



Catcalling as a Human Rights Violation: An Examination of Law and Regulation in Public Spaces

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Abstract: This research aims to analyze the legal aspects and social implications of catcalling as a form of human rights violation, as well as identify shortcomings in existing regulations to protect victims from verbal harassment in public spaces. The method used is a qualitative approach through the analysis of legal documents, literature review, and case studies of catcalling incidents in several major cities, which allows researchers to explore in-depth the public perception, cultural norms, and the application of laws related to sexual harassment. The research examines laws and regulations governing harassment and discrimination, comparing Indonesia's legal protection mechanisms with practices in other countries, to highlight weaknesses and opportunities for improvement in the national legal system. The results show that catcalling is a manifestation of human rights violations that undermine dignity, safety and gender equality, as the practice not only inflicts psychological trauma on victims, but also creates an atmosphere of insecurity in public spaces. The findings also indicate that while there is a legal framework on sexual harassment, its implementation and enforcement remain weak, influenced by social norms and gender stereotypes that consider such behavior as normal. Therefore, this study recommends reviewing existing regulations, raising public awareness through education, and implementing stricter legal sanctions, as strategic steps to address catcalling and realize an inclusive and safe social environment for all citizens.

Keywords : Catcalling; Human Rights Violation; Public Regulation

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1. Introduction

In the midst of the hustle and bustle of urban life, we are increasingly witnessing interactions that, although seemingly trivial, have a profound impact on the dignity and security of each individual. The phenomenon of catcalling is no longer regarded as a friendly compliment; rather, it has revealed a dark side that threatens human rights and disrupts the tranquility of public spaces. Many citizens feel that public areas, which should serve as arenas for togetherness and positive activities, have now transformed into battlegrounds where indecent remarks and verbal taunts erode self-esteem and cause psychological trauma. This situation is even more alarming when we recognize that such behavior is not merely the fault of individuals but reflects an imbalanced power structure in which cultural norms deeply rooted in patriarchal values continually promote discriminatory and dismissive attitudes.¹

Although Indonesia has established a number of laws and regulations to protect the public from sexual harassment and discrimination, the enforcement of these laws in catcalling cases is frequently hampered by various obstacles, such as unresponsive complaint mechanisms, limited evidence to substantiate reports, and a tendency among law enforcement to sometimes dismiss these incidents as trivial. Conversely, advances in information technology and the rapid spread of social media have accelerated the dissemination of news about verbal harassment incidents, thereby raising public awareness and prompting demands for more tangible protection and strict action against perpetrators. This growing awareness has spurred calls for reforming existing regulations so that the law is not merely reactive to events that have occurred but also proactive in preventing verbal harassment in public spaces.

Behind every taunt delivered in the form of catcalling lies the real story of individuals who feel humiliated, ignored, and deprived of their right to feel safe in public. These bitter experiences raise fundamental questions about how we can design a legal framework that protects every citizen in a fair and humane manner. Inspiration drawn from developed countries which have implemented strict regulations against all forms of verbal harassment alongside intensive educational programs suggests that legal reform in Indonesia is urgently needed. In several European and North American nations, acts of verbal harassment are classified as serious offenses that not only attract severe penalties but are also accompanied by widespread socialization efforts to cultivate a culture of mutual respect. This demonstrates that the success of law enforcement relies not merely on the existence of regulations, but also on the preparedness of law enforcement agencies and a transformation in social paradigms.²

In the context of Indonesian culture, which remains heavily steeped in traditional values, there is often confusion in interpreting the boundaries of appropriate social interaction. Gender stereotypes and rigid constructions of masculinity play a

¹ Fadillah Afrian and Heni Susanti, "Pelecehan Verbal (Catcalling) Di Tinjau Dari Hukum Pidana," *Jurnal Ilmu Humaniora* 6, no. 2 (2022): 317–24.

