themselves. Each group plays a unique role in shaping responses to this pressing issue. Law enforcement agencies are at the forefront of combating cybercrime, yet they often encounter significant challenges. Limited resources, insufficient training in digital forensics, and the rapid evolution of technology can hinder their ability to effectively investigate and prosecute offenders. Enhancing the capacity of law enforcement through specialized training in cyber investigations is essential to better protect children from online threats.

Educators also play a vital role in this landscape. Schools are uniquely positioned to teach children about online safety and digital citizenship. By integrating digital literacy into the curriculum, educators can empower students with the knowledge and skills to recognize and navigate potential risks in the online environment. Programs that foster open discussions about the dangers of cyberbullying, grooming, and exploitation can equip children to make informed decisions while engaging with digital platforms.

Parents, too, are a crucial part of the equation. Active parental involvement in a child's online life is key to creating a supportive environment. Open communication about internet safety and potential threats encourages children to share their experiences without fear of

Richard Apau, Felix Nti Koranteng, and Samuel Adu Gyamfi. "Cyber-crime and its effects on E-commerce technologies." *Journal of Information* 5, no. 1 (2019): 39-59; Fauziah Lubis, "Cyber Crime E-Commerce Business Transactions." *SASI* 28, no. 4 (2022): 589-598. *See also* Wen Akhuai, et al. "Social Capital of Pancasila Education in Smart Education with Social Media in Cybercrime Prevention in the Industrial Revolution Era 4.0." *Jurnal Panjar: Pengabdian Bidang Pembelajaran* 4, no. 2 (2022): 283-442; Hardianto, Djanggih, and Nurul Qamar. "Penerapan Teori-Teori Kriminologi dalam Penanggulangan Kejahatan Siber (Cyber Crime)." *Pandecta Research Law Journal* 13, no. 1 (2018): 10-23.

judgment. By establishing trust, parents can help children develop healthy boundaries and understand the importance of privacy.

The perspectives of children themselves are invaluable. Many young victims of cybercrime may feel ashamed or hesitant to report incidents due to fears of not being believed or facing stigma. Creating an environment that prioritizes their safety and encourages them to speak up is vital for effective protection. By incorporating these diverse viewpoints, we can foster a comprehensive approach to protecting children from the multifaceted risks present in the digital realm.

Furthermore, there is a need to enhance the capacity and resources of law enforcement agencies and related agencies to deal with cybercrime cases, including improved training, the acquisition of advanced technology, and the development of effective information systems to support the investigation and law-enforcement processes. With better capacity, law enforcement can be more effective in tackling cybercrime and protecting consumers and children from threats in the cyber world.

Inter-agency coordination also needs to be enhanced through the establishment of a forum or coordination mechanism involving the various stakeholders involved in consumer and child protection. This forum can serve as a platform for sharing information, experiences, and strategies in dealing with cybercrime. With better coordination, efforts to protect consumers and children from cyber crime can be carried out more integrated and effective.²⁰

Cybercrime is a serious threat to girls as digital consumers. The impact of this cybercrime is devastating, both psychologically, socially, academically, and in terms of personal security. Indonesia's legal framework addressing cybercrime and the protection of children, particularly girls, relies on several key laws. These include the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE), Law No. 23 of 2002 on Child Protection (revised by Law No. 35 of 2014), and additional regulations issued by related agencies. While these laws provide a basis for safeguarding children, they fail to fully address gender-based vulnerabilities and the unique threats girls face in digital spaces.

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Utin Indah Permata Sari, "Kebijakan Penegakan Hukum dalam Upaya Penanganan Cyber Crime Yang Dilakukan oleh Virtual Police di Indonesia." *Jurnal Studia Legalia* 2, no. 1 (2021): 58-77.

The Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE) is Indonesia's primary legislation against cybercrime, covering offenses like online harassment, identity theft, and cyberstalking. However, this law does not explicitly focus on protecting minors or include gendersensitive provisions. Consequently, girls, who often face particular forms of exploitation like online sexual harassment and grooming, may not receive adequate protection under current legal definitions. Although UU ITE penalizes cybercriminals, it does little to prevent these crimes or support victims in the recovery process.

