Symbolic violence of cigarette Sales Promotion Girl (SPG) in Surabaya City

Kekerasan simbolik Sales Promotion Girl rokok di Kota Surabaya

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Abstract
Symbolic violence is a form of violence through the imposition of symbols and meaning. This study looks at how the symbolic violence that occurred in SPG Cigarettes in the city of Surabaya. The symbolic violence that occurs in SPG Cigarettes in the Work Environment has meanings and symbols that are cultivated by perpetrators of violence. This study uses the theory of symbolic violence from Pierre Bourdieu. Researchers used qualitative research methods with a phenomenological approach. Data collection techniques in this study included observation and in-depth interviews as well as general qualitative data analysis techniques from Creswell. This study found double violence in SPG Cigarettes, namely symbolic violence and sexual violence. This study also finds a new category of forms of symbolic violence adapted from Pierre Bourdieu’s Theory. This study describes the habitus, capital, and realm that cause a person to commit symbolic violence on smoking SPGs. This study concludes that the symbolic violence that occurred against cigarette smokers has become a culture in several community groups. Women as ‘victims’ of symbolic violence and sexual violence can fight so that this violence does not occur continuously and does not become a culture.

Keywords: sexual harassment; SPG cigarettes; symbolic violence

Introduction
Sexual violence in the year 2022 has become rampant in Indonesia. Data spanning the year 2022 from the Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection (PPPA) reveals that cases of sexual violence against women amounted to 25,050. This data indicates an increase of 15.2% in cases of sexual violence against women. