



Gigolo Communication Patterns in Online Prostitution on Social Media

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1 Introduction

The development of information and communication technology to date is in line with the development of communication media, thereby changing the way humans communicate. This phenomenon is visible with the presence of mass media, which along the way has experienced changes marked by the presence of social media. Social media is a new set of communication and collaboration tools that enable various types of interactions that were previously unavailable to ordinary people [1]. The presence of social media makes it easier to communicate, access information, or just find entertainment. However, nowadays, social media is not only used as a communication tool but has developed into a marketing medium. Various kinds of goods and services are present in social media marketing. Starting from legal goods and services to illegal ones, one of which is online prostitution on social media. Online prostitution is a business that provides sexual activities outside of marriage by utilizing social media to earn money and use it as a source of income involving commercial sex workers (PSK) as service providers and customers who are dominated by men.

The reason why many prostitutes engage in online prostitution is because some social media do not filter content that is full of pornography. The database report on handling social media content in the period August 2018 to November 30 2021 found that the Twitter platform was the one with the most negative content. Followed by Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp [2]. There are also a variety of prostitutes who use social media in online prostitution, ranging from female prostitutes, transvestites, and even men who are often called gigolos. According to Koentjoro [3], a gigolo is briefly described as a paid man who is kept or hired by a woman as a lover or sexual partner. In contrast to that, in the current development of social phenomena, there is a change in orientation. As stated by Lindinalva Laurindo da Silva [4], the definition of gigolo is a term that refers to paid

men who have sex or spend their time either with women or men. Based on these two opinions, it can be concluded that gigolos not only serve members of the opposite sex as consumers but are also able to serve members of the same sex. The main orientation of gigolos is payment for sexual services performed, not based on sexual orientation. So, gigolo is a term used to refer to male commercial sex workers who commercialize their sexual services both to the opposite and the same sex [5].

Just like female prostitutes, gigolos also use social media to carry out online prostitution. Gigolo exchanges information with their customers regarding rates, location, payment methods, and anything related to the prostitution carried out, both verbally and non-verbally, thus forming a communication pattern. Thus, this research aims to find out the communication patterns between gigolos and their customers in online prostitution on social media. According to Soejanto, communication patterns are a framework for relationships between individuals or groups in carrying out a process of sending or receiving messages or information which is carried out in an appropriate and structured manner, so that the message or information conveyed can be easily understood by each other [6].

The phenomenon related to the rise of prostitution on social media is more precise using social information processing theory which can be used to explain a reality where the communication carried out by application/social media users in online media can match the level of intimacy or even exceed communication carried out face to face. This is done by revealing how social media users who have never met face-to-face, in an anonymous medium, can form interpersonal relationships with each other [7]. Regarding the rise of online prostitution on social media, it is hoped that this research can reveal more clearly the misuse of social media as a medium for prostitution which can have a bad effect on society, considering that prostitution is an act that violates the law and deviates from the values and norms of Indonesian society, and hurts health.

Based on initial observations from researchers who saw the gigolo phenomenon in the city of Makassar who used the media as a suggestion for online prostitution, then became the basic assumption of researchers to conduct research on gigolo communication patterns in online prostitution on social media.

2 Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative method by analyzing communication patterns between gigolos and their customers on social media which is related to the research questions, so the phenomenological method is used to create informants in this research will share their experiences regarding online prostitution on social media so that we can conclude what communication patterns are visible. The object of this research is gigolos associated with online prostitution on social media. The role of the researcher in this research is planner, data collector, analyzer, and finally the originator of the research. This research was carried out in the city of Makassar by looking for gigolo informants who use social media

as a medium for online prostitution, be it open bookings, sensual massages, or video call sex.

There are 2 techniques used to determine informants, namely purposive sampling and snowball sampling techniques. The purposive sampling technique was used to select informants with the consideration that they were the ones who knew the most information about the research. The second technique is snowball sampling, also known as the snowball sampling technique. This technique determines informants based on interviews with previous informants or by correspondence. Data sources in research are obtained directly from sources through direct interviews (primary data) and visual, audio-visual documentation, books, and articles from printed and electronic sources that are relevant to the problem being researched, in this case, visual documentation which is managed by the researcher himself (secondary data). Data collection techniques in this research used non-participant observation methods, in-depth interviews, and documentation. In analyzing the data, researchers used non-statistical analysis, namely analysis in the form of descriptive descriptions. The data is described after going through several stages.