² Yuni Kartika and Andi Najemi, "Kebijakan Hukum Perbuatan Pelecehan Seksual (Catcalling) Dalam Perspektif Hukum Pidana," *PAMPAS: Journal of Criminal Law* 1, no. 2 (2020): 1–21.

significant role in shaping these perceptions, leading to situations where catcalling may be misconstrued as a form of attention or compliment, even though it inherently contains elements of harassment. Consequently, victims frequently feel belittled and unappreciated, while perpetrators often view their actions as simply part of an established culture. This reality calls for an in-depth dialogue among stakeholders from law enforcement, policymakers, and academics to the general public to collectively formulate holistic and applicable solutions. Such dialogue must prioritize education on gender equality, respect for human rights, and the importance of creating safe and inclusive public spaces.

Furthermore, the phenomenon of catcalling has sparked a discourse on the redefinition of public space in the modern era. Where public spaces were once considered neutral territories free from conflict, they have now evolved into arenas of complex interactions in both the physical and digital realms. Technological advancements have expanded the boundaries of public space, giving rise to new forms of verbal harassment online. This shift necessitates an adjustment of legal regulations to remain relevant and adaptive to contemporary dynamics. Protecting society must encompass not only interactions in physical spaces but also those in the digital domain, where perpetrators can disseminate harassing content anonymously with equally significant consequences. Thus, the integration of conventional regulations with digital protection measures is essential to comprehensively address every form of harassment without exception.³

It is also important to emphasize that legal reform must be accompanied by profound cultural change. Enforcement efforts alone will not suffice if society continues to regard verbal harassment as a commonplace occurrence. There is a pressing need for education on equality and human rights outreach to transform social paradigms from an early age. Educational programs that integrate material on ethics, individual rights, and social responsibility should be widely implemented, both in schools and through public campaigns. Such initiatives will enable younger generations to grow up with a heightened awareness of the importance of fostering healthy and respectful social interactions. Moreover, the mass media being one of the primary pillars in shaping public opinion plays a strategic role in disseminating positive and educational narratives about issues of verbal harassment. Through objective and informative reporting, the media can help shift the public perception that any act diminishing human dignity is intolerable.

Cross-sectoral collaboration among the government, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector is also key to creating effective regulations. Through such partnerships, various initiatives can be synergized to develop policies that are both comprehensive and adaptive to the evolving times. Experiences from developed countries demonstrate that an interdisciplinary approach combining insights from law, sociology, psychology, and gender studies can yield solutions that are not only

³ Chantika Pebrianti and Margo Hadi Pura, "Perlindungan Hukum Terhadap Korban Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal (Catcalling) Di Media Sosial," *Journal Of Human And Education (JAHE)* 3, no. 4 (2023): 229–35.

normative but also pragmatic. The implementation of policies integrated with transparent complaint systems and continuous training for law enforcement officers will enhance the effectiveness of addressing each case of harassment. Consequently, existing regulations must be reinforced through institutional reforms capable of addressing challenges in both physical and digital realms.⁴

Behind every incident of catcalling lies the story of an individual who feels cornered and loses self-confidence, thereby jeopardizing their right to feel safe and respected in public spaces. Anticipating this, the restructuring of legal regulations must incorporate strategic measures that not only prioritize deterrence for perpetrators but also provide rehabilitation mechanisms for victims. The recovery from psychological trauma and social reintegration should be integral components of a comprehensive protection policy, enabling every victim to regain their sense of security and dignity. Although such efforts require significant resource allocation, this investment is invaluable in forging a more inclusive and just society.

