



## The Influence of Digitalization in Encouraging Crime: A Criminological Perspective

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**Abstract:** Digitalization has a significant impact on the increase in crime, especially through the phenomenon of criminal imitation models spread on the internet. This research aims to analyze the influence of digitalization on crime from a criminological point of view. The methodology used is a qualitative approach with a descriptive design and normative data collection techniques. The results showed that the development of digitalization triggered an increase in imitative criminal behavior, as shown by police data indicating an upward trend in crime in the last five years. Social media, especially TikTok, is the main platform for disseminating content that encourages imitation of criminal acts. These findings confirm the importance of strengthening regulations and prevention strategies to mitigate the negative impact of digitalization on criminal behavior.

**Keywords :** Digitalization; Imitation; Crime

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### **How to cite (Chicago Style) :**

Ainun Agustina Atiqah Balqis, Lisnawaty W. Badu. "The Influence of Digitalization in Encouraging Crime: A Criminological Perspective". *Estudiante Law Journal* 7 (1) (February 2024): 139-148. <https://doi.org/10.33756/eslaj.v7i1.27964>.

## 1. Introduction

Humans are greatly influenced by the development of digitalization, so that it has a big impact, both positive and negative.<sup>1</sup> The extreme and uncontrolled development of digitalization is a big threat. Crimes that occur more frequently are one of the impacts of the development of digitalization. This can be seen from the country of Indonesia which is currently facing a wave of cybercrime due to the increasing and increasingly advanced development of digitalization, especially in the financial sector, which is experiencing losses from cybercrime in Indonesia. In the period 2017 to 2022, this cybercrime caused losses of IDR 139.03 trillion.<sup>2</sup> Indonesia is ranked third in the world for the largest number of data leak cases, according to data collected by Netherlands-based cybersecurity company Surfshark. It cannot be denied that crime can be rampant on the internet, on television and in other media.<sup>3</sup> It cannot be denied that the internet, television and other media can become a hotbed for crime. In life, the internet has touched all aspects without exception. The development of digitalization in life can be seen in terms of the number of online transactions currently in the form of e-wallet, m-banking, e-money, QRIS and so on. In terms of transportation, there are Maxim, Grab, Gojek and other online motorcycle taxi applications that are easy to access. From an educational perspective, those who today use laptops and computers to work on their theses no longer use typewriters. However, again and again, the impacts caused by the development of digitalization must be addressed wisely so that criminal acts do not occur.

Crime is rampant because people easily access the internet and other media that broadcast crime. The internet and other media are currently very easy to access so it is very dangerous, especially for minors who are very easy to imitate the behavior of what they see. Currently, scenes of violence that appear on TV and the internet cause perpetrators to commit crimes inspired by what they watch or what they see or what is also usually called criminal imitation model. In a 1961 study, Schramm, Lyle, and Parker examined news reports from the 1950s as well as various examples of imitative violence. According to his research findings, the relationship between watching television shows that show crime and imitating crime and violence is not just a matter of chance.<sup>4</sup> One of the cases of abuse that occurred in Bukittinggi as a result of television broadcasts in October 2014 was quite worrying because the perpetrators of the abuse were minors who were inspired by television shows or were known as criminal imitation models. A criminal imitation model is someone who imitates or

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<sup>1</sup> Sindy Ariyaningsih et al., "Korelasi Kejahatan Siber Dengan Percepatan Digitalisasi Di Indonesia," *Justisia: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 1, no. 1 (2023): 1-11.

<sup>2</sup> Abdul Muslim, "Kejahatan Digital Mengancam Indonesia, Rp 139 T Disikat Penjahat Siber," *BeritaSatu.com*, 2023, <https://www.beritasatu.com/ototekno/1063452/kejahatan-digital-mengancam-indonesia-rp-139-t-disikat-penjahat-siber>.

<sup>3</sup> Yakhamid and Rezky Yayang, "Waspada Kejahatan Siber Di Era Serba Daring," *LAN RI*, 2023, <https://lan.go.id/?p=13415>.