3 Results

This research was conducted in the city of Makassar by selecting 4 gigolos who run an online prostitution business. To maintain the identity of research informants, the names of research informants were changed using initials.

Table 1. Gigolo Profile

Name Initials	Types of Prostitution	Social media	Rates	Sexual Orientation
E.M	Open Booking	Tinder	Rp. 300,000,-	Straight
SP	Open Booking	Blued	Rp. 200,000,-	Bisexual
JF	Sensual Massage	Line	Rp. 150000,-	Gay
CI	VCS	Twitter/X	Rp. 200,000,-	Gay

Source: Research Results, 2023

In this research, the researcher first identified communication elements such as communicator, communicant, message, media, and feedback. Gigolo as a communicator communicates with his customers (communicants) using features on each social media which are used to send messages to communicants using verbal/non-verbal symbols. Verbal symbols are signs that use words, whether spoken or written. Non-verbal symbols are signs that use anything other than words, whether images, gestures, colors, facial expressions, or others.

The features available in social media help gigolos to send and receive verbal and non-verbal symbols. Tinder is a free dating application that has a message feature for sending and receiving text messages, a bio feature that contains personal information (name, location, zodiac, social media accounts, blood type, education, and occupation), a photo feature as a medium for showing a photo of a face or other photo, a face verification feature as a sign that the photo used in the application is a real photo marked with a blue tick on the account, the swipe right feature is used to indicate that the user is interested in another user's profile that appears on the homepage, and features match provides a sign that other users are interested in the profile of the user who previously swiped right.

Blued is a dating application for gay and bisexual people that has a chat feature for sending and receiving messages (text, audio, images, video, and location), the taps feature is used as a sign that the user is interested in other users, the bio feature contains personal information (name, GPS location, online activity, age, status, photos, and role or position in penetration), and the private photos feature provides photos which are private (original photos and sensual photos) which can only be accessed if the user allows other users to see them.

Line is a personal chat application that has several excellent features. The chat feature is used to send and receive messages (text, audio, images, videos, and locations), the bio feature consists of general information (name, status message, and date of birth), the story feature is for creating statuses in the form of text, images or videos which lasts 1X24 hours, a profile photo feature, a people nearby feature for adding friends via the GPS, and a voom feature for sharing status in the form of text, images or videos that can be seen by Line friends when visiting the user's profile.

Twitter or In the tweet feature there are sub-features, such as reply to reply to previously sent tweets, retweet to reshare tweets, and a like button as a sign that the user likes a tweet. The message feature is for sending personal messages (text, images, videos, links, and voice notes), and the bio feature contains Twitter/X user information (photo, name, date of birth, and location).

The EM informant sent non-verbal symbols using the photo, face verification, and right swipe features in the Tinder application. SP informants who send verbal and non-verbal symbols use the bio and private photo features in the Blued application. JF informants who send verbal and non-verbal symbols use the bio feature, story feature, and profile photo feature in the Line application. CI informants send verbal and non-verbal symbols using the tweet, profile photo, bio, and hashtag features in the Twitter/X application.

Table 2. Gigolo as a Communicator

Name Initials	Message	Media/Features
E.M	Non-verbal	Photo, face verification, and swipe right.
SP	Verbal and non-verbal	Private bio and photos

JF	Verbal and non-verbal	Bio, story and profile photo
CI	Verbal and non-verbal	tweets, profile photos, bio and hashtags

Source: Research Results, 2023

When a gigolo receives feedback as a communicator, the message received is in the form of verbal/non-verbal symbols. EM informants use Tinder features to receive verbal symbols (text message/bio features) and non-verbal (photo/facial verification/match features). SP informants use Blued features to receive verbal symbols (taps/chat/bio feature) and non-verbal (chat/private photo features). Informant JF uses Line features to receive verbal symbols (chat/bio feature) and non-verbal (story/profile photo/voom/people nearby features). CI informants use Twitter/X features to receive verbal symbols (message/bio/replay features) and non-verbal (message/tweet/profile photo features).