The transformation in social attitudes toward verbal harassment must be supported by a spirit of mutual cooperation and the active participation of all layers of society. Open and participatory dialogue among citizens, authorities, and policymakers is essential in formulating regulations that reflect the aspirations and needs of the broader community. Through effective feedback mechanisms, any gaps in the legal system can be promptly identified and rectified, ensuring that regulations remain relevant and adaptive to changing social dynamics. Moreover, society must be empowered to monitor policy implementation by leveraging the accessibility of information and digital technology.⁵

Equally important is the role of education and outreach in instilling values of equality, empathy, and respect for human rights from an early age. The educational curriculum at all levels should incorporate subjects on ethics and basic rights as part of an effort to cultivate individuals who are both law-abiding and capable of driving positive social change. Accordingly, legal reform must proceed alongside a profound cultural transformation, so that every social interaction in public spaces is free from the taint of degrading harassment.

Through the synergy of firm law enforcement, gender equality education, and active societal participation, it is hoped that public spaces will be transformed into safe, inclusive, and respectful environments. Every reform measure must be grounded in a collective commitment to protect human rights, ensuring that there is no room for actions that undermine the dignity and integrity of individuals. There is great promise in this collective effort, for behind every revised regulation lies a vision of a just and civilized society where every citizen feels valued and has an equal opportunity to

⁴ Ribka Polii, "Tinjauan Yuridis Atas Pelaku Dan Korban Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal (Catcalling) Di Kota Manado," *Lex Privatum* 10, no. 3 (2022), <https://ejournal.unsrat.ac.id/index.php/lexprivatum/article/view/41009>.

⁵ 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* 3, no. 1 (2022): 108-14.

thrive. The spirit of change must be continuously nurtured so that every incident of harassment including catcalling can be promptly addressed with firm and responsive policies. Through these joint efforts, we remain optimistic that one day public spaces will not only serve as gathering places but will also stand as symbols of courage, unity, and respect for every human right.⁶

3. Method

In this study, a qualitative method was employed through case studies, legal document analysis, and literature review.⁷ Data were collected from statutory regulations, academic journals, media reports, and field observations. Descriptive and comparative analytical techniques were used to identify regulatory weaknesses and explore public perceptions of catcalling as a human rights violation. This interdisciplinary approach integrates perspectives from law, sociology, and gender studies to formulate strategic recommendations for enhancing the legal framework in public spaces. The methodology enables an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of social interaction and its impact on human rights protection. Data validation was conducted through source triangulation, ensuring the accuracy of the information obtained in this comprehensive analysis.

3. Legal Analysis and Regulatory Weaknesses in Tackling Catcalling

In the midst of increasingly dynamic urban life, the phenomenon of catcalling has become a serious issue that disturbs the peace and security of public spaces. This form of verbal harassment, often disguised as a compliment or spontaneous interaction, in fact has a profound impact on individual self-esteem and dignity. Many victims experience psychological trauma and ongoing discomfort as a result of taunts and inappropriate comments made in public. Legally, existing regulations should be able to protect every citizen; however, the definition of what constitutes verbal harassment remains very vague. This ambiguity gives perpetrators the opportunity to justify their actions by claiming a misunderstanding of the boundary between a compliment and harassment.⁸

As a result, law enforcement officers are often hesitant to interpret and process catcalling case reports, especially when the evidence collected is minimal and the complaint mechanisms are not responsive. In addition, deep-rooted cultural biases, where patriarchal values often interpret catcalling as part of social norms, continually hinder comprehensive law enforcement efforts. The consequence is a lack of public trust in the legal system, leaving victims feeling marginalized and denied the justice

⁶ Mochammad Alfin Ramdhan et al., "Maraknya Catcalling (Pelecehan Verbal) Ditinjau Dari Perspektif Hukum Pidana Dan HAM," in *Prosiding Seminar Hukum Aktual Fakultas Hukum Universitas Islam Indonesia*, vol. 2, 2024, 158–66, <https://journal.uui.ac.id/psha/article/view/34993>.

⁷ S. H. I. Jonaedi Efendi, S. H. Johnny Ibrahim, and M. M. Se, *Metode Penelitian Hukum: Normatif Dan Empiris* (Prenada Media, 2018).