Similarly, Law No. 23 of 2002 on Child Protection, revised by Law No. 35 of 2014, mandates special protections for children from abuse, including those that occur online. However, despite this, the law lacks specific guidelines on addressing gender-based cybercrime against girls. While the law ensures children's rights to safety in digital spaces, it does not provide actionable steps to mitigate risks unique to girls, such as exposure to sextortion, grooming, or image-based abuse. The failure to account for the differing experiences between boys and girls online demonstrates a significant gap in Indonesia's legal approach to cybercrime.

Additionally, while Indonesia is a signatory to international conventions like the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the country has not fully incorporated these international standards into its national legal framework. The CRC and other global agreements emphasize the need for gender-sensitive policies, which Indonesia's laws currently lack. As a result, there is limited legal recourse for girls facing gender-specific online threats.

Moreover, enforcement of existing laws remains a challenge. Law enforcement agencies often lack the necessary resources, training, and technical expertise to properly investigate cybercrime cases, particularly in rural areas where girls are especially vulnerable due to limited digital literacy and access to protection tools. This points to the urgent need for integrating digital literacy education into broader child protection policies, as well as enhancing the capacity of law enforcement agencies to handle cases of cybercrime with a gendered lens.

Indonesia's existing legal framework provides some degree of protection against cybercrime, but it falls short when it comes to addressing the specific vulnerabilities faced by girls. Without targeted

reforms and a gender-sensitive approach, the laws currently in place will continue to leave girls at heightened risk of cybercrime in the digital age.

However, the implementation and enforcement of this law still faces challenges, including lack of public awareness, limited resources and infrastructure, and lack of inter-agency coordination. To address these challenges, more intensive efforts are needed in the education and socialization of consumer rights and child protection in the online world, as well as increased capacity and resources for law enforcement agencies and related institutions, and improved inter-agency coordination. With more coordinated and effective efforts, we can protect girls as digital consumers from the threat of cybercrime and create a safer and more supportive digital environment.

Gender Perspective in Consumer Protection of Girls as Vulnerable Consumers

Consumer protection²¹ of girls from cybercrime must be done with a gender perspective. Differences in risk and vulnerability between girls and men should be taken into account in the development of protection strategies. Girls tend to face different risks and vulnerabilities than boys in the context of cybercrime. For example, girls are more likely to become victims of sexual exploitation and abuse online, owing to various factors, including differences in the way girls and men use technology, as well as existing social and cultural norms.

The social and cultural norms that exist often affect how girls use the internet and how they respond to online threats. Gender stereotypes can also affect perceptions and actions towards victims of cybercrime. For example, girls may feel ashamed or afraid to report online harassment for fear of being untrusted or judged. These stereotypes could hinder efforts to protect and recover victims of cybercrime.

Alfina Maharani, and Adnand Darya Dzikra. "Fungsi Perlindungan Konsumen dan Peran Lembaga Perlindungan Konsumen di Indonesia: Perlindungan, Konsumen dan Pelaku Usaha (Literature Review)." *Jurnal Ekonomi Manajemen Sistem Informasi* 2, no. 6 (2021): 659-666.

The world of consumerism²² recognizes the term consumer disadvantaged which is consumer losses caused by unfavourable conditions that last continuously so placing consumers in an unequal position in market activity.²³ Such consumers are often referred to as "unfortunate consumers" or disadvantaged consumers that are in a position that is in a detrimental position (sometimes happening repeatedly) so that the consumer gets satisfaction below the average of the activity of buying/consuming a product.²⁴

This condition is different from the vulnerable consumer. (vulnerable consumer). Vulnerable consumers are people who easily or quickly suffer losses in the process of consumption, caused by the characteristics or quality of a particular product, or individual consumer conditions that have an adverse impact on their decision-making.

As consumer protection laws evolved, the question arose: are children in the category of Vulnerable Consumers? Is the reference to such consumer vulnerabilities a 'loss' because it belongs to the characteristics of a specific class or citizen that is easily identified? The concept of vulnerability as a state of individual impotence that may be experienced by anyone and anyone in their lifetime. The child's view as an individual belonging to the category of Vulnerable Consumer has grown rapidly over the last few years, but indeed the conceptualization of vulnerable consumers in general, is still a subject of debate²⁵.

Consumer vulnerabilities are clarified as:: "Consumer vulnerability is a state of powerlessness that arises from an imbalance in marketplace interactions or from the consumption of marketing messages and products (Baker S.M. 2009)." This can occur when control in the world of marketing is not on the side of the consumer so that consumer dependency arises on external factors such as obstruction of the purpose

Deviana Yuanitasari, Hazar Kusmayanti, and Agus Suwandono. "A comparison study of strict liability principles implementation for the product liability within Indonesian consumer protection law between Indonesia and United States of America law." *Cogent Social Sciences* 9, no. 2 (2023): 2246748.

²³ Lucy Woodliffe, "An empirical re-evaluation of consumer disadvantage." International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research 17, no. 1 (2007): 1-21.

²⁴ Woodliffe.

²⁵ Fiona Spotswood,and Agnes Nairn. "Children as vulnerable consumers: a first conceptualisation." *Journal of Marketing management* 32, no. 3-4 (2016): 211-229.

of consumption of a product, consumer experience in the past, as well as market fairness created by the marketer. ²⁶ This is what's called a consumer vulnerability. The actual vulnerability will then emerge from interpersonal interactions, individual characteristics, and external conditions in a context in which the purpose of consumption can be inhibited and consumer experience ultimately affects personal perceptions and purchasing decisions of himself. A study by The European Commission aimed at helping formulate policies for better consumers, making the category Vulnerable Consumer is when meeting the following things²⁷.

- 1. Consumers at greater risk have problems when buying/using goods or services,
- 2. Consumers who often feel vulnerable because of their personal characteristics,
- 3. Consumers having difficulty getting/understanding information about goods and services,
- 4. Consumers less able to buy, choose, access the good or services appropriate,
- 5. As well as consumers that are prone to problems due to marketing practices.

An understanding of consumer vulnerabilities is important as a reason to consider, could children be included in the category of Vulnerable Consumer? Children have unique limitations and specifications in their consumption patterns, so thinking about the best interests of the child as a consumer will be very useful as an input to the formulation of future government policies that can accommodate children's interests. Every child is entitled to survival, growth and development and to protection from violence and discrimination. Every

Stacey Menzel Baker, "Vulnerability and resilience in natural disasters: A marketing and public policy perspective." *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* 28, no. 1 (2009): 114-123; Stacey Menzel Baker, James W. Gentry, and Terri L. Rittenburg. "Building understanding of the domain of consumer vulnerability." *Journal of Macromarketing* 25, no. 2 (2005): 128-139; Fiona Spotswood, and Agnes Nairn. "Children as vulnerable consumers: a first conceptualisation." *Journal of Marketing Management* 32, no. 3-4 (2016): 211-229.

²⁷ Chartered Trading Standards Institute. Consumer Vulnerability: A Guide to Identifying Consumers Who May Be Vulnerable (Making Sure Your Business Complies with Consumer Law). (UK: Chartered Trading Standards Institute, 2021).

child has the right to a good and equitable life and the State is obliged to take responsibility for and guarantee the development and life of children to the maximum extent possible. ²⁸

Act No. 23 of 2002 on the Protection of the Child – updated Act no. 35 of 2014 on the Amendment of Law No.23 of 2002 concerning the protection of the child (hereinafter referred to as the Child Protection Act) regulates the rights of children.²⁹ General Provisions Article 1 No. 12 of the Child Protection Act states that the rights of the child are part of the human right, not only a responsibility of parents, families and the community, but also a duty to be guaranteed, protected and fulfilled by the government and the state.

Girls' access to education and training on cybersecurity may be more restricted than boys. Education on cybersecurity should start early, with a special focus on girls. They need information on how to identify and protect themselves from various forms of cybercrime. Parents, teachers, and educational institutions play an important role in providing this education. An effective educational programme should take into account the specific needs and vulnerabilities of girls, as well as addressing the barriers they may encounter in accessing information and training.

Protecting girls' consumers from cybercrime requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach. Measures that can be taken include education and awareness, regulation and policies, the use of protective technology, psychological and social support, and interagency collaboration.

Education on cybersecurity should start early,³⁰ with a special focus on girls. They need information on how to identify and protect

Yanuar Farida Wismayanti, and Ivo Noviana. "Perlindungan Anak Berbasis Komunitas: Sebuag Pendekatan Dengan Mengarusutamakan Hak Anak." Informasi 16, no. 3 (2011): 203-212.