<sup>4</sup> Dede Mahmudah, "Tayangan Kekerasan Di Televisi Dan Terpaannya Pada Khalayak Masyarakat," *Jurnal Masyarakat Telematika Dan Informasi* 4, no. 1 (2013): 53-60.

imitates what is seen on television or in the news.<sup>5</sup> At this time, everyone without age restrictions can easily access the internet and television anywhere and anytime.

Of course, in this case the development of digitalization is the main factor in which someone can imitate criminal acts through what they see on the internet, TV and other media. So the threat of the development of digitalization causing criminal acts must be a concern for the government because it is a serious threat. Because the number of criminal cases is increasing, one of the most significant issues that must be of common concern for modern human life is criminal acts caused by the development of digitalization.<sup>6</sup>

As a result of broadcasts on television and the internet, one of the cases that occurred because it was inspired by watching films was the case of the mutilation of a UMY student in Sleman, Yogyakarta. In the case of mutilation carried out by the two perpetrators, namely Waliyin and Ridduan, this was a case that occurred as a result of watching the film "Kanibal (2006)" which inspired the perpetrator to carry out a mutilation scene by slitting the victim's throat and cutting off parts of the victim's body as in the action in the film scene.<sup>7</sup> This case went viral because it also revealed the fact that the perpetrator and victim were part of an unnatural community on Facebook, namely the abbreviation BDSM community.

BDSM is a sexual practice that involves violence for lovemaking. Some experts claim that the trauma experienced by a child being raised under strict rules and in an environment where physical abuse such as beatings and slapping occurs is what causes personality disorders (BDSM). During a meeting between the two perpetrators and the victim in a boarding house belonging to one of the perpetrators to carry out BDSM, without more careful planning, one of them lost his life due to excessive force which even ended in mutilation. In this case, the development of digitalization really influences a person's behavior and mindset. The internet itself has a big influence on the quality of people's lives. Excessive use of the internet can have negative impacts ranging from mental health to crimes that can even kill someone's life.<sup>8</sup>

To learn more deeply about why someone imitates or emulates and is inspired by shows that contain elements of violence, criminology is very useful for studying more deeply why the development of digitalization influences crime through broadcasts on the internet, television and other media. Criminology can help solve public concerns

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<sup>5</sup> Rakha Darmawan Arlyanto, "Pelaku Bakar Wanita Di Cisauk Tangerang Terinspirasi Film Kriminal," *detiknews*, 2021, <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-5641912/pelaku-bakar-wanita-di-cisauk-tangerang-terinspirasi-film-kriminal>.

<sup>6</sup> Raodia Raodia, "Pengaruh Perkembangan Teknologi Terhadap Terjadinya Kejahatan Mayantara (Cybercrime)," *Jurisprudentie* 6, no. 2 (2019): 232.

<sup>7</sup> Wijaya Kusuma and Dita Angga Rusiana, "Mutilasi Mahasiswa UMY, Pelaku Terinspirasi Dari Film Pembunuhan," *KOMPAS.com*, 2023, <https://yogyakarta.kompas.com/read/2023/11/22/212722278/mutilasi-mahasiswa-umy-pelaku-terinspirasi-dari-film-pembunuhan>.

<sup>8</sup> Wily Mohammad and Nabilla Ryca Maulidiyah, "Pengaruh Akses Internet Terhadap Aspek Kualitas Kehidupan Masyarakat Indonesia," *Triwikrama: Jurnal Multidisiplin Ilmu Sosial* 01, no. 02 (2023): 30–45.

regarding criminal acts that often arise as a result of spectacles or in this case called the criminal imitation model. Criminology is very helpful in uncovering why someone commits a crime because criminology is a science that studies the symptoms of crime as widely as possible.<sup>9</sup> Science helps criminology in revealing how crime is very helpful so that crime can be prevented or overcome so that it can minimize the occurrence of criminal acts again. Criminology also studies criminal activity in both individual and organized forms, including how criminals commit crimes using methods. Criminology is also the science of studying the causes of crime, namely by comparing the perpetrators of one crime with the perpetrators of other crimes, a particular crime case with other crime cases.

Looking at the symptoms that arise in society, especially nowadays, where technology is more advanced and the increasingly crazy development of digitalization has resulted in criminal acts involving both adults and children because of the shows that appear on the internet, television and other media, so it is interesting to study. Further regarding the influence of digitalization in encouraging someone to imitate criminal acts from a criminological perspective.