Table 3. Gigolo as Communicant

Name Initials	Feedback	Media/Features
EM	Verbal and Non-verbal	Text messages, bio, photos, face verification, and match
SP	Verbal and non-verbal	Taps, chat, bio and private photos
JF	Verbal and non-verbal	Chat, bio, story, and profile photo, people nearby, and voom
CI	Verbal and non-verbal	Messages, bio, replays, tweets and profile photos

Source: Research Results, 2023

From the results of this research, it was found that the informants in this research used secondary communication patterns. The secondary communication pattern is the delivery of messages by the communicator to the communicant using means as a second medium after using symbols in the first medium. Communicators use this second media because the targets of communication are far away, or in large numbers [8]. The first media in this case are verbal symbols that the gigolo sends to its customers using features on social media as the second media. The type of communication that uses this process is mass communication because it is communication that prioritizes channels for conveying communication messages. Apart from that, communication using both print and electronic media is also suitable for using this pattern [9].

Apart from that, there are also other communication patterns seen in this research. If viewed from the perspective of the communicator and communicant, there are three communication patterns, namely linear, circular, and spiral communication patterns.

Linear communication patterns are seen when customers do not receive feedback when sending messages using features on social media. This is in line with the understanding of linear communication patterns is the process of conveying a message from the communicator to the communicant using or without media and without any feedback from the communicant. In this study, all gigolos used linear communication patterns. EM can find out if he doesn't get feedback when his account doesn't match other accounts when EM swipes right on Tinder. SP can find out if they don't get feedback when the SP has opened a private photo to an account that requested a private photo but hasn't sent a message back to the SP on Blued. JF can find out if he doesn't get feedback when JF creates a Line story but these contacts only see JF's Story without sending text messages on Line.

Circular communication patterns can be seen when gigolos receive feedback from customers which can be seen when customers send verbal and non-verbal symbols to gigolos. The climax of this pattern is when the customer invites the gigolo to engage in prostitution or asks questions related to prostitution such as rates, orientation, etc. when the customer sees the verbal and non-verbal symbols sent previously by the gigolo. This applies to customers who try gigolo prostitution services for the first time and after that, customers no longer contact gigolos. In this way, this phenomenon is by circular communication patterns which means round, circular, or circumferential. In this circular process, feedback occurs, namely the flow of communication from communicator to communicator, as the main determinant of the success of communication. In a communication pattern like this, the communication process continues, namely there is feedback between the communicator and the communicant [10].

The spiral communication pattern is seen when the informant has regular customers who continuously use the gigolo's services so they continue to communicate with the gigolo. All gigolos in this study have regular customers who will contact the gigolo again to use gigolo prostitution services. This is in line with the spiral communication pattern which sees communication as a process that continuously influences each other. The spiral or helical model (derived from the word helix) was introduced by Frank Dance in 1976 which shows that communication is a dynamic process and not a linear process. This spiral model tries to describe how different communication aspects of a communication process change over time. The point is that the communication process moves dynamically toward a point that has no end. The communication process starts from the very small bottom, then moves up to become bigger until the top until you don't know the end. This small part influences the next communication process and so on up to the highest level [11].

By looking at the communication patterns of gigolos who use social media in online prostitution, customers who use gigolo services provide an intimate effect for both parties (gigolo & their customers). The use of features in social media becomes a forum for gigolos to communicate with their customers, thereby forming a variety of communication patterns, according to the capacity of each social media feature to reach

its audience. In social information processing theory or SIP, this development of impressions and relational communication through computer-mediated communication (CMC) [12]. The reality that occurs between gigolos and their customers even exceeds face-to-face communication. Some gigolos who serve new customers and have never met face to face, in an anonymous medium, can form interpersonal relationships with each other by knowing each other's sexual orientation or variations in sexual activity which is a personal matter for each prostitute.

4 Conclusions

Based on research conducted by researchers, it can be concluded that; Online prostitution carried out by gigolos on social media uses secondary communication patterns where the prostitution perpetrator as the communicator and the customer as the communicant sends verbal and non-verbal symbols as the first media and features on social media as the second media. Apart from that, if you look at it from a feedback perspective, gigolo online prostitution on social media also has linear, circular, and spiral communication patterns. Linear communication patterns are seen when gigolos do not get feedback, circular communication patterns occur when gigolos get feedback, and spiral communication patterns apply to gigolos who have regular customers.

This research also found other forms of prostitution in the form of organizations and virtual forms such as live streaming which uses more complex social media so that it can be studied further so that in the future various communication patterns can be found.

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