



INTEGRITY OF WOMEN'S BODIES: THE URGENCY OF PROTECTING WOMEN FROM CATCALLING AS A FORM OF SYMBOLIC VIOLENCE

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ABSTRACT

Catcalling has emerged as a pervasive form of symbolic violence in Indonesian public spaces, threatening women's bodily integrity and limiting their freedom of movement. This study aims to analyze catcalling as an expression of patriarchal culture that reduces women's bodies to sexual objects, examines its psychological, social, and physical impacts on victims, and evaluates gaps in the Indonesian legal system regarding verbal sexual harassment. Despite the harmful consequences, current regulations often fail to explicitly address verbal harassment in public spaces, and such behaviors are frequently considered trivial or tolerated as part of local customs. This research employs a normative and comparative legal approach, examining both Indonesian laws and international best practices to identify lessons that can inform more effective legal protections. The study also explores institutional mechanisms necessary to safeguard women's rights and dignity. The findings indicate that catcalling contributes to fear, anxiety, trauma, and prolonged stress among women, reinforcing unsafe conditions and perpetuating gender inequality. The study underscores the urgent need for comprehensive, gender-just legal reforms that explicitly criminalize verbal harassment, provide adequate remedies for victims, and promote public awareness.

1. Introduction

Legal protection in Indonesia is founded on the recognition of human dignity as reflected in Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, which affirm human rights as

inherent rights of every citizen. Women's rights are an inseparable part of human rights, and the state bears the constitutional responsibility to ensure their protection. Although Indonesia has ratified various international instruments such as Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) through Law Number 7/1984 and recognizes women's equality in the Constitution and national legislation, the protection of women's bodily integrity remains incomplete.¹ *Das sein*, or empirical reality, shows persistent gender-based violence, while *das sollen*, or normative guarantees, promises equality and freedom from discrimination. The tension between these two illustrates a fundamental contradiction in Indonesia's human rights enforcement.²

One phenomenon that embodies this contradiction is catcalling or verbal sexual harassment in public spaces. Although catcalling is often trivialized as humor or casual interaction, it constitutes symbolic violence that threatens women's dignity, bodily autonomy, and psychological well-being. Catcalling interferes with women's bodily integrity, understood as the wholeness and autonomy of one's physical and non-physical self, closely linked to personal identity, self-esteem, and self-concept.³ Numerous international instruments, including the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, have emphasized that gender-based violence encompasses physical, psychological, and sexual acts that "result in or may result in" harm.⁴ Thus, even non-physical acts such as catcalling fall within this broader understanding of violence.

In Indonesia, however, this conceptual clarity is not fully reflected in the legal framework. Catcalling is not explicitly defined or sanctioned at the national level. Regulations remain fragmented and inconsistent, creating a legal vacuum that leads to uneven enforcement and weak protection for female victims. While Law Number 12/2022 on Sexual Violence Crimes introduces several new forms of sexual harassment, it does not clearly categorize catcalling as symbolic violence against bodily integrity, leaving authorities without a clear legal basis to act. As a

¹ Hanafi Arief., Legal protection against women victims by the Indonesian domestic violence act 23, 2004, *Sriwijaya Law Review*, 2017, page.113. See too, Naufal Al Rahman., Pelecehan seksual verbal pada mahasiswa berjilbab (Studi tentang pemaknaan pengalaman pelecehan seksual verbal bagi mahasiswa berjilbab di kota Surabaya), (PhD diss., Universitas Airlangga, 2019), page.23.

² Louna Maret., Implementation of the CEDAW in France and Indonesia: Challenges and Progress regarding Women's Rights, *Indonesian J. Int'l L.* no.21, 2023, page.618.

³ Abdurrahman Alhakim., Analisis Hukum Catcalling Dan Pemenuhan Asas Bhinneka Tunggal Ika Terhadap Peraturan Daerah Kota Batam Dalam Mencegah Pelecehan Seksual Verbal, *Jurnal Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan Undiksha*, Vol.9, no.3, 2021, page.24. See too, Murakaba, and Mohamad Rafi'ie., Tinjauan Yuridis Terhadap Perbuatan Catcalling (Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal): Berdasarkan UU No. 12 Tahun 2022 tentang Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual di Indonesia, *Justicia Journal*, Vol.12, no.2, 2023, page.228.

⁴ Ni Putu Rai Yulianti, Hartana Hartana, Lukas Norman Kbarek, and Seguito Monteiro., From Retribution to Restoration: Human Rights-Based Legal Protection for Women Victims of Sexual Violence, *Jurnal Media Hukum*, Vol.32, no.2, 2025, page.281-300. See too, Suprihatin Suprihatin, and Abdul Muhaiminul Azis., Pelecehan Seksual Pada Jurnalis Perempuan di Indonesia, *PALASTREN: Jurnal Studi Gender*, Vol.13, no.2, 2020, page.418.

result, law enforcement tends to treat catcalling as a minor disturbance rather than gender-based violence.

Comparatively, several countries have adopted more explicit regulations. France criminalizes street harassment through the 2018 Law Against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, enabling on-the-spot fines for verbal harassment. Belgium's Gender Act in 2014 prohibits sexist speech in public places, including catcalling.⁵ The Philippines' Safe Spaces Act in 2019 explicitly recognizes catcalling as a punishable offense.⁶ These developments show a global normative trend toward recognizing verbal harassment as gender-based violence requiring specific legal responses. Indonesia, in contrast, lags behind in adopting a clear legislative framework despite its commitments under CEDAW and other human rights instruments.⁷

This gap between international standards and national law illustrates a significant phenomenon: catcalling is widespread, harmful, and normalized in daily life, yet it remains insufficiently recognized in legal and policy frameworks as a serious form of symbolic violence. Evidence from Komnas Perempuan⁸ supports this, reporting a total of 330,097 cases of gender-based violence against women—an increase of 14.17% from 289,111 cases in 2023. Most incidents occurred in the personal sphere (309,516), followed by the public sphere (12,004), highlighting the prevalence of verbal harassment in public spaces. Women subjected to catcalling often experience anxiety, fear, psychosomatic symptoms, loss of confidence, and restrictions on mobility. By reducing women's freedom and sense of safety in public spaces, catcalling indirectly reinforces patriarchal structures and limits women's full participation in society.⁹ However, these significant impacts are not matched by adequate policy responses.

There is also a clear legal gap: existing Indonesian laws do not specifically regulate catcalling or address its harms to bodily integrity. The absence of precise legal definitions undermines victims' access to justice, perpetuates impunity, and contradicts the state's human rights obligations. While human rights laws guarantee protection of personal security (Law Number 39/1999, Article 30), the implementation remains weak due to the lack of detailed regulation and enforcement mechanisms.

⁵ Jean-Marc Hausman., Criminalisation of "Street Harassment" in Belgium and France: Two Different Legislative Approaches to "Sexist" Acts, *CRIMEN-časopis za krivične nauke*, Vol.14, no.2, 2023, page.128.

⁶ Philippines., Republic Act 11313, An Act Defining Gender-Based Sexual Harassment in Streets, Public Spaces, Online, Workplaces, and Educational or Training Institutions, Providing Protective Measures and Prescribing Penalties Therefor (Safe Spaces Act), *Philippine Commission on Women*, April 17, 2018.

⁷ Louna Maret., Implementation of the CEDAW in France and Indonesia: Challenges and Progress regarding Women's Rights, *Indonesian J. Int'l L.* 21, 2023, page.616. See too, Mahfud, and Rizanizarli Rizanizarli., Domestic violence against women in Indonesia: The recent domestic violence elimination law analysis, *Fiat Justisia: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* Vol.15, no.4, 2021, page.388.

⁸ Komnas Perempuan., Menata Data, Menajamkan Arah: Refleksi Pendokumentasian dan Tren Kasus Kekerasan terhadap Perempuan 2024, *Komnas Perempuan*, June 2, 2025.

⁹ Angeline Hidayat, and Yugih Setyanto., Fenomena catcalling sebagai bentuk pelecehan seksual secara verbal terhadap perempuan di Jakarta, *Koneksi*, Vol.3, no.2, 2019, page.135.

Academic discussions in Indonesia on catcalling are still dominated by sociological and psychological perspectives, focusing on gender relations, victims' experiences, and cultural normalization.¹⁰ However, there is a research gap in legal studies: the legal dimensions of catcalling, particularly its status as symbolic violence, its impact on bodily integrity, and its implications for human rights, remain underexplored.¹¹ Existing research rarely examines the normative consequences of symbolic violence within Indonesia's constitutional and human rights framework, nor does it evaluate the adequacy of existing laws or compare international approaches.¹²

This study addresses women's bodily integrity and symbolic violence within a legal analysis framework. However, as described above, the theoretical discussion on women's bodily integrity and symbolic violence is insufficiently developed. Given the extensive body of existing scholarship on these concepts, this research aims to elaborate the concepts of symbolic violence, articulate their urgency in the context of women's rights, and formulate a framework for integrating these concepts into legal analysis to enhance the protection of women's bodily integrity in public spaces.

This study contributes by framing catcalling as symbolic violence and a form of gender-based violence that threatens women's bodily integrity, requiring legal recognition. By combining normative legal analysis with symbolic violence theory, it offers a legal-analytical framework beyond sociological perspectives. It identifies gaps in Indonesia's legal system, examines psychological and social impacts on victims, and draws lessons from international practices, providing insights for legal reform and effective protection of women's rights and dignity.

2. Research Methods

This study employs a normative legal research design oriented towards law reform, focusing on analyzing applicable legal norms, principles, and concepts to propose regulatory improvements addressing catcalling in Indonesia. The methodology

¹⁰ Abdurrahman Alhakim., Analisis Hukum Catcalling Dan Pemenuhan Asas Bhinneka Tunggal Ika Terhadap Peraturan Daerah Kota Batam Dalam Mencegah Pelecehan Seksual Verbal, *Jurnal Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan Undiksha*, Vol.9, no.3, 2021, page.26. See too, Aryati Hamzy, Cheng-Chung Chen, and Kuan-Ying Hsieh., Mental health and aggression in Indonesian women, *Behavioral Sciences*, Vol.13, no.9, 2023, page.727; Elli N. Hayati, Ulf Högberg, Mohammad Hakimi, Mary C. Ellsberg, and Maria Emmelin., Behind the silence of harmony: risk factors for physical and sexual violence among women in rural Indonesia, *BMC women's health*, Vol.11, no.1, 2011, page.52; Deborah N. Simorangkir., Work-related sexual harassment and coping techniques: the case of Indonesian female journalists, *Media Asia*, Vol.47, no.1-2, 2020, page.32.

¹¹ Habiba Chafai., Everyday gendered violence: women's experiences of and discourses on street sexual harassment in Morocco, *Te Journal of North African Studies*, Vol.26, no.5, 2021, page.1015.

¹² Ni Putu Rai Yulianti, Hartana Hartana, Lukas Norman Kbarek, and Seguito Monteiro., From Retribution to Restoration: Human Rights-Based Legal Protection for Women Victims of Sexual Violence, *Jurnal Media Hukum*, Vol.32, no.2, 2025, page.287.

integrates philosophical, statutory, conceptual, and case approaches to ensure a comprehensive legal analysis rather than solely sociological description.

The philosophical approach explores fundamental values, including human dignity, bodily integrity, gender justice, and social justice as derived from Pancasila, to provide an ethical basis for legal reform. The statutory approach examines relevant national legislation, including the 1945 Constitution, Law Number 39 of 1999 on Human Rights, Law Number 12 of 2022 on Sexual Violence Crimes (*Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual/TPKS*), the Criminal Code (Articles 281 and 315), Law Number 44 of 2008 on Pornography, and regional regulations addressing public order. International instruments such as CEDAW, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and the Beijing Platform for Action are analyzed to evaluate whether national laws align with global standards for protecting women against gender-based violence.

The conceptual approach develops a theoretical framework to understand catcalling as symbolic violence, drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's theory and the legal concept of sexual harassment, while the case approach incorporates empirical data, survey findings, and illustrative cases to demonstrate gaps between legal norms and social practices.¹³ Selection criteria for case examples focus on publicly documented incidents, legal disputes, and survey responses that reflect the range of verbal sexual harassment in Indonesia. The study also adopts a comparative approach to examine how other jurisdictions, such as France and the Philippines, regulate street harassment, providing practical lessons for law reform in the Indonesian context.

Moreover, to examine experiences and perceptions regarding catcalling as a form of verbal sexual harassment in public spaces, this study also used a cross-sectional survey method. The study sample consisted of 79 respondents selected from various social backgrounds in Malang City, East Java. Respondents included high school students, university students, and the general public. This sample selection aimed to represent various age groups and social statuses, with respondents ranging in age from 15 to 50 years old. Sampling was conducted purposively, targeting individuals who frequently spend time in public spaces and have direct experience or observation of catcalling. Data collection was conducted through structured interviews and questionnaires, focusing on several key factors and indicators, including: perceptions and awareness of catcalling as sexual harassment, attitudes toward legal sanctions for perpetrators, the perpetrator's gender and social status, the perpetrator's relationship with the victim, the forms of catcalling experienced or witnessed, the victim's psychological response, the victim's behavioral response, and the response of the surrounding community.

The research reasoning integrates deductive reasoning, deriving specific conclusions from general human rights principles; interpretive reasoning, to analyze and interpret legal norms; and evaluative-prescriptive reasoning, to formulate actionable legal and policy recommendations. Data are collected from

¹³ Michaela Wolf., Pierre Bourdieu, In *the Routledge handbook of translation history*, Oxfordshire, Routledge, 2021, page.127.

primary, secondary, and tertiary legal sources, including statutes, scholarly publications, and official reports. Legal materials are systematically identified, categorized, and analyzed using technological tools for literature searches. This process ensures the reliability and validity of sources while allowing critical assessment of normative, conceptual, and empirical evidence.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Catcalling as Symbolic Violence and Its Impacts

Catcalling is a widespread phenomenon and can theoretically be placed within Pierre Bourdieu's framework of symbolic violence. Symbolic violence, as conceptualized by Bourdieu¹⁴ is a form of non-physical violence that operates subtly, often unconsciously, through language, gestures, and socially sanctioned practices that reinforce pre-existing power hierarchies. In the case of catcalling, verbal remarks, whistles, or suggestive gestures directed at women reproduce gender power imbalances by positioning them as objects to be evaluated rather than autonomous subjects. This form of violence is normalized in social interactions, making it invisible to both perpetrators and observers, yet producing significant psychological and social impacts. In public spaces, women are subjected to gender evaluations, subjected to unsolicited sexual attention that undermines their bodily integrity and freedom of movement.

The concept of bodily integrity is crucial to understanding the harm caused by catcalling.¹⁵ Bodily integrity refers to an individual's inalienable right to autonomy over their own body, a principle upheld in international human rights frameworks such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW), and CEDAW.¹⁶ In the context of Indonesian law, Articles 28G and 28I of the 1945 Constitution guarantee the right to bodily integrity and security of person. Catcalling, by turning women into objects of sexualized comments, constitutes a violation of these rights, as it violates their psychological and physical autonomy, thereby limiting their ability to occupy public spaces without fear or coercion.¹⁷

Feminist legal theory further clarifies the implications of catcalling as gender-based

¹⁴ Pierre Bourdieu, Loïc Wacquant, Nancy Scheper-Hughes, and Philippe Bourgois., *Symbolic violence*, Cham, Springer, 2004, page.272.

¹⁵ Marchelya Sumera., Perbuatan kekerasan/pelecehan seksual terhadap Perempuan, *Lex et Societatis*, Vol.1, no.2, 2013, page.211. See too, Rosania Paradias, and Eko Soponyono., Perlindungan hukum terhadap korban pelecehan seksual, *Jurnal Pembangunan Hukum Indonesia*, Vol.4, no.1, 2022, page.65.

¹⁶ Cheryl O'Brien, and Morgan Newport., Prioritizing women's choices, consent, and bodily autonomy: From a continuum of violence to women-centric reproductive care, *Social Science & Medicine* Vol.333, 2023, page.1161. See too, Rebecca J. Cook., International human rights and women's reproductive health, *Women, medicine, ethics and the law*, 2020; page.39.

¹⁷ Yuni Kartika, and Andi Najemi., Kebijakan hukum perbuatan pelecehan seksual (catcalling) dalam perspektif hukum pidana, *PAMPAS: Journal of Criminal Law*, Vol.1, no.2, 2020; page.11. See too, Ratih Wulandari., Diskriminasi perempuan di tempat kerja, *Jurnal Idea Hukum*, Vol.8, no.1, 2022, page.23.

violence. Feminist jurisprudence emphasizes that justice must be substantive, not merely formal, by recognizing women's lived experiences as a legitimate basis for legal and social protection. From this perspective, acts of verbal harassment, including catcalling, are not trivial but constitute violations of human dignity and safety. The CEDAW definition of gender-based violence emphasizes that acts do not necessarily result in actual physical harm to be considered legally and socially harmful; psychological harm, intimidation, and restrictions on social participation are equally significant. Thus, catcalling qualifies as symbolic gender violence because it targets women's psychological well-being, instills fear, and reinforces systemic inequalities.¹⁸

Legally, catcalling is a form of verbal sexual harassment that violates bodily integrity and individual liberty.¹⁹ This act violates women's constitutional rights to bodily integrity and freedom of movement, as guaranteed by Articles 28G and 28I of the 1945 Constitution, as well as international standards enshrined in the UDHR, DEVAW, and CEDAW. The lack of regulations governing verbal sexual harassment means that perpetrators of catcalling rarely face legal action.

The survey findings presented in Table 1 illustrate that catcalling is widely recognized as a form of verbal sexual harassment, with 97.4% of respondents identifying it as such. However, public perception often downplays the severity of catcalling, dismissing it as a harmless joke or a form of attention. This discrepancy highlights the crucial role of public awareness and perception in addressing symbolic violence, as well as the need for a deeper understanding of its consequences. The data also show that 88.5% of respondents believe that perpetrators should face criminal penalties, indicating a strong recognition of legal accountability and the importance of protecting victims' rights.

Table 1. Respondent's Perception & Awareness on Catcalling (n = 79)

No.	Research Indicator	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Whether catcalling is considered sexual harassment	Yes	77	97.5
		No	2	2.5
	Total		79	100
2	Whether perpetrators of catcalling should face penalties	Yes	70	88.6
		No	9	11.4
	Total		79	100

¹⁸ Johanna Rosalí Reyes-Reinoso, Ana Fabiola Zamora Vázquez, Maria Cristina Useche Aguirre, Maria Elizabeth Leon-Prieto, Luciana Soledad Basso, and Magdalena Emilia Ordoñez-Gavilanez., Overview of Symbolic Violence: A Review of the Literature, *Revista De Gestão Social E Ambiental*, Vol.18, 2024, page.15. See too, Madeleine Lie, Elisa Novianti, Windisen Windisen, Gavinela Clarissa, and Ratu Shyfa NC., Penegakan Hukum Terhadap Pelaku Pelecehan Seksual Dibawah Umur (Studi Kasus: Pelecehan Seksual Di SMP X), *Jurnal Hukum Adigama*, Vol.4, no.1, 2021, page.1383.

¹⁹ Siti Nurahlin., Perlindungan hukum terhadap korban pelecehan seksual secara verbal (catcalling) dalam Undang-Undang Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual, *Jatistwara*, Vol.37, no.3, 2022, page.24.

In terms of perpetrator characteristics and social context, the majority of catcallers are male (93.6%), although women can also commit verbal harassment (6.4%), as shown in Table 2. Perpetrators come from a variety of social backgrounds, including the general public (73.1%), high school students (10.3%), university students (9%), and the unemployed (7.7%). This diversity indicates that catcalling is not limited to uneducated or marginalized individuals but occurs across diverse social groups, reflecting broader social norms that enable such behavior. The relationship between perpetrator and victim further emphasizes women's vulnerability in public spaces, with 93.6% of catcalling incidents perpetrated by strangers, 6.4% by friends, and none by family members. Common forms of catcalling include whistling (52.6%) and inappropriate verbal remarks (43.6%), while gestures or sounds such as inappropriate eye contact and kissing noises are less common.

Table 2. Perpetrator Characteristics & Social Context on Catcalling (n = 79)

No.	Research Indicator	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Gender of the catcalling perpetrators	Male	74	93.7
		Female	5	6.3
		Total	79	100
2	Status/profession of the catcalling perpetrators	General public	58	73.4
		High school student	8	10.1
		University student	7	8.9
		Unemployed	6	7.6
		Total	79	100
3	Relationship of the perpetrator to the victim	Stranger	74	93.7
		Friend	5	6.3
		Family	0	0.0
		Total	79	100
4	Forms of catcalling experienced or witnessed	Whistling	41	51.9
		Inappropriate words	34	43.0
		Inappropriate eye gestures	3	3.8
		Kiss sounds	1	1.3
		Total	79	100

The victims' experiences demonstrate the psychological and social impacts of verbal abuse, as shown in Table 3. Approximately 74.4% of respondents had experienced catcalling, with feelings of fear (48.7%) and anxiety (34.6%) predominating, alongside trauma (2.6%) and indifference (14.1%). Responses to catcalling were largely defensive; 64.1% of victims chose to remain silent or pretend not to notice, while 17.9% confronted or reprimanded the perpetrator. Community responses varied, with 41% helping the victim, 33.3% reprimanding the perpetrator, and 25.6% pretending not to notice. These patterns reflect the prevalence of fear-based social control and the normalization of gender power imbalances in public spaces, consistent with Bourdieu's theory of symbolic violence.

Table 3. Victim Experience & Response on Catcalling (n = 79)

No.	Research Indicator	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Community response when witnessing catcalling	Protecting the victim	32	40.5
		Reprimanding the perpetrator	26	32.9
		Pretending not to notice	21	26.6
	Total		79	100
2	Whether the respondent has ever been a victim of catcalling	Yes	59	74.7
		No	20	25.3
	Total		79	100
3	Feelings of victims after experiencing catcalling	Afraid	39	49.4
		Anxious	27	34.2
		Traumatized	2	2.5
		Indifferent	11	13.9
	Total		79	100
4	Victim's response when experiencing catcalling	Silent or pretending not to notice	51	64.6
		Confronting or retaliating	14	17.7
		Reprimanding the perpetrator	14	17.7
	Total		79	100

Consistent with previous research, these findings indicate that verbal harassment is a significant form of symbolic violence that violates women's psychological well-

being, mobility, and bodily integrity.²⁰ The combination of diverse perpetrators, limited law enforcement, and societal tolerance contributes to the persistence of verbal sexual harassment in public spaces. This situation underscores the widespread impact of catcalling on women's freedom, security, and dignity, highlighting the need to consider the social and structural dimensions of symbolic violence in understanding public harassment.

Various studies in Indonesia, including the survey findings in this study, indicate that catcalling results in fear, anxiety, trauma, and even limits women's participation in public spaces.²¹ These findings align with the fear of crime theory, which explains that fear can be a tool of social control against vulnerable groups. Doctrinally, this phenomenon positions catcalling as an act that violates the principles of equality, freedom of expression without fear, and the right to security as guaranteed by Articles 28G and 28I of the 1945 Constitution.

3.2. The Challenge of Regulatory Voids and Lessons from International Jurisdictions

Verbal sexual harassment occurs almost daily in public spaces, both on the streets and in other public places. Victims often feel afraid, anxious, and traumatized, while perpetrators are unaware of their wrongdoing due to a lack of public education. This harassment is not limited to women wearing revealing clothing; many victims who dress modestly and even children are also targeted.²² This suggests that catcalling is more related to public ignorance, patriarchal culture, and gender power imbalances than to the victim's attire or sexual attractiveness.²³

Pancasila, as the foundation of the state and the Indonesian nation's philosophy of life, can serve as a reference in drafting laws. In particular, the fifth principle of Pancasila, "Social Justice for All Indonesians," emphasizes the importance of protecting the human rights of every individual, including victims of verbal sexual harassment. Implementing this principle requires clear regulations and an adequate law enforcement system, so that victims have access to justice. In the

²⁰ Johanna Rosalí Reyes-Reinoso, Ana Fabiola Zamora Vázquez, Maria Cristina Useche Aguirre, Maria Elizabeth Leon-Prieto, Luciana Soledad Basso, and Magdalena Emilia Ordoñez-Gavilanez., Overview of Symbolic Violence: A Review of the Literature, *Revista De Gestão Social E Ambiental*, Vol.18, 2024, page.17.

²¹ Lenie Okviana, and Shifa Audrey Avianti Setiawanto., Pengaruh komunikasi verbal" catcalling" terhadap kepercayaan diri wanita berjilbab di Kota Depok, *BroadComm*, Vol.3, no.2, 2021, page.18. See too, Dandi Juliantara, Haris Thofly, and Nu'man Aunuh., Analisis Viktimologis Pelecehan Seksual Verbal di Wilayah Hukum Kota Malang (Studi di Polresta Kota Malang), *Indonesia Law Reform Journal*, Vol.1, no.3, 2021, page.446.

²² Kadek Ayu Wulandari, and I. Dewa Gede Dana Sugama., Pembuktian Tindakan Pelecehan Seksual Verbal (Catcalling) dalam Perspektif Hukum Acara Pidana, *Ethics and Law Journal: Business and Notary*, Vol.3, no.1, 2025, page.324. See too, I. Nyoman Alit Putrawan, and Dewa Putu Tagel., Legal impact of catcalling perpetrators and physiological impact on victims in Indonesia, *Ipsa Jure*, Vol.1, no.9, 2024, page.26.

²³ Anita Puspitas, and Wildan Nugraha., Pengaruh Budaya Patriarki Terhadap Maraknya Fenomena Catcalling, *Widya Duta*, Vol.18, no.1, 2023, page.60.

context of catcalling, the principles of Pancasila can serve as a normative guide for drafting laws that prioritize victim protection.

Several regulations, such as Articles 281 and 315 of the Criminal Code (*Kitab Undang Undang Hukum Perdata/KUHP*), Law Number 44 of 2008 concerning Pornography, and Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Sexual Violence (*Undang Undang Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual/TPKS Law*), provide partial protection, but none explicitly criminalize catcalling or verbal sexual harassment in public spaces. Article 281 of the Criminal Code regulates indecent acts in public, but its emphasis is on physical indecent acts such as touching, rather than verbal harassment. Article 315 of the Criminal Code addresses minor assault or acts that incite fear, but does not specifically address gender-based or verbal sexual harassment.

Specifically, Article 281 of the Criminal Code regulates indecent acts committed in public places, but its primary focus is on touching or physical indecent acts, not verbal harassment:

“Anyone who, with the intent to commit an indecent act against another person, commits such act in public, shall be punished by a maximum imprisonment of two years and eight months.”

Meanwhile, Article 315 of the Criminal Code emphasizes minor assault that instills fear and does not specifically target verbal sexual harassment:

“Anyone who intentionally injures or intimidates another person in public shall be punished by a maximum imprisonment of nine months or a maximum fine of four thousand five hundred rupiah.”

Law Number 44 of 2008 concerning Pornography regulates behavior containing pornographic content, including Articles 8, 9, 34, and 35, which emphasize the prohibition of the distribution of pornography and protection against sexual exploitation. However, this law is more relevant to digital media or the publication of pornographic material, so it does not clearly regulate verbal harassment in public spaces. Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence, although more modern, still does not define catcalling as a separate crime.²⁴

Furthermore, the Pornography Law regulates the distribution of pornographic material in print or digital media, not spontaneous verbal interactions in public spaces, so its application to catcalling is very limited.²⁵ The 2022 TPKS Law, while making progress in addressing sexual violence, lacks a separate provision that

²⁴ Murakaba, and Mohamad Rafi'ie., Tinjauan Yuridis Terhadap Perbuatan Catcalling (Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal): Berdasarkan UU No. 12 Tahun 2022 tentang Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual di Indonesia, *Justicia Journal*, Vol.12, no.2, 2023, page.229. See too, Fara Novanda Fatura., Telaah tindak pidana pelecehan seksual secara verbal dalam hukum pidana Indonesia, *Recidive: Jurnal Hukum Pidana dan Penanggulangan Kejahatan*, Vol.8, no.3, 2019, page.242; Livia Jayanti Putri, and I. Ketut Suardita., Tinjauan Yuridis Terhadap Perbuatan Catcalling (Pelecehan Verbal) Di Indonesia, *Kertha Wicara: Journal Ilmu Hukum*, Vol.8, no.2, 2019, page.14.

²⁵ Anak Agung Ayu Wulan Pramesti Puja, Anak Agung Sagung Laksmi Dewi, and Luh Putu Suryani., Penghapusan Kekerasan Seksual malam Melindungi Korban Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal (Catcalling) di Indonesia, *Jurnal Preferensi Hukum*, Vol.3, no.1, 2022, page.112.

clearly criminalizes catcalling. As a result of this legal vacuum, reporting of verbal harassment cases is rare, law enforcement is weak, and perpetrators feel safe without fear of legal consequences. The social normalization of catcalling as a compliment or a joke exacerbates the situation. Victims are reluctant to report due to stigma and fear of retaliation from perpetrators, while law enforcement lacks gender-sensitive guidelines and sensitivity, so this phenomenon is often handled through informal mediation.

This legal vacuum results in poor law enforcement, minimal reporting, and a misguided public perception of catcalling as a joke or compliment. Victims are often afraid to report due to stigma and fear of retaliation from perpetrators perceived as more powerful. Law enforcement institutions also face challenges due to a lack of guidelines and understanding of verbal abuse as a symbol of sexual violence, so cases often end through informal mediation. This situation creates a discrepancy with international obligations ratified by Indonesia. The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) requires member states to provide effective protection against all forms of violence and discrimination against women, including gender-based violence in public spaces.

Comparisons with several other jurisdictions demonstrate that these countries have taken strong legal steps to combat street harassment. In France, for example, since 2018 the country has passed a law strengthening the fight against sexual and sexist violence ("Sexual and Sexist Violence Law 2018", French: loi no 2018-703), which introduces criminal provisions against acts of "street harassment" or "harcèlement de rue" (street harassment) including catcalling, gesturing, sexual comments, and gender-based demeaning behavior. Violators can be fined up to €750, and more if the act is aggressive or physical. Data shows that in the first year of the law's implementation, more than 700 fines were issued against perpetrators of harcèlement de rue.²⁶

In Belgium, since the enactment of the Law of 22 May 2014 on Measures to Combat Sexism in Public Spaces ("Loi Sexisme / Anti-Sexisme Law 2014"), sexual harassment and sexist harassment in public spaces have been recognized as criminally punishable. This law makes harassment in public spaces whether in the form of insults, derogatory comments based on gender, sexual gestures, or other forms of street harassment a criminal offense. Perpetrators can be punished with fines or imprisonment (up to approximately one year), depending on the provisions. Belgium has chosen an ad hoc legislative approach to sexism in public spaces, in contrast to France, which includes it within the provisions of its Criminal Code on sexual violence.²⁷

²⁶ E. Batha., France Fines More Than 700 in First Year of 'Catcall' law, *Reuters*, August 6, 2019.

²⁷ Jean-Marc Hausman., Criminalisation of "Street Harassment" in Belgium and France: Two Different Legislative Approaches to "Sexist" Acts, *CRIMEN-časopis za krivične nauke*, Vol.14, no.2, 2023, page.128. See too, Blyth Derek., New Belgian Law Makes Sexual Harassment Illegal. *The Bulletin*, March 14, 2014; Mischa JT Dekker., What Shapes Feminist Journalism? Comparing

In the Philippines, Republic Act Number 11313 ("Safe Spaces Act 2019") explicitly defines catcalling as a form of sexual harassment in the street and public spaces and establishes criminal and administrative sanctions for perpetrators. Article 4 of the law defines that "gender-based street and public space sexual harassment includes catcalling, wolf-whistling, unwanted remarks, or gestures..." and Article 11 stipulates penalties for first offenses of a ₱1,000 fine and community service, including gender sensitization seminars.²⁸ These legal instruments demonstrate that such regulations are not merely normative theories but have been implemented in practice.

The three models in France, Belgium, and the Philippines demonstrate that clear and specific regulations against street harassment are important not merely as symbols, but as instruments for law enforcement and harassment prevention. Examples from other jurisdictions emphasize three elements: an explicit definition of verbal or gender-based harassment in public spaces; strict sanctions (fines or imprisonment); and adequate reporting and enforcement mechanisms.²⁹

Thus, Indonesia requires comprehensive legal reconstruction: the creation of new norms explicitly criminalizing catcalling and gender-based verbal harassment in public spaces; revision or addition to the TPKS Law or a new law; The development of clear legal definitions to align with the principle of legal certainty (*lex certa*) and human rights commitments based on Pancasila values particularly social justice and respect for human dignity; and the development of enforcement mechanisms: simplified reporting procedures, training for law enforcement officers, and psychological support services for victims.³⁰ These reforms will help fill the regulatory gap that has allowed perpetrators to go free, and provide victims with access to justice and protection of their physical and psychological integrity.³¹

Dutch and French Reporting on Street Harassment, *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, Vol.11, no.2, 2024, page.2332.

²⁸ Philippines., Republic Act 11313, An Act Defining Gender-Based Sexual Harassment in Streets, Public Spaces, Online, Workplaces, and Educational or Training Institutions, Providing Protective Measures and Prescribing Penalties Therefor (Safe Spaces Act), *Philippine Commission on Women*, April 17, 2018.

²⁹ Loïc Lerouge., Workplace bullying and harassment in France and few comparisons with Belgium: a legal perspective, *Workplace Bullying and Harassment, JILPT Report n 12/2013, op. cit*, Vol.2, no.1, 2013, page.43.

³⁰ Leony Sondang Suryani, and Ahmad Khozi., Ketentuan TPKS Dalam KUHP Baru, *Jurnal Hukum & Pembangunan*, Vol.53, no.2, 2023, page.299. See too, Abdullah Sulaiman., Evaluation of Legal Reform and Implementation of Protection for Victims of Sexual Violence in Indonesia Through Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence, *Jurnal Greenation Sosial dan Politik*, Vol.3, no.4, 2025, page.768; Franciscus Xaverius Wartoyo, and Yuni Priskila Ginting., Kekerasan seksual pada lingkungan perguruan tinggi ditinjau dari Nilai Pancasila, *Jurnal Lemhannas RI*, Vol.11, no.1, 2023, page.32; Mahardika, Ahmad Gelora., Menggali nilai-nilai kebangsaan dalam Pancasila sebagai groundnorm Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia, *Ahkam: Jurnal Hukum Islam*, Vol.6, no.2, 2018, page.237; Dea Pitaloca, Nasywa Iedha Khaerunisa Anrose, Nadia Aristawati Daniswara, and Maulia Depria Kembara., Implementasi nilai-nilai Pancasila dalam menanggulangi pelecehan seksual di lingkungan Masyarakat, *Garuda: Jurnal Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan Dan Filsafat*, Vol.1, no.2, 2023, page.99.

³¹ Oheo Kaimuddin Haris, Sabrina Hidayat, and Arniyanti Ahsyam., Batasan kekerasan seksual secara verbal dalam RKUHP dan undang-undang TPKS, *Halu Oleo Legal Research*, Vol.5, no.1, 2023, page.16.

3.3. Strengthening the Protection of the Physical Integrity of Catcalling Victims through Legal and Institutional Approaches

The phenomenon of catcalling, or verbal sexual harassment in public spaces, has become a serious problem in Indonesia, particularly for women and children. Studies show that victims of catcalling not only feel embarrassed, offended, or humiliated, but also experience long-term psychological disorders such as trauma, anxiety, and loss of self-confidence.³² This verbal harassment is often trivialized by society, due to social norms that still justify such behavior as mere “compliments” or “jokes.” This is exacerbated by a lack of public education about the definition and impact of verbal harassment, leaving perpetrators unaware of their wrongdoing, while victims are afraid to report it due to stigma and potential retaliation.³³

To address this situation, comprehensive legal reform is needed. First, Indonesia must formulate new norms in national legislation or revise Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence to include the category of verbal harassment in public spaces as a separate crime.³⁴ This definition needs to align with the principles of CEDAW, which emphasizes the state’s obligation to protect women from all forms of gender-based violence, including verbal violence in public spaces.³⁵ This way, victims gain legal certainty (*lex certa*) and are no longer dependent on interpretations of general articles in the Criminal Code or the Pornography Law, which have been deemed inadequate in addressing catcalling.³⁶

Second, legal reform must be based on the values of Pancasila, particularly the second principle, “Just and Civilized Humanity,” and the fifth principle, “Social

³² Murakaba, and Mohamad Rafi'ie., Tinjauan Yuridis Terhadap Perbuatan Catcalling (Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal): Berdasarkan UU No. 12 Tahun 2022 tentang Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual di Indonesia, *Justicia Journal*, Vol.12, no.2, 2023, page.230. See too, Evelyne Julian Halim., Direction of Regulating Catcall Actions in Law: Comparison of Indonesia and France Law, *Lex Scientia Law Review*, Vol.5, no.1, 2021, page.65.

³³ Habiba Chafai., Everyday gendered violence: women’s experiences of and discourses on street sexual harassment in Morocco, *Te Journal of North African Studies*, Vol.26, no.5, 2021, page.1017. See too, Amandine Lebugle., Young women in large cities are the main victims of violence in public spac, *Population & Societies*, Vol.550, no.11, 2017, page.3.