## **2. Method**

The research method applied is the Normative Juridical method. Normative Juridical is a method for discovering legal regulations, legal principles and legal doctrine. Methods in normative legal research can be used on main legal sources and additional legal sources, provided that the legal sources contain legal regulations.<sup>10</sup>

## **3. Discussion And Analysis**

Crime is increasingly growing due to digitalization factors, which can be seen from the very high crime rate obtained from police data for the last 5 years which continues to show an increase.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Yasmirah Mandasari Saragih and Alwan Hadiyanto, *Pengantar Teori Kriminologi & Teori Dalam Hukum Pidana* (Medan: Cattleya Darmaya Fortuna, 2021).

<sup>10</sup> Zainuddin Ali, *Metode Penelitian Hukum* (Sinar Grafika, 2021).

<sup>11</sup> Febriana Sulistya Pratiwi, "Data Jumlah Kejahatan Di Indonesia Pada 2023," *DataIndonesia.id*, 2023, <https://dataindonesia.id/varia/detail/data-jumlah-kejahatan-di-indonesia-pada-2023>.



This shows that the parallel increase and development of digitalization is very influential in influencing a person's mindset and behavior. This is because the development of digitalization today has brought big changes to humanity, for example the existence of smartphones which makes it easier for people to build and access information so that people cannot be separated from smartphones and have a feeling of dependence on smartphones. With developments in the realm of privacy, the realm of privacy is getting narrower, with personal data stored on computers making it very easy for people to be tracked, even if they only have a telephone number, so the opportunity for crime to occur is very high.<sup>12</sup>

In data compiled by KompasTekno from Statista, Indonesia is in second place with the most TikTok users in the world, followed by Brazil, Mexico and Russia. The TikTok application is very real evidence of the development of digitalization and influences paradigms and a person's behavior. Tiktok is an application that can be used to make videos and shop because its features are being developed all the time.<sup>13</sup> TikTok itself contains various kinds of videos ranging from comedy videos, dramas, conspiracies to videos related to crime. In the TikTok application itself, Challenge videos often appear containing challenges. To increase TikTok viewers, people will compete to create content, be it funny content or even content related to someone's life.

Many people do whatever challenges appear on TikTok to increase their followers and video views on TikTok. One of the tragedies caused by TikTok content was an accident experienced by a 15 year old teenager with the initials DP, this incident took place on Jl. Raya Simpang Sentul, Bogor, and West Java. In the video footage circulating, 4 teenagers appeared in the middle of the road to greet a speeding truck, but 3 other

<sup>12</sup> gabriella Marysca Enjel Nikijuluw, Ari Rorong, And Very Y Londa, "Perilaku Masyarakat Di Era Digital (Studi Di Desa Watutumou Iii Kecamatan Kalawat," *Jurnal Administrasi Publik* 6, no. 92 (2020).

<sup>13</sup> Galuh Putri Riyanto and Wahyunanda Kususma Pertiwi, "Pengguna TikTok Di Indonesia Tembus 113 Juta, Terbesar Kedua Di Dunia," KOMPAS.com, 2023, <https://tekno.kompas.com/read/2023/07/10/11000067/pengguna-tiktok-di-indonesia-tembus-113-juta-terbesar-kedua-di-dunia>.

teenagers managed to survive and 1 was killed by the truck.<sup>14</sup> This accident occurred because these teenagers followed the TikTok trend that blocked the truck. Not only once did this TikTok trend also claim a victim in Pamulang, South Tangerang, namely a teenager with the initials MH who was only 14 years old. Not only that, one of the trending challenges on TikTok is the use of firearms, one of which is the tragedy that occurred in America, namely the #orbeezchallenge carried out by 2 Broward teenagers who shot more than 24 people using frozen water droplets.<sup>15</sup> This trend generally uses firearms which are very dangerous to other people's lives.

