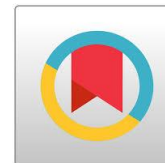


**Impact of Social Media on Child Prostitution Network in Pontianak City
 (Case Study of Rumah Aman Kota Pontianak)**



**Dampak Media Sosial Terhadap Jaringan Prostitusi Anak di Kota
 Pontianak (Studi Kasus Rumah Aman Kota Pontianak)**

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ABSTRACT

The misuse of social media for child prostitution in Pontianak City has increased in recent years, this requires mutual attention. This study aims to describe the types of social media used by online prostitutes in interacting and communicating, and then to describe how social media forms child prostitution networks in Pontianak. The data collection methods carried out are observation, interview, documentation, and data analysis, while this study uses a descriptive qualitative research method approach. In this study, the subjects of this study were officers of the Pontianak City Safe House and the agency that revealed the case, namely the KPPAD team. The results of this study show that social media is an alternative for child commercial sex workers in Pontianak. Related to social media, the most widely used social media is MiChat and WhatsApp GB, besides that social media such as Facebook is also used but not the main one. Furthermore, the results of the study also show that the function of social media is divided into two, namely social media is access to involvement of children in prostitution cases, second social media can form new networks in child prostitution. From the two results of the study, it can be concluded that social media has formed online child prostitution through child online prostitution networks, namely these networks can be formed anytime, anywhere, and by anyone. In addition, as long as social media are labelled as media providers of prostitution services still exist and are easy to download, then social media can form or regenerate new networks.

Kata Kunci

Media Sosial;
 Prostitusi Anak;
 Jaringan;

ABSTRAK

Penyalahgunaan media sosial untuk prostitusi anak di Kota Pontianak beberapa tahun ini meningkat, hal ini membutuhkan perhatian bersama. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan jenis-jenis media sosial digunakan pelaku prostitusi online dalam berinteraksi dan berkomunikasi, selanjutnya untuk mendeskripsikan bagaimana media sosial membentuk jaringan prostitusi anak di kota Pontianak. Metode pengumpulan data yang dilakukan adalah metode observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi serta analisis data, sementara itu penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan metode penelitian kualitatif deskriptif. Dalam penelitian ini yang menjadi subjek dalam penelitian ini adalah petugas Rumah Aman kota Pontianak dan instansi yang mengungkap kasus yaitu tim KPPAD. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa media sosial menjadi alternatif bagi para pekerja sex komersial anak di kota Pontianak. Terkait media sosial yang paling banyak digunakan adalah media sosial adalah MiChat dan WhatsApp GB selain itu media sosial seperti Facebook juga digunakan akan tetapi tidak menjadi yang utama. Selanjutnya hasil penelitian juga menunjukkan bahwa fungsi media sosial terbagi menjadi dua yaitu pertama media sosial menjadi akses terlibat nya anak dalam kasus prostitusi, kedua media sosial mampu membentuk jaringan baru dalam prostitusi anak. Dari kedua hasil

	<p><i>penelitian tersebut dapat disimpulkan bahwa media sosial telah membentuk prostitusi anak secara online melalui jaringan prostitusi online anak yakni jaringan tersebut dapat terbentuk kapan saja, dimana saja, dan oleh siapa saja. Selain itu selama media sosial yang terlabel sebagai media penyedia jasa layanan prostitusi masih ada dan mudah diunduh maka media sosial tersebut dapat membentuk atau meregenerasi jaringan baru.</i></p>
<p>Article History Send 11th May 2023 Review 7th November 2023 Accepted 4th January 2024</p>	<p>Copyright ©2024 Jurnal Aristo (Social, Politic, Humaniora) This is an open access article under the CC-BY-NC-SA license. Akses artikel terbuka dengan model CC-BY-NC-SA sebagai lisensinya.</p>



Introduction

In this era of digitalization, more and more people use the internet. In Indonesia, there are 212.9 million internet users at the beginning of 2023 and 167.0 million people who use social media (datareportal.com, 2023), they access media using smartphones and smartphone users in Indonesia are dominated by children and adolescents (Zaini & Soenarto, 2019). Since the beginning of its development, social media has become an access to interact by ignoring distance in other words, communication can occur anywhere, anytime, and by anyone (Décieux et al., 2019; Glowacz & Schmits, 2020) so this makes social media in demand by many users (Efevbera et al., 2017) in various parts of the world, including Indonesia. The development of social media continues to strive for security through privacy policies for its users (Beigi, 2018) so that all activities carried out by users are not known by any party, thus users do not need to worry when using social media to interact and have private conversations (Marín et al., 2021), however, the policies offered by social media are used by criminals as a means to act: One of the crimes is online prostitution services (Nuzulita & Subriadi, 2020; Shade & Singh, 2016).

Online prostitution has been rife in Pontianak City, based on information from KPPAD West Kalimantan in 2019 there were 150 cases of child prostitution handled (Febriawan, 2022) and from early 2020 until October there were 360 cases of prostitution of minors (Yuliani, 2020). In 2020 KPPAD handled 294 cases of online trafficking and prostitution of children, while 69 cases were recorded with child prostitution problems of which the highest incidence location with 53 cases occurred in the city of Pontianak (Compass TV, 2020a). Prostitution activities are carried out using social media (Compass TV, 2020). Research on online prostitution has been widely conducted, including about Michat (Efendi, 2021; Efthariena et al., 2022; Rahmawati, 2020), then research conducted in Makassar on student prostitution through online media (Wahab et al., 2020) online prostitution seen from human values and justice (Nurgiansah, 2020). Researchers are interested in taking this research topic because there has not been much research on the prostitution of minors due to social media and Pontianak City is one of the cities with the highest cases of child prostitution compared to other cities in West Kalimantan Province.

To look at the impact of social media on prostitution networks, researchers used Ritzer and Goodman's network theory, as network theory has been widely applied to social media network analysis, reflecting the significant impact of their work in understanding the dynamics of social media and communication technologies (Andrews, 2018; Bakardjieva, 2014; Sarkhoh & KhosraviNik, 2020).

This network theory relies on a set of logically related principles, among others: First, bonds between actors are usually symmetrical in degree and intensity. Second, bonds between individuals must be analysed in the context of broader network structures. Third, the structure of social bonds gives rise to different types of nonrandom networks. Accompaniment is transitive when there is a bond between A and B and C there is a possibility of bonding between A and C. The result is a greater likelihood of a network that includes A, B, and C (Ritzer, 2015; Ritzer & Jeffrey, 2019). Based on the description of the investigation case and the number of cases handled by the West Kalimantan Regional Women and Children Protection Commission (KPPAD), it is explained that the involvement of children as perpetrators of prostitution in the network is carried out individually or through pimping (KPPAD Kalimantan Barat, 2023), this explanation is also in line with that of several other researchers about pimping involvement in child prostitution (Fedina et al., 2016; KPPAD Kalimantan Barat, 2023; Novarizal, 2020; O'hara, 2018).

The use of social media in online prostitution has become a significant research trend in recent years (Laksana et al., 2019a; Mohammed et al., 2021; Wasis & Nurzakiah, 2022a). Research shows that social media platforms are used to promote prostitution services (Juditha et al., 2022). In addition, other studies have shown that high school students use social media for prostitution (Asur et al., 2011). Research states that the existence of online prostitution cases shows that social media is a powerful tool to promote prostitution (Permata, 2021), furthermore, the Internet is also highlighted as an increasingly important means of sharing information about prostitution (Rocha et al., 2010a).

Based on this background, identify previous problems, The researcher formulated the problem in the subject of discussion. The problem statement is: 1). What is the impact of social media as access to interact and communicate on child prostitution networks in Pontianak? 2). What are the types of social media used by *online* prostitutes to interact and communicate? 3). How does social media form a network of Pontianak child prostitution carried out by pimps?

Method

The writing in this study uses qualitative research methods, with a case study approach, this approach is used because researchers want to investigate certain cases or social phenomena (Pacheco-Montoya et al., 2022), informant determination technique with purposive informant. The informants in this study consisted of 5 people, namely the head of the West Kalimantan KPPAD, the Safe House Shelter Management (under the auspices of the DP2KBP3A agency), 3 children victims of online prostitution who were in the Safe House. The collection technique

used is triangulation with the nature of induction information analysis (Sugiyono, 2017). In addition, this research provides results with an emphasis on meaning and not generalizing (generalization), induction analysis itself is based on a natural background and as a whole (holistic), where people act as research instruments, tend to prioritize a series of actions rather than the results and outputs obtained are agreements or meeting points of understanding between people who research and those studied.

The technique used in collecting observational data is carried out through in-depth interviews. According to Esterberg, interviews are data exchange activities in the form of information carried out by dialoguing through questions that have been provided, so they are semi-structured interviews. Interview type in-depth interview aims to get the core of the problem clearly where respondents or resource persons provide opinions or ideas. The tools needed in conducting this interview are voice recording devices, or stationery if needed (Wicaksono et al., 2021).

Data Analysis techniques in this study use 3 stages revealed by Miles and Huberman, namely the first stage of condensation is the process of selecting and transforming data close to all parts of field notes in writing, interview transcripts, documents and empirical materials that aim to sharpen the analysis, the second stage of data presentation this stage is the unification of information so that it can be presented in a complete pattern so that the analysis can describe what is occurs and also describes an even conclusion and the third stage of conclusion making is to conclude, this verification can be a new finding or explanation from before the opaque object becomes clear after the study is carried out (Miles & Saldana, 2014).

Result and Discussion

This study discusses social media forming a network of child prostitution that occurs in the city of Pontianak, this is done based on preliminary information obtained by researchers about the rise of online child prostitution through news in online media such as (kalbaronline.com, 2022; Kumparan.com, 2022; Nurmansyah, 2020; Sudirmansyah, 2020; tvonenews.com, 2022), several news portals reported the results of the disclosure of child prostitution cases in Pontianak City. Based on information reported through the news portal, the author conducted research in two related institutions, namely the West Kalimantan Regional Child Protection and Supervision Commission (KPPAD Kalbar) and the Pontianak City Office of Population Control, Family Planning, Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (DP2KBP3A) which in this case study focused on Safe Houses, Rumah Aman is a rehabilitation shelter under the auspices of DP2KBP3A which aims to protect children and

women who experience domestic violence (KDRT), victims who have experienced violence and sexual abuse of minors (Hidayat & Liauw, 2021), The function of Rumah Aman is as a recovery and consultation of victims (Dewi et al., 2017).

Types of Social Media Used in Child Prostitution Networks in Pontianak City

Based on the results of interviews, it is known that child commercial sex workers use the MiChat application a lot because the application has advantages such as being able to detect other users who are at a certain distance, thus this application is a prima donna for child sex workers in marketing themselves. Furthermore, the affirmation of the chairman of Rumah Aman stated that based on the results of investigations at Rumah Aman, it was found that children who were child commercial sex workers, carry out their actions using the *MiChat* application. When Rumah Aman administrators checked that the majority of child prostitutes used MiChat, their applications and chat transactions became evidence during networking and deeper investigations, the MiChat application also has a feature that can detect saved contacts to add as friends in addition to being able to add other users by detecting the distance of the closest user (Yudhishtira & Jaya, 2022), because of these features MiChat has become a popular application as a means of online prostitution in Indonesia (Paradise & Regieri, 2022).

The chairman of Rumah Aman also conveyed a statement that the media used in transactions not only use *MiChat* but there are other additional applications such as WhatApps GB, and through friend-to-friend without using social media applications. The following is the statement of the Safe House Officer when met at the DP2KBP3A office:

"Yes, they use MiChat a lot, but for now Michat is rarely used, they are already smart because many police use MiChat to detect child prostitutes! commercial sex workers arrested in 2020-2021 all used Michat, but now some of the arrested children are using this WA Invisibility" (Participant 1, personal communication, April 2023)

Table 1. Percentage of KPPAD West Kalimantan Investigation Results Related to Online Prostitution Media in Pontianak City

Media Prostitusi Online	Persentase
Michat	80%
WhatApps	25%
Other Application	3%
Non-Social Media	2%

Source: KPPAD West Kalimantan Document, 2022

Table 1 shows that data from KPPAD West Kalimantan which is the result of the investigation shows similar results where in the case of child prostitution in Pontianak city, the

majority of child commercial workers conduct transactions electronically through social media, MiChat short messages, and reach 80% of children involved in online prostitution cases, Michat is the most widely used application because there is a "People Nearby" feature (to find other users around him) so there are researchers who make digital forensic analysis using the Michat application for handling online prostitution cases (Mahendra & Ari Mogi, 2021). As for how child commercial sex workers use MiChat to provide codes to potential customers by creating personal status or profiling accompanied by naughty codes, codes are often used, as in Table 2 below;