⁸ Ratih Kumala Sirait, "Perlindungan Hukum Terhadap Korban Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal (Catcalling)" (PhD Thesis, Universitas Malikussaleh, 2024), <https://rama.unimal.ac.id/id/eprint/8657/>.

they deserve. Therefore, a holistic reform approach is necessary, one that not only establishes strict legislation but also transforms the cultural interpretation of the law through education, outreach, and training for law enforcement to become more sensitive to the psychological impact of such actions.

Observing law enforcement practices in several developed countries reveals that the success of regulations depends not only on the existence of laws but also on the clarity of their definitions and implementation mechanisms. In Europe and North America, verbal harassment is explicitly defined in regulations, with severe sanctions imposed on any perpetrator who violates these rules. Complaint systems are designed to be easily accessible, quickly processed, and supported by modern technology that enables real-time documentation of incidents. This approach provides tangible deterrence and increases public trust in law enforcement.⁹

In contrast, in Indonesia there are still many regulatory gaps that result in numerous catcalling cases never receiving serious attention. Often, the complaint process is hampered by complex bureaucracy, a lack of valid supporting evidence, and a tendency among law enforcement to dismiss the issue as trivial. In addition, strong social biases and gender stereotypes, where cultural norms still favor rigid masculinity, lead perpetrators to view their actions as a natural part of interaction. This comparison reveals that improvements to the legal framework must include refining the definition of verbal harassment, updating the complaint mechanisms, and enhancing the training of law enforcement officers. Comprehensive regulatory reform would not only deter perpetrators but also pave the way for providing psychological support and rehabilitation for victims, thus creating truly safe and inclusive public spaces.

Behind every incident of catcalling lie heartbreaking stories that are often overlooked by the public. Many victims feel humiliated and degraded, and their right to enjoy public spaces without fear is thus threatened. These experiences provide concrete evidence that verbal harassment is not a trivial issue but a serious violation of human rights that must be promptly addressed. Unfortunately, in practice many victims feel ashamed or afraid to report such incidents, fearing that they will not be believed or may even face negative reactions from their community.¹⁰

This situation is further exacerbated by the inability of the legal system to provide a complaint mechanism that is both user-friendly and easily accessible, leaving victims with little hope of obtaining justice. In this context, legal regulatory reform must be accompanied by a humanistic approach in which every policy is formulated with consideration for the psychological and emotional aspects of the victims. Comprehensive support programs, counseling services, and free legal aid are strategic measures that need to be implemented to help victims recover and report incidents

⁹ Noenik Soekorini, "Catcalling Sebagai Perilaku Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal Ditinjau Dari Perspektif Hukum Pidana," *UNES Law Review* 7, no. 1 (2024): 114–27.

¹⁰ Tauratiya Tauratiya, "Perbuatan Catcalling Dalam Perspektif Hukum Positif," *Ekspose: Jurnal Penelitian Hukum Dan Pendidikan* 19, no. 1 (2020): 1019–25.

with greater confidence. Additionally, there must be intensive public education efforts to change negative perceptions toward reporting harassment so that every individual feels safe to share their experiences without fear of judgment or blame. This collective effort is expected to create a legal culture that is more inclusive and responsive, in which every report is taken seriously and addressed thoroughly.

Furthermore, legal regulatory reform in handling catcalling cannot be separated from the context of continuously evolving social dynamics, especially in the current digital era. With the widespread use of social media and online platforms, verbal harassment occurs not only in physical public spaces but also extends to the digital realm, where perpetrators can operate with a high degree of anonymity. This demands an update to the legal framework to cover the full spectrum of interactions, both direct and through digital media. Information technology offers significant potential to enhance the effectiveness of complaint mechanisms, for example through the introduction of online reporting applications that enable the public to document and report incidents quickly and accurately. The data collected through these digital systems can then be used to analyze incident patterns, identify high-risk areas, and develop more targeted prevention strategies.¹¹ However, the use of technology also presents challenges, particularly regarding the privacy and security of victims' personal data. Therefore, every innovation in the reporting system must be balanced with strict data protection measures to avoid creating new risks for victims. Moreover, the integration of conventional and digital regulations must be carried out comprehensively so that every form of interaction, whether in the physical or virtual world, can be effectively managed.