Apart from that, one of the cases which was quite serious because it involved 2 children and one adult occurred in Surabaya, this robbery case had been operating at 15 crime scenes.<sup>16</sup> One of the perpetrators admitted that his actions were inspired by robberies on social media. This proves that the influence of viewing shows is very large because in general people will follow what they see or what is usually called imitation. In criminology, the theory of imitation or imitation is usually known as the imitation theory put forward by French sociologist and criminologist Gabriel Tande, he put forward this theory in a book *Le Lois de l'imitation* (The Law of Imitation) published in 1890, he put forward the argument that people do what they know. Tarde was the first theorist to link crime to learning in what he called the law of imitation.

According to Tarde's theory of imitation, he believed that crime was the result of imitating or modeling the behavior of others. When someone learns a new response by observing others, this is called modeling. He does not view people who commit crimes as biologically or psychologically different from noncriminal; instead, he sees criminals simply modeling the deviant behavior they see around them. He feels this is especially true for fathers and their sons (like father, like son). The theory goes against the common belief that criminals are bad people. If crime, as Tarde proposed, is learned by observing and imitating the criminal behavior of those around the individual, then crime can also be eliminated. Tarde believes that this is more likely to occur in dense urban areas where individuals have more exposure to people as models, ready to emulate.<sup>17</sup>

According to Tarde, imitation is the source of all progress that occurs, both good and bad. By recognizing the power of imitation, people can try to control the outcome. He believes that more positive relationships and better communication can lead to better results. An important factor in his "law of imitation" was that individuals needed to

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<sup>14</sup> Ikhwan Hastanto, "Akibat Tren Konten TikTok Hadang Truk Melaju, 2 Remaja Tewas Dalam Sebulan," *Vice*, 2021, <https://www.vice.com/id/article/88n4x5/tren-konten-tiktok-hadang-truk-melaju-tewaskan-2-remaja-di-bogor-dan-pamulang>.

<sup>15</sup> Sophia Pargas, "Parents, Beware of These 5 Dangerous TikTok Challenges on Your Child's 'For You' Page," *6South Florida*, 2021, <https://www.nbcmiami.com/news/local/parents-beware-of-these-5-dangerous-tiktok-challenges-on-your-childs-for-you-page/2800166/>.

<sup>16</sup> Deny Prastyo, "Begal 15 TKP Di Surabaya Ini Ngaku Belajar Membegal Dari TikTok," *detikjatim*, 2023, <https://www.detik.com/jatim/hukum-dan-kriminal/d-6817914/begal-15-tkp-di-surabaya-ini-ngaku-belajar-membegal-dari-tiktok>.

<sup>17</sup> Frank E. Hagan, *Introduction to Criminology: Theories, Methods, and Criminal Behavior*, ed. Jerry Westby, 6th ed. (United States of America, 2008).

be closely related. People are influenced by people they have relationships with or at least people they see on a regular basis.<sup>18</sup>

The TikTok application is a very popular application and almost every smartphone user definitely has the TikTok application, some use it for selling, for education and even as a means of crime. There are many cases resulting from the TikTok application which are even very life-threatening, leading to crime and death. TikTok has a huge influence, people who watch TikTok will join in doing what is spread on TikTok, either just for fun or to increase their reputation because it is viral and watched by many people. In the world of psychology, this is called the bandwagon effect.

The Bandwagon Effect is a psychological phenomenon where someone tends to follow trends, styles, attitudes, etc. after seeing many people doing the same thing. Apart from that, sensational content will more easily become the public spotlight so that people who create sensational content will find it easier to go viral and be remembered by the public. People who watch TikTok live will follow along and act out what they see from the TikTok broadcast. This is the same as the influence of television shows on people who watch them. Because both display images and sound, people will be more interested in seeing them.<sup>19</sup>

This is proven by research conducted by Schramm, Lyle, and Parker in a study in 1960 which examined a number of imitative violence. From the results of research conducted by Schramm, Lyle, and Parker, they argue that exposure to violent television shows is related to imitation of crime and violence and is not just a coincidence.<sup>20</sup> Not a few people are inspired by television shows and other electronic devices such as cellphones, iPads, computers and laptops to commit crimes because they are inspired. The development of digitalization becomes a terror for society if it is not utilized properly. In the current era of digitalization, it is very easy for people to access shows or content needed for personal needs, such as people who are learning to cook will definitely look for shows related to cooking tutorials that they will definitely copy. It is the same as imitating criminal acts where someone will intentionally or unintentionally access content that smells like crime or pornography. One of the cases regarding immoral crimes is the case that occurred in Sidoarjo. This case attracted public attention because it was carried out by the perpetrator who was still a junior high school student and only 15 years old, while the victim was also a junior high school student and both were 15 years old.<sup>21</sup>