Tabel 2 Kode Michat

MiChat code used	Code Meaning
ST	Short Time
FT	Full Time
SK	Stay at Kost/Hotel
Telephone	Receiving Calls

Source: Participant 3, personal communication, April 2023

Table 2 shows the codes used to provide information to potential customers, based on interviews with informant 3 who are victim of child commercial sex workers, ST code means the duration of intercourse between 1-2 hours (1 play) for Rp. 150,000-300,000, the FT code has a duration of more than 2 hours or more than 2 plays at a rate of Rp. 400,000-800,000 and the SK code provides a code that the owner of the MiChat account provides services sex at the place where he stayed and the phone picture code (call) means that the account owner can play and be called at any time (Participant 3, personal communication, April 2023). The codes used are words that tend to indicate sexual activity, if using emoji only use water emojis.

In addition to MiChat, there is also a supernatural Whatsapp, "WA *Invisibility*" or *WhatsApp GB* is a term for WA applications that are not official WhatApp as generally used, but WA GB is a type of WA Mod or WA application from third parties that has been modified by offering many new features that are not owned by Official WA. Unlike the official WhatsApp application, which based on the *Business of Apps* report in 2021 noted that *WhatsApp* users reached 112 million people in Indonesia (Annur, 2022; Rahayu, 2023), WA GB itself is not known how many users but on the other hand it has many advantages over official WA which can attract the attention of official WA users to download the application through the Google Chrome search engine (Yudhistira & Jaya, 2022).

The reasons for using WA GB include that WA GB can hide incoming messages and disable notifications for these messages. When this research was conducted, it turned out that this feature became a feature used by Pontianak child commercial workers, this was done with the aim that all forms of transactions carried out were not known and accessed by any party other than account users, the explanation was conveyed by Rumah Aman officers when researchers conducted an in-depth investigation where children of prostitutes were secured in Brankas House, Here's an excerpt:

"Some children who are suspected of being on their cellphones use Occult WA, so we can't open it on the main screen display, they also have a public WA whose contents are safe. Like chat teman, family, but if WA Invisibility we have to open from settings. Then open the WA GB logo like a globe image (browser logo) and pink. Now it turns out that in this occult WA, the customer is buried in the archive, and for those who do not understand this WA the activity of online prostitution transactions is unknown because if the message is archived it does not appear to be a new WA chat unless we look at the archive" (Participant 2, personal communication, April 2023)

How to use WA GB in child prostitution transaction activities, WA GB is only limited to communication between friends and prospective customers, while pimps are usually friends with a commission distribution of 6: 4 (60% for children of commercial sex workers and 40% for pimps or friends who recommend or bring customers), other ways of distributing commissions with a calculation of 8: 2 (80% for child prostitutes and 20% for pimps), or by mutual agreement (Participant 4, personal communication, April 2023). WA GB that can hide this message is the choice of application used for communication between perpetrators and customers of child prostitution.

Social Media Forms Child Prostitution Network in Pontianak City

Technology has changed people's lives because media and technology affect human behaviour and the structure of society, so technological changes will affect society in general, as stated by McLuhan (Asogwa, 2020), these effects are seen in changes in community communication rather than social processes (Römmele & Pfetsch, 2015). Technology can also change the way people make decisions and determine social structures, in addition to the effects of technology forming online prostitution networks with social media (Laksana et al., 2019b; Wasis & Nurzakiah, 2022b).

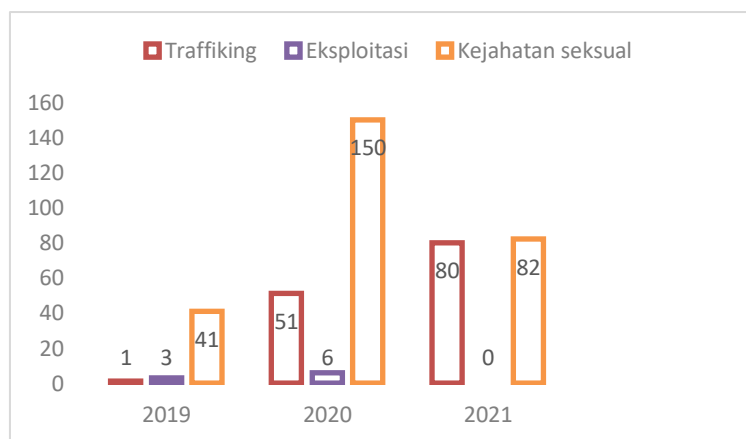
Manuel Castells states in his work Network Society that the massive use of information technology changes society (Herzig & Aßmann, 2014). Society arises in a structure characterized by networks which is then referred to as network society. Information technology is not only used by capitalists but also permeates individuals. Utilisation by these individuals