Republic of Indonesia. Law on Child Protection, Law No. 23 of 2002, as amended by Law No. 35 of 2014 on Amendments to Law No. 23 of 2002 on Child Protection, as amended by Law No. 17 of 2016 on Stipulation of Government Regulation in Lieu of Law No. 1 of 2016 as last amended by Law No. 34 of 2014 on Second Amendment to Law No. 23 of 2002 on Child Protection Becoming Law, LN of 2014 No. 297, TLN No. 5606, hereinafter referred to as the Child Protection Law.

Miftakhur Rokhman Habibi, and Isnatul Liviani. "Kejahatan Teknologi Informasi (Cyber Crime) dan Penanggulangannya dalam Sistem Hukum Indonesia." Al-

themselves from various forms of cybercrime³¹. Parents, teachers, and educational institutions play an important role in providing this education. Education should cover topics such as how to maintain online privacy, recognize signs of online grooming, and how to report cybercrime.³² Moreover, education on cyber security should be given on a sustainable basis, following up on technological developments and existing cyber threats.

Strict regulations and policies are also needed to protect girls from cybercrime. Governments and related agencies need to develop and implement regulations that prohibit the sexual exploitation of children, as well as policies that encourage the reporting and handling of cyber crime cases quickly and effectively. Existing laws must be enforced rigorously, and cybercriminals must be punished fairly to prevent the recurrence of such crimes³³. Moreover, existing policies must be continuously updated to address the growing cyber threats. Using protective technologies such as antivirus software, strong privacy settings, and parental monitoring apps can help protect girls from cyber threats. Parents and guardians also need to be taught how to use these technologies effectively. Protection technologies must be designed to be easy to use by children and parents, 34 as well as provide features tailored to the needs and vulnerabilities of girls. In addition, technology developers must collaborate with cybersecurity experts and child protection agencies to ensure that their products are effective in protecting children from cybercrime.

Qanun: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pembaharuan Hukum Islam 23, no. 2 (2020): 400-426.

MOHD Yusuf DM, Addermi Addermi, and Jasmine Lim. "Kejahatan Phising dalam Dunia Cyber Crime dan Sistem Hukum di Indonesia." *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Konseling (JPDK)* 4, no. 5 (2022): 8018-8023.

Muhammad Satrio Purnomo Wikantomo, and Ida Aryati Dyah Purnomo Wulan. "Penegakan Hukum Cyber Crime dalam Upaya Penanggulangan Tindak Pidana Teknologi Informasi." GEMA 34, no. 2 (2022): 34-38.

³³ Yuni Fitriani, and Roida Pakpahan. "Analisa penyalahgunaan media sosial untuk penyebaran cybercrime di dunia maya atau cyberspace." *Cakrawala-Jurnal Humaniora* 20, no. 1 (2020): 21-27.

³⁴ Arthur Simada, et al. "Penentuan Locus Delictie dalam Tindak Pidana Cyber Crime (Merusak dan Mengganggu Sistem Elektronik dan Komunikasi Milik Orang Lain)." *Locus Journal of Academic Literature Review* 3, no. 4 (2024): 349-361.

Girls who are victims of cybercrime need psychological and social support to cope with trauma and other negative impacts. Counseling services and support groups can be very helpful in their recovery process. Psychological support should be available and easily accessible to victims, as well as tailored to their individual needs. In addition, social support from friends, family, and communities is also important in helping victims³⁵ overcome the impact of cybercrime and return to their normal lives³⁶.

Protecting girls from cybercrime requires collaboration among various institutions, including governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and communities. This collaboration is essential to creating a safer and more supportive digital environment. Governments should work with child protection agencies, educational institutions, and the private sector to develop and implement effective protection policies and programmes. In addition, the community should also play an active role in supporting efforts to protect girls from cybercrime, including by reporting cyber crimes they are aware of and providing support to victims.

To give a clearer picture of the importance of protecting girls' consumers from cybercrime, here are some relevant cases and empirical studies. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in cases of sexual exploitation of girls on social media. Studies have shown that perpetrators often use platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and