In criminology there are several theories that support the criminal imitation model, the first of which is the theory of mental defects put forward by J.E.D Esquirol Isac

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Anisa Rizki Febriani, "Kenapa Manusia Suka Mengikuti Tren Yang Viral? Begini Kata Psikolog UNS," *detikedu*, 2023, <https://www.detik.com/edu/detikpedia/d-6523989/kenapa-manusia-suka-mengikuti-tren-yang-viral-begini-kata-psikolog-uns>.

<sup>20</sup> Mahmudah, "Tayangan Kekerasan Di Televisi Dan Terpaannya Pada Khalayak Masyarakat."

<sup>21</sup> Cindy, "Bercermin Dari Kasus Pemerksaan Pelajar Di Sidoarjo, Ini 5 Bahaya Pornografi Pada Psikologi Anak," *medcom.id*, 2021, <https://www.medcom.id/gaya/fitness-health/Zkev5VqK-bercermin-dari-kasus-pemerksaan-pelajar-di-sidoarjo-ini-5-bahaya-pornografi-pada-psikologi-anak>.

Ray in 1772-1881. The second theory is Goring's, namely that mental instability, which was put forward by Calres Goring in 1870-1919, is mental instability which is the cause of perpetrators committing crimes. Moniz's third theory is that brain irregularities were put forward by Abtonio Moniz in 1935, namely that brain irregularities trigger criminal acts. Furthermore, Mark Evin's theory, namely mental irregularities due to brain damage, was put forward by Veron Mark and Franj Ervin in 1970. There are several theories in criminology which also support the core theory, namely Ferry's theory in 1929-1956 which was put forward by Enrico Ferr, who was a student of criminologist Lambroso.

In this theory, it is stated that individual and environmental factors influence the occurrence of crime. Furthermore, the following supporting theory is the Labeling theory in 1969 put forward by Frank Tanbaum Howard Backer Kai Ericekso Schur Sehrag which states that individuals are considered to have committed deviations because their behavior is considered deviant by other people or social control agents. These theories can answer questions that arise from a criminological perspective regarding criminal imitation models. These theories have a relationship or correlation between one another. The essence of these theories explains that mental defects or mental disorders or mental illness are the causes of crime. People who have brain irregularities will tend to commit crimes because it will affect a person's paradigm and the individual's behavior. Seeing that digitalization technology is often misused nowadays and is used as a means of crime, this makes it an urgent matter for legal policy, so that by having a binding and firm criminal law policy, it can be anticipated and become an effort to overcome crimes that arise as a result of the development of digitalization.

Seeing that digitalization technology is often misused nowadays and is used as a means of crime, this makes it an urgent matter for legal policy, so that by having a binding and firm criminal law policy we can anticipate and act as a countermeasure for crimes that arise as a result of the development of digitalization.<sup>22</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

One of the negative impacts caused by the development of digitalization is an increase in crime. The increase in crime is because it is supported by facilities such as the internet, computers, gadgets, television and other digital goods so that it can give rise to crime such as the criminal imitation model because it imitates or follows crimes that are spread due to digitalization. This is shown by the increase in crime rates in the last 5 years. In imposing criminal imitation models, the perpetrators will still be punished using the Indonesian legal basis, namely the Criminal Code, because there are no special regulations that specifically discuss criminal imitation models so that sentences are imposed based on the judge's decision.

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<sup>22</sup> Faturohman, Rachmat Putra Hidjriana, and Rizky Zendra Rahayu, "Dampak Pengaruh Teknologi Terhadap (Cyber Crime) Tindak Pidana Serta Analisis Hukum Terkait," *QAIMUDDIN: Journal Constitutional Law Review* 2, no. 1 (2024): 3.



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