encourages the formation of information technology networks. A situation that leads to multidimensional changes such as economic, political, social and cultural (Hanley, 2021). In a network society, what applies is network logic. In it, there are communication relations that form new cultures (Fernández-Ardèvol & Ribera-Fumaz, 2022), including child prostitution.

Based on the results of an interview with the chairman of the West Kalimantan Regional Women and Children Protection Commission (KPPAD) stated that the network of child prostitution in Pontianak City has been agitating and growing, this is because the number of cases based on the results of arrests made by KPPAD continues to increase. Based on the results of the arrest investigation, it was also found that the child prostitution network had been embedded in several schools in Pontianak City, by utilizing the network embedded in these schools, KPPAD began to check several hotels where prostitution activities occurred by involving children as workers (KPPAD Kalimantan Barat, 2023).

Child prostitution is a form of sexual crime, all acts committed by adults to minors to satisfy their sexual desires (Setyawan, 2014). In addition, child prostitution is also included in the crime of child trafficking or child trafficking with the aim of child sexual exploitation, it is based on the Presidential Decree of the Republic of Indonesia number 88 of 2002 (KEPRES No 88, 2022).

Table 3. Children's Case Data by Case Type



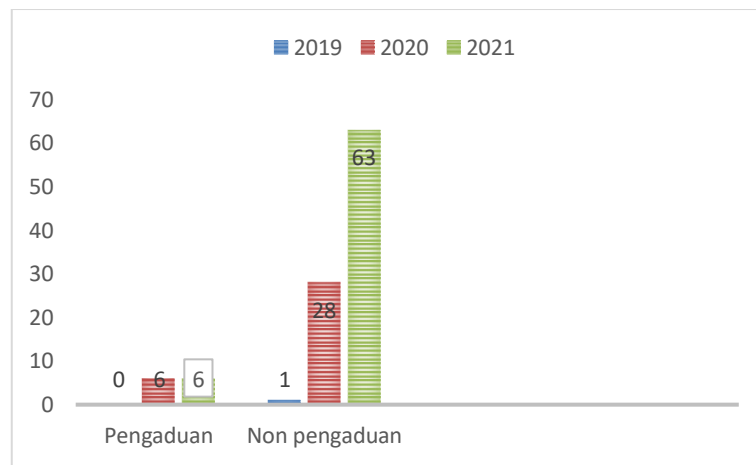
Sumber: Dokumen KPPAD Kalimantan Barat, 2022

Table 3 explains that children involved in prostitution cases either in the form of *trafficking* or sexual crimes use *MiChat* social media as their main access. This was also revealed by officers of Rumah Aman Pontianak regarding the use of *MiChat* social media as access to children's involvement in child prostitution cases. The statement was conveyed by the officer of Rumah Aman Pontianak city by affirming that the involvement of children in prostitution cases could not be separated from the use of *MiChat* social media as access to prostitution transactions. Based on the results of further investigations, the children who were

netted and secured in Rumah Aman carried out prostitution transactions until reaching an agreement, all carried out through social media such as *MiChat* and *WhatsApp GB* (Participant 2, personal communication, April 2023).

The next fact arises based on data obtained from the KPPAD shows that in the comparison of data in Table 3, the comparison of case data from 2019 to 2021 is divided into two, namely data obtained from complaints and non-complaints. Where the complaint data is obtained from complaints from child commercial workers to KPPAD directly, while non-compliant is obtained through the results of arrests or investigations by KPPAD itself (KPPAD Kalimantan Barat, 2022):

Table 3. Case of Child Trafficking/Prostitution in Pontianak



Source: West Kalimantan KPPAD Document, 2022

Table 3 shows that there has been an increase in cases of non-compliant child prostitution, in this case, it turns out from the data above that these children are involved in online prostitution networks of children who use social media either using *Michat* or other social media. Based on the table, it can be found that social media can be a forum for communication carried out in child prostitution transactions. Social media has led to wider prostitution networks and social media becoming easier for prostitution marketing. Prostitutes simply make information marks on social media that are used and then only wait for customers to contact them to make transactions, this makes child commercial sex workers (PSK) safe from the bad stigma of the surrounding community. The presence of social media with various advanced features available such as the detection feature of other users around with an adjustable radius or distance is very helpful for users of the application to find "*main*" points (the right application use points) to target other users' glance and even make transactions using social media.

Social media is also the choice of commercial sex workers (PSK) children to transact there because it is safe, this is because social media has policies that prioritize the safety and comfort of its users in accessing or using the application. So that in practice users do not need to worry about a third party knowing the contents of the message in the application or when making transactions. Based on the above findings, if analyzed using Manuel Castells' network society theory, this theory provides a framework for understanding the role of social media in shaping modern social structures and interactions (Castells, 2022; Rocha et al., 2010b), including prostitution networks. Social media in online prostitution serves as a lubricant, liaison, and glue because social media is one of the most effective platforms for promotion (Wahyuni Purbohastuti, 2017). In addition, social media has also shaped online prostitution networks, because social media and the rise of networks represent a new paradigm, which forms new social, political, and economic structures (Castells, 2022; Hanley, 2021), including forming prostitution networks.

Castells believes that social media is a collection of information that is widespread and can be accessed by anyone (Olivier, 2022), So we can say that the role of information technology provides space for the formation of prostitution online transactions, one of which is using social media (Anttiroiko, 2015). The first function of social media is as a lubricant that plays an active role as an intermediary that facilitates and facilitates commercial workers and customers so that two-way communication occurs until a mutually beneficial transaction agreement occurs for both service providers and users of the service. Social media is used to conduct online prostitution transactions because social media is considered to provide a guarantee of privacy security and is easy to use, currently, the majority of children can use social media (Irawan et al., 2019). The second function of social media is as a liaison that social media can easily connect between service providers and customers which is directly proportional to the development of the network, in other words when a customer or worker downloads social media such as *MiChat*, the user is automatically in the online network system and the decision to get involved in networking is as easy as replying to a chat. *Michat* is one of the most widely used applications for online prostitution (Efendi, 2021; Efendi & Eka Apriliani, 2020).

The third function is an attachment, in this case, it can be understood that interactions that occur on social media such as *MiChat* and *WhatsApp* are interactions that occur based on the level of mutual trust and benefit, thus the interactions that occur on social media are only limited to relationships with mutual interests and benefits of each. Based on this belief that

provides space for a shift from conventional prostitution to online prostitution that reaches minors (Arsanti, 2017).

The community network theory in this study describes the connectedness facilitated by information technology, which leads to the emergence of new prostitution networks through social media with various platforms (Bajan, 2015; Costa et al., 2019; Li, 2017). Social media has an impact on the rise of online prostitution in minors, because social media has no control over its users, therefore the role of parents, society, the environment, and the government must also play an active role in preventing online prostitution. Some of the factors that cause prostitution in children is family, economic, educational, environmental, mental, and psychological factors, as well as trafficking, therefore special attention needs to be paid to the environment and family so that children get good development, including attention from the government for children's education as a generation of the nation (Fathonah, 2016).

Conclusion

In this study, it can be concluded that the types of social media used in the *online* prostitution of children in Pontianak are types of social media that generally have labelling as a place to provide prostitution services such as *MiChat* and there is also the use of social media that is widely used by the millennial generation such as *WhatsApp GB*. The second conclusion about the impact of social media on the child prostitution network in Pontianak is divided into two, namely the first impact of social media being access to the involvement of children in prostitution cases, and the *second* social media can form a new network in child prostitution. Social media has an impact on child online prostitution networks because they can be formed anytime, anywhere, and by anyone. In addition, as long as social media labelled as a media provider of prostitution services still exists and is easy to download, social media can form or regenerate new networks with new workers or new pimps and for old workers and old pimps to widen the network, because social media is the main access in the online prostitution market.

Further research suggestions from this research can discuss how the dynamics of information on network formation are in line with the increasing coordination of prostitution through the Internet.

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