An interdisciplinary approach involving experts in law, technology, and sociology is key to formulating adaptive and innovative policies that are not only reactive to incidents but also proactive in prevention. Thus, legal regulatory reform in the digital context is a strategic step to address new challenges in handling verbal harassment while strengthening the legal foundation to provide comprehensive protection for all layers of society.

A series of discussions and comparisons with practices in developed countries clearly show that the weaknesses in Indonesia's legal regulations are not solely due to technical shortcomings in drafting laws but are also influenced by deeply ingrained cultural factors. Gender bias and rigid masculine stereotypes are major obstacles that lead to the interpretation of verbal harassment being frequently questioned or even trivialized by some. Therefore, regulatory reform must not only change the normative aspects of the law but also target a cultural paradigm shift through deep education and socialization. This change must start at the school level and extend to the

¹¹ Liza Deshaini et al., "Upaya Penanggulangan Kasus Catcalling Di Lingkungan Perguruan Tinggi," *Consensus: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 3, no. 3 (2025): 117–24.

workplace and mass media, with the aim of building collective awareness that any action degrading human dignity is unacceptable.¹²

Empowering the public to actively monitor the implementation of regulations and to engage in dialogue among stakeholders is also crucial. Discussion forums, seminars, and training sessions for law enforcement officers and the wider community should be promoted as efforts to strengthen complaint systems and the enforcement of catcalling cases. Ultimately, this collective effort is expected not only to produce stricter and more effective legal regulations but also to create a social culture that values justice, equality, and humanity. In this way, every reform step taken will yield long-term positive impacts, where public spaces truly become safe and inclusive for every individual without exception.

Considering the existing challenges, legal regulatory reform in handling catcalling should be viewed as a long-term investment for social progress and national civilization. The proposed strategic measures, ranging from refining legal definitions, simplifying complaint mechanisms, leveraging information technology, to increasing the capacity of law enforcement officers, must all be designed to be responsive to the dynamics of the times. A humanistic approach is also essential so that every victim not only obtains formal justice but also receives the emotional and psychological support needed for recovery.¹³

A joint commitment from all parties, including the government, non-governmental organizations, media, academia, and the community itself, is the key to achieving regulations that are not only legally stringent but also capable of transforming the social paradigm that has long considered verbal harassment an acceptable phenomenon. By integrating the values of justice, empathy, and respect for human rights into every policy, we can create an environment in which every individual feels valued and protected. There is great hope in this reform effort, for with a strong legal foundation and an inclusive social culture, public spaces will once again become places that support togetherness, creativity, and societal growth. Through genuine synergy and commitment, it is anticipated that this transformation will yield widespread positive impacts, creating a future in which every word and action truly reflects respect for human dignity and human rights.

4. The Role of Social and Cultural Norms in Shaping Perceptions of Catcalling

In the context of a rapidly changing modern society, the role of social norms and culture in shaping perceptions of catcalling becomes extremely significant because it not only reflects how society evaluates verbal interactions in public spaces but also reveals how long-standing gender stereotypes and deeply rooted patriarchal culture

¹² AMY FIRSTA DEWI, "Perlindungan Hukum Bagi Korban Pelecehan Seksual Di Dunia Pendidikan Berdasarkan Perspektif Ham," in *Seminar Nasional-Kota Ramah Hak Asasi Manusia*, vol. 1, 2021, 44–52.

¹³ M. Fadhli et al., "Kasus Baiq Nuril Tinjauan Filsafat Hukum Dalam Pencapaian Keadilan Dan Perlindungan Hak Asasi Manusia," *YUSTISI* 12, no. 1 (2025): 405–14.

can blur the boundary between sincere compliments and degrading verbal harassment. This results in profound psychological and social impacts on victims and raises concerns about the safety and dignity of individuals amid the dynamic urban environment.¹⁴

Essentially, catcalling is often viewed by some as a form of attention or a simple expression of admiration. In reality, however, this behavior carries inherent bias and discrimination that should not be taken lightly. Behind the spoken words lies a social construction that positions men in a dominant role and treats women as objects. As a result, the perception that catcalling is acceptable becomes deeply ingrained in a society that still upholds patriarchal values. This culture promotes the view that men have the right to express their admiration openly without considering the emotional and psychological impact on the opposite sex, which frequently blurs the line between compliments and harassment and ultimately leaves targeted individuals feeling insecure, intimidated, and degraded.

Furthermore, the social values passed down through generations via the education system, mass media, and everyday social interactions also play a role in establishing norms that equate catcalling with spontaneous and harmless interactions. In reality, however, such behavior may manifest broader forms of discrimination, thereby calling for a critical examination of popular culture and communication practices in public spaces.¹⁵

The role of the media cannot be separated from how society perceives this phenomenon. Mass media and digital platforms often present catcalling in a light context, sometimes even packaging it as humor or entertainment. This reinforces the perception that the behavior is merely part of normal social dynamics, even though such reporting has the potential to strengthen the stereotype that verbal harassment is acceptable and, in some cases, even considered an entertaining form of interaction. This further blurs the boundary between compliments and harassment and causes society to overlook the serious impact of catcalling on the mental health and dignity of victims.

On the other hand, education plays a crucial role in shaping the paradigm and collective awareness regarding the importance of respecting human rights and ensuring gender equality. Through a comprehensive and inclusive educational process, values such as justice, empathy, and mutual respect can be instilled from an early age so that the younger generation grows up understanding that every form of verbal interaction should be based on respect and social responsibility rather than a desire to assert dominance or power. If such education is integrated into curricula that address gender issues and human rights, the stereotypes that have long supported the

¹⁴ Astuti Nur Fadillah, "Catcalling Sebagai Perilaku Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal Ditinjau Dari Perspektif Hukum Pidana," *Jurnal Belo* 7, no. 2 (2021): 146–55.

¹⁵ Aurel Margareth Hia, "Perlindungan Korban Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal (Catcalling) Di Polres Metro Jakarta Timur" (PhD Thesis, Universitas Kristen Indonesia, 2024), <http://repository.uki.ac.id/14930/>.

view that catcalling is acceptable will gradually erode, enabling society to evaluate social interactions more critically.

In addition, public dialogue among various stakeholders including the government, non-governmental organizations, academics, and local communities is essential to create an open and constructive forum for discussing the issue of catcalling. Through such dialogue, diverse experiences and perspectives can be exchanged, forming a consensus that verbal harassment, even when disguised as an expression of admiration, remains a serious violation of human rights that must be addressed decisively and comprehensively. This public dialogue serves not only as a platform for critiquing existing practices but also as a means to formulate more inclusive policy recommendations that prioritize victim protection and deter perpetrators. Ultimately, the goal is to transform societal paradigms so that catcalling is no longer seen as a normal aspect of social interaction but rather as an act that undermines individual integrity and dignity, in line with global efforts to advocate for human rights and gender equality.¹⁶

In the process of changing this paradigm, the role of institutions such as schools, universities, and training centers becomes very important. It is within these institutions that values of humanity and justice can be instilled through both formal and informal education. Such education must transcend technical academic boundaries and incorporate ethical values that shape character and foster critical awareness against all forms of discrimination, including catcalling. This will ultimately create a new culture that values differences and rejects all forms of harassment.

At the same time, reforms in the presentation of information by the mass media are necessary so that reporting on catcalling is no longer confined to stereotypes that belittle or glorify the behavior. Instead, the media should present the true reality, highlighting the deep psychological wounds caused by verbal harassment and its impact on the quality of life of victims. This will help the public understand the urgency of changing the culture of communication in public spaces and will require synergy between the government, the media, and the community in promoting positive values such as respect, equality, and empathy.

Furthermore, active participation from local communities is vital because they serve as the spearhead of cultural change. Through activities such as workshops, seminars, and open discussions, communities can be encouraged to reflect on the values they have long upheld and to identify cultural elements that support the emergence of

¹⁶ Saur Bakti Boru Manurung and Asep Suherman, "Perlindungan Hukum Bagi Korban Pelecehan Seksual Cat Calling Pada Perempuan Di Lingkungan Kampus Universitas Bengkulu," *Jurnal Kajian Hukum Dan Kebijakan Publik* | E-ISSN: 3031-8882 2, no. 1 (2024): 294-304.

verbal harassment practices. This collective reflection can lead to sustainable improvements.¹⁷

Thus, social norms and culture not only serve as the foundation for forming perceptions of catcalling but also function as instruments that can be changed and renewed through education, dialogue, and active participation. This approach enables each individual to view verbal interactions more critically and responsibly and to reject any behavior that undermines human dignity.

In this context, the paradigm shift must begin at the micro level, with changes in individual attitudes through education and experience, and then extend to the macro level, where the social and cultural structures that have long supported discriminatory practices in public spaces must be reformed.¹⁸ Ultimately, catcalling should no longer be seen as a normal or harmless phenomenon but rather as a serious violation of human rights that demands collective attention and action to create safe, inclusive, and respectful public spaces.

Efforts to achieve this change require a strong commitment from all parties, including the government, the private sector, educational institutions, and civil society. They must work together to implement policies that promote gender equality and combat all forms of discrimination so that the cultural foundations that support catcalling can be fundamentally transformed. This will have a broad positive impact on the overall quality of life in society because when every individual feels valued and safe in public spaces, the potential for creativity, innovation, and healthy social interactions will flourish, thereby creating an environment where justice, empathy, and compassion dominate every aspect of life, both individually and collectively.¹⁹

Thus, a comprehensive cultural transformation in addressing catcalling is not an easy task but rather a long-term investment for a more inclusive and civilized future. Every policy and initiative undertaken must focus on strengthening human values and respect for human rights while integrating an interdisciplinary approach that includes

¹⁷ Rafif Fadhail Nabih, Nabila Muti'ah Maryam, and Nurlaili Rahmawati, "Analisis Penegakan Hukum Dan HAM Terhadap Korban Kekerasan Seksual Pada Perempuan Dan Anak Sebagai Kelompok Rentan," *JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC AND LAW STUDIES* 8, no. 2 (2024): 207–24.

¹⁸ Dian Ekawaty Ismail et al., "Collocation of Restorative Justice with Human Rights in Indonesia," *Legality: Jurnal Ilmiah Hukum* 32, no. 2 (September 20, 2024): 394–417, <https://doi.org/10.22219/ljih.v32i2.35374>; Dian Ekawaty Ismail et al., "Cyber Harassment of Public Figures: Causes and Importance of Legal Education," *E3S Web of Conferences* 594 (2024): 03005, <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202459403005>; Maya Lasena et al., "Cockfighting Gambling Criminal Acts Commitment," *Estudiante Law Journal* 4, no. 2 (June 1, 2022): 77–90, <https://doi.org/10.33756/eslaj.v4i2.16039>; Viorizza Suciani Putri, Ahmad Ahmad, and Mohamad Hidayat Muhtar, "Antara Otoritas dan Otonomi : Pertautan Hak Asasi Manusia dalam Praktik Eksekusi Putusan PTUN: Perlindungan HAM dalam Eksekusi Upaya Paksa Terhadap Putusan Peradilan Tata Usaha Negara," *Jurnal Konstitusi* 21, no. 3 (September 1, 2024): 392–412, <https://doi.org/10.31078/jk2133>.

¹⁹ Gerda Haldist Napitupulu, "Analisis Yuridis Terhadap Korban Tindak Pidana Pelecehan Seksual Non-Fisik Berdasarkan Undang-Undang Nomor 12 Tahun 2022 Tentang Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual" (PhD Thesis, Universitas Kristen Indonesia, 2023), <http://repository.uki.ac.id/id/eprint/12460>.

education, media, and public dialogue as the main drivers of change. This will enable every individual to play an active role in creating a culture of communication that is healthy and dignified, eventually eroding the remnants of discrimination and gender stereotypes that have long been entrenched and paving the way for a new era in which public spaces are free from all forms of verbal harassment and are characterized by unity, justice, and respect for every human being.

Additionally, attention must be given to the important role of religious institutions, youth organizations, and intergenerational discussion forums in actively involving various elements of society in reexamining the values that have so far justified behaviors such as catcalling. This will help each individual realize that every form of verbal interaction should be based on an awareness of diversity and mutual respect.

In this context, critical thinking and active societal participation in correcting narratives that justify verbal harassment are key to building a more inclusive culture. Such efforts require not only the support of educational institutions and the media but also close cooperation between the government and local communities, so that every initiative can reach all segments of society without exception.²⁰

Thus, achieving a paradigm shift in understanding and addressing catcalling will be accomplished through a combination of formal education, public campaigns, and ongoing dialogue involving all parties, from community leaders to the younger generation. As a result, every citizen will become more sensitive to issues of gender equality and human rights, ultimately shaping a social environment free from discrimination and verbal harassment.

This collective awareness is expected to create a harmonious atmosphere in which every individual feels valued and has the freedom to interact constructively without the worries or pressures stemming from outdated restrictive norms. Through continuous cultural transformation, society will be able to embrace a new era characterized by justice, tolerance, and empathy, where every form of communication contributes positively to social and human development.²¹

5. Conclusion

The phenomenon of catcalling is a serious issue that disrupts the security and tranquility of public spaces amid the dynamics of urban life, causing psychological trauma and feelings of degradation among victims. Current legal regulations have proven weak due to the ambiguous definition of verbal harassment and interpretative gaps that perpetrators exploit to justify their actions. These shortcomings are further compounded by deeply rooted cultural biases and patriarchal stereotypes, leading law enforcement officers to hesitate in taking decisive action because of insufficient

²⁰ Ferry Septian Pratama, "Kebijakan Hukum Pidana Atas Korban Pelecehan Seksual Secara Verbal (Catcalling) Dan Non Verbal" (PhD Thesis, Universitas Bhayangkara Surabaya, 2023), <http://eprints.ubhara.ac.id/2144/>.

²¹ Miranda Zulaeha, "Tinjauan Viktimologi Terhadap Tindak Pidana Catcalling," *JURNAL ILMIAH MAHASISWA FAKULTAS HUKUM UNIVERSITAS MALIKUSSALEH* 5, no. 2 (2022).

evidence and unresponsive complaint mechanisms. Experience in developed countries shows that effectively addressing catcalling depends on clear legal definitions, severe sanctions, and the use of technology for real-time documentation. Therefore, regulatory reform must be carried out comprehensively by integrating improvements in the normative aspects of the law, enhancing the capacity of law enforcement, and simplifying complaint procedures. Furthermore, education and outreach through media, educational institutions, and public dialogue are essential to change the cultural paradigm that still regards catcalling as acceptable behavior. An interdisciplinary approach involving government, society, and the private sector is key to creating public spaces that are safe, inclusive, and fully respectful of human rights. This comprehensive reform is expected to eradicate discriminatory cultural practices, boost public trust, and create a social environment conducive to collective growth and well-being. It is a hope shared by all.

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