Abdurrahman Harit's Ketaren, Analisis Yuridis Tindak Pidana Cybercrime dalam Perbuatan Pidana Pencemaran Nama Baik Ditinjau dari Undang-Undang No. 8 Tahun 2011 Tentang Informasi Transaksi dan Elektronik dan Hukum Pidana. Thesis. Universitas Sumatera Utara, 2018. See also Robert Brian Smith, "Cybercrime in ASEAN: Anti-Child Pornography Legislation." Journal of Indonesian Legal Studies 5, no. 2 (2020): 277-294; Okti Putri Andini, "Cyber Terrorism Criminal Acts in the Perspective of Transnational Organized Crime." Unnes Law Journal 7, no. 2 (2021): 333-346; Massulthan Rafi Wijaya, and Ridwan Arifin. "Cyber Crime in International Legal Instrument: How Indonesia and International Deal with This Crime?." Indonesian Journal of Criminal Law Studies 5, no. 1 (2020): 63-74; Wulan Saputri Indah, et al. "Deviant Behavior of Children in Social Media from Perspective of Law and Criminology: Does Creativity on Social Media Encourage Bad Behavior in Children?." Journal of Creativity Student 7, no. 2 (2022): 267-282.

Rafi Septia Budianto Pansariadi, and Noenik Soekorini. "Tindak Pidana Cyber Crime dan Penegakan Hukumnya." *Binamulia Hukum* 12, no. 2 (2023): 287-298.

TikTok to approach and exploit victims. In many cases, they use fake identities or disguise as peers to build the victim's trust before exploiting.

Research also suggests that girls are more likely to suffer cyberbullying than boys. The impact of this cyber bullying includes decreased mental health, academic achievement, and social relationships. Studies show that girls who become victims of cyberbulllying have more chances of experiencing depression, anxiety and social isolation than boyfriends. These effects can last long and affect various aspects of their lives, including academic achievement and interpersonal relationships.

To address the challenges faced in protecting children³⁷ from cybercrime, it is essential to provide more detailed and actionable recommendations. *First*, regulatory updates should be made to the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE) to include specific protections for children, particularly girls, from cybercrime threats. This law should clearly define criminal actions focused on child grooming and online sexual exploitation, as well as impose stricter penalties for offenders. *Second*, comprehensive education programs aimed at enhancing digital literacy among children and parents should be prioritized. These programs could include training on how to identify and avoid online risks, as well as an understanding of their rights as internet users. Schools should be instructed to incorporate lessons on digital safety and internet usage ethics into their curricula. By doing so, children will be better prepared to navigate the challenges they may encounter in the digital world.

Furthermore, there must be an enhancement of law enforcement capacity in handling cybercrime cases. This can be achieved through ongoing training for police and law enforcement officers on digital investigation techniques and the latest technology. Skilled and well-trained law enforcement personnel will be more effective in investigating and prosecuting cases involving cybercrime, including exploitation of children.

³⁷ Sonny D. Judiasih, et al. "Efforts to eradicate child marriage practices in Indonesia: Towards sustainable development goals." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 21, no. 6 (2020): 135-149.

Lastly, collaboration among government, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, and communities is crucial. Establishing networks that involve various stakeholders can facilitate the exchange of information and resources needed to protect children from cybercrime. With these collective efforts, we can create a safer environment for children in the digital realm.

Several countries have taken proactive measures to protect girls from cybercrime. For example, in the UK, there are programs that focus on cybersecurity education in schools, as well as public awareness campaigns targeting parents and children. The program includes training on how to maintain online privacy, recognize signs of online grooming, and report cybercrime. In addition, the UK government is also working with technology companies to develop protective tools and technologies that can help protect children from cyber crime.

Conclusion

Protecting consumer girls from cybercrime is a very important issue in today's digital age. By considering a gender perspective, we can develop more effective strategies to protect girls from various cyber threats. Education, regulation, protective technology, psychological support, and inter-agency collaboration are some of the steps that can be taken to this goal. It is important for all parties involved to work together to create a secure and supportive digital environment for girls, so that they can use technology safely and without fear. Education on cybersecurity should start early, with a special focus on girls. Strict regulations and policies are needed to protect girls from sexual exploitation and other cybercrimes. Using protective technologies such as antivirus software and parental monitoring apps can help reduce the risk of girls becoming victims of cybercrime. Psychological and social support is crucial in helping girls who are victims to cope with the negative impact of cybercrime.

Collaboration between various institutions and communities is essential to creating a secure and supportive digital environment for girls. With these measures, we can create a safer and more supportive digital environment for girls. It is important for all parties involved, including governments, educational institutions, the private sector, and

society, to work together to protect girls from cybercrime. Thus, girls can use digital technology safely and without fear, so that they can take advantage of technology for their development and well-being.

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