³⁴ Murakaba, and Mohamad Rafi'ie., Tinjauan Yuridis Terhadap Perbuatan Catcalling (Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal): Berdasarkan UU No. 12 Tahun 2022 tentang Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual di Indonesia, *Justicia Journal*, Vol.12, no.2, 2023, page.231. See too, Ni Putu Rai Yuliantini, Hartana Hartana, Lukas Norman Kbarek, and Seguito Monteiro., From Retribution to Restoration: Human Rights-Based Legal Protection for Women Victims of Sexual Violence, *Jurnal Media Hukum*, Vol.32, no.2, 2025, page.288.

³⁵ Hanafi Arief., Legal protection against women victims by the Indonesian domestic violence act 23, 2004, *Sriwijaya Law Review*, 2017, page.115. See too, Louna Maret., Implementation of the CEDAW in France and Indonesia: Challenges and Progress regarding Women's Rights, *Indonesian J. Int'l L.*, no.21, 2023, page.619.

³⁶ Evelyne Julian Halim., Direction of Regulating Catcall Actions in Law: Comparison of Indonesia and France Law, *Lex Scientia Law Review*, Vol.5, no.1, 2021, page.66.

Justice for All Indonesian People”.³⁷ These values place human dignity as the ethical foundation for protecting women’s physical and psychological integrity, while providing moral and legal legitimacy for state intervention. Pancasila values can be translated into case-handling guidelines, strengthening the capacity of law enforcement officers, and public education curricula on verbal harassment, including legal and gender literacy programs that focus on recognizing victims’ rights and perpetrators’ responsibilities.³⁸

Third, institutional mechanisms need to be strengthened. Reporting procedures must be easily accessible and clear, with protection for witnesses and victims throughout the legal process. Furthermore, psychological recovery services for victims of catcalling are an essential part of comprehensive protection. This approach aligns with the principle of victim-oriented justice in victimology theory, which places the victim’s experience as the basis for policy formulation.³⁹ Psychological rehabilitation and victim support not only restore victims’ mental health but also build their courage to continue safely engaging in public spaces.⁴⁰

Fourth, lessons learned from other jurisdictions can be used as a reference in designing Indonesian regulations. In France, for example, the Loi Schiappa has been in effect since 2018, criminalizing street harassment (*harcèlement de rue*), including catcalling, sexual gestures, derogatory comments, and other gender-based acts. Perpetrators can be subject to an immediate fine of up to €750, with penalties increasing for aggressive or physical acts. Initial evaluations indicate that over 700 fines were issued in the first year of the law’s implementation. The Philippines, through its Safe Spaces Act of 2019, also clearly defines catcalling as sexual harassment on the street and in public spaces, and establishes criminal and administrative sanctions.⁴¹ Belgium, through its Law of 22 May 2014, criminalizes sexist harassment in public spaces, with penalties of imprisonment or fines. These countries’ regulatory models emphasize three essential elements: an explicit definition of gender-based verbal harassment, strict sanctions, and adequate reporting and enforcement mechanisms. Indonesia can adapt this model by

³⁷ Iwan Hertanto, Supanto Suparto, Muhammad Rustamaji, and Yusuf Saefudin., Police and Law Enforcement of Domestic Violence Crimes Based on Human Rights in Indonesia, *Khazanah Hukum*, Vol.6, no.2, 2024, page.135. See too, Leonard Brahmandika., Pengamalan nilai-nilai Pancasila sebagai landasan etis dalam kebijakan perlindungan perempuan dari kekerasan seksual, *CIVICS: Jurnal Pendidikan Pancasila dan Kewarganegaraan*, Vol.9, no.2, 2024, page.546.

³⁸ Murakaba, and Mohamad Rafi’ie., Tinjauan Yuridis Terhadap Perbuatan Catcalling (Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal): Berdasarkan UU No. 12 Tahun 2022 tentang Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual di Indonesia, *Justicia Journal*, Vol.12, no.2, 2023, page.232. See too, Ni Putu Rai Yulianti, Hartana Hartana, Lukas Norman Kbarek, and Seguito Monteiro., From Retribution to Restoration: Human Rights-Based Legal Protection for Women Victims of Sexual Violence, *Jurnal Media Hukum*, Vol.32, no.2, 2025, page.290; Affandi Hernadi S. H., *Pancasila-Eksistensi dan Aktualisasi*, Yogyakarta, Penerbit Andi, 2020, page.24.

³⁹ Ni Putu Rai Yulianti, Hartana Hartana, Lukas Norman Kbarek, and Seguito Monteiro., From Retribution to Restoration: Human Rights-Based Legal Protection for Women Victims of Sexual Violence, *Jurnal Media Hukum*, Vol.32, no.2, 2025, page.291.

⁴⁰ Evelyne Julian Halim., Direction of Regulating Catcall Actions in Law: Comparison of Indonesia and France Law, *Lex Scientia Law Review*, Vol.5, no.1, 2021, page.67.

⁴¹ Evelyne Julian Halim., Direction of Regulating Catcall Actions in Law: Comparison of Indonesia and France Law, *Lex Scientia Law Review*, Vol.5, no.1, 2021, page.68.

considering the local socio-cultural context, the preparedness of law enforcement, and local community norms.

Fifth, legal and gender literacy campaigns are crucial tools for changing public perceptions about catcalling. The normalization of verbal harassment as humor must be countered through ongoing public education, involving schools, universities, local governments, and local communities.⁴² A better understanding of women's rights and the definition of catcalling will encourage victims to report it, while perpetrators will understand the legal consequences of their actions. Legal and gender literacy also supports the creation of a culture of safe public spaces, where respect for individual rights becomes a social norm.

An integrated approach encompassing legal substance, institutional capacity, and cultural change is expected to create safer public spaces and guarantee women's rights to physical integrity, dignity, and safety.⁴³ Clear law enforcement, victim protection, public education, and psychological rehabilitation form the foundation of comprehensive protection. In line with the principles of Pancasila, these measures affirm the state's responsibility to uphold just and civilized social and humanitarian justice, and provide concrete protection for victims of verbal harassment.

This legal reform also emphasizes the importance of human rights-based protection. Catcalling is a violation of women's physical and psychological integrity, directly threatening their rights to security, dignity, and freedom of movement in public spaces.⁴⁴ A rights-based approach emphasizes victim recovery, not simply punishment of the perpetrator, so that victims receive not only legal justice but also psychological and social support to return to normal lives.⁴⁵

⁴² Murakaba, and Mohamad Rafi'ie., Tinjauan Yuridis Terhadap Perbuatan Catcalling (Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal): Berdasarkan UU No. 12 Tahun 2022 tentang Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual di Indonesia, *Justicia Journal*, Vol.12, no.2, 2023, page.233. See too, Habiba Chafai., Everyday gendered violence: women's experiences of and discourses on street sexual harassment in Morocco, *Te Journal of North African Studies*, Vol.26, no.5, 2021, page.1018.

⁴³ Ni Putu Rai Yulianti, Hartana Hartana, Lukas Norman Kbarek, and Seguito Monteiro., From Retribution to Restoration: Human Rights-Based Legal Protection for Women Victims of Sexual Violence, *Jurnal Media Hukum*, Vol.32, no.2, 2025, page.292. See too, Iwan Hertanto, Supanto Suparto, Muhammad Rustamaji, and Yusuf Saefudin., Police and Law Enforcement of Domestic Violence Crimes Based on Human Rights in Indonesia, *Khazanah Hukum*, Vol.6, no.2, 2024, page.136.

⁴⁴ Murakaba, and Mohamad Rafi'ie., Tinjauan Yuridis Terhadap Perbuatan Catcalling (Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal): Berdasarkan UU No. 12 Tahun 2022 tentang Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual di Indonesia, *Justicia Journal*, Vol.12, no.2, 2023, page.234. See too, Ni Putu Rai Yulianti, Hartana Hartana, Lukas Norman Kbarek, and Seguito Monteiro., From Retribution to Restoration: Human Rights-Based Legal Protection for Women Victims of Sexual Violence, *Jurnal Media Hukum*, Vol.32, no.2, 2025, page.294.

⁴⁵ Hanafi Arief., Legal protection against women victims by the Indonesian domestic violence act 23, 2004, *Sriwijaya Law Review*, 2017, page.117. See too, Iwan Hertanto, Supanto Suparto, Muhammad Rustamaji, and Yusuf Saefudin., Police and Law Enforcement of Domestic Violence Crimes Based on Human Rights in Indonesia, *Khazanah Hukum*, Vol.6, no.2, 2024, page.138.

Furthermore, legal reform in Indonesia must take into account ratified international obligations, such as the 1979 CEDAW, which obliges states to provide effective protection against gender-based violence, including in public spaces.⁴⁶ The current legal gap leads to underreporting, weak law enforcement, and a misguided public perception of catcalling as a joke. Therefore, creating a new norm specifically criminalizing catcalling would provide legal certainty and strengthen victims' standing under the law.

Therefore, integrating clear legal formulation, strong institutional mechanisms, and ongoing social education is key to protecting women from catcalling in Indonesia. This approach not only ensures justice for victims but also builds broader social awareness, changes community behavior, and restores public trust in public spaces as safe and free from verbal harassment.⁴⁷ The emphasis on ethical, legal, and human rights dimensions emphasizes that violations of women's physical and psychological integrity are not merely social issues, but serious human rights violations that contradict the values of Pancasila.

Overall, structured legal, institutional, and public education measures are expected to make catcalling a real legal issue, rather than a neglected social phenomenon. This way, women in Indonesia can move freely and safely in public spaces, while society learns to respect individual rights and reject all forms of verbal harassment. These reforms also affirm Indonesia's position as a nation that respects human rights, upholds the dignity of victims, and upholds the principles of social justice as enshrined in Pancasila.⁴⁸

4. Conclusion

This study shows that catcalling in Indonesian public spaces is a form of symbolic violence that threatens women's physical integrity, restricts their freedom, and has significant psychological, social, and physical impacts. Based on Bourdieu's theory, these findings indicate that verbal sexual harassment is considered normal in society, often treated as a joke, but it causes fear, anxiety, trauma, and reduced public participation for victims. The survey results confirmed that the majority of respondents considered catcalling to be sexual harassment. This underscores its

⁴⁶ Ni Putu Rai Yulianti, Hartana Hartana, Lukas Norman Kbarek, and Seguito Monteiro., From Retribution to Restoration: Human Rights-Based Legal Protection for Women Victims of Sexual Violence, *Jurnal Media Hukum*, Vol.32, no.2, 2025, page.295.

⁴⁷ Murakaba, and Mohamad Rafi'ie., Tinjauan Yuridis Terhadap Perbuatan Catcalling (Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal): Berdasarkan UU No. 12 Tahun 2022 tentang Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual di Indonesia, *Justicia Journal*, Vol.12, no.2, 2023, page.235. See too, Evelyne Julian Halim., Direction of Regulating Catcall Actions in Law: Comparison of Indonesia and France Law, *Lex Scientia Law Review*, Vol.5, no.1, 2021, page.69; Ni Putu Rai Yulianti, Hartana Hartana, Lukas Norman Kbarek, and Seguito Monteiro., From Retribution to Restoration: Human Rights-Based Legal Protection for Women Victims of Sexual Violence, *Jurnal Media Hukum*, Vol.32, no.2, 2025, page.296.

⁴⁸ Murakaba, and Mohamad Rafi'ie., Tinjauan Yuridis Terhadap Perbuatan Catcalling (Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal): Berdasarkan UU No. 12 Tahun 2022 tentang Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual di Indonesia, *Justicia Journal*, Vol.12, no.2, 2023, page.236. See too, Iwan Hertanto., Supanto Suparto, Muhammad Rustamaji, and Yusuf Saefudin., Police and Law Enforcement of Domestic Violence Crimes Based on Human Rights in Indonesia, *Khazanah Hukum*, Vol.6, no.2, 2024, page.138.

serious implications for women's dignity and safety.

From a legal perspective, there are applicable legal provisions, such as the Criminal Code, the Pornography Law, and the TPKS Law. However, Indonesia's legal framework remains inadequate to explicitly address verbal harassment in public spaces. This allows perpetrators to act with impunity and limits access to justice for victims. Furthermore, sociocultural norms tend to blame the victim, and low public awareness further exacerbates this problem.

To address these issues, this study recommends specific legal, institutional, and social reforms. First, catcalling must be explicitly criminalized in line with CEDAW to provide legal certainty and enable enforcement. Second, reforms should reflect Pancasila principles, particularly social justice and human dignity, ensuring protection of women's bodily integrity and autonomy. Third, institutional mechanisms must be strengthened, including accessible reporting procedures, victim protection, psychological recovery services, and capacity-building for law enforcement. Fourth, public education and gender literacy campaigns are necessary to challenge the normalization of verbal harassment. Additional recommendations include education on verbal sexual harassment for all, imposing legal and social sanctions on perpetrators, establishing rehabilitation centers for victims, and creating laws and educational programs that allow society to support victims and guarantee justice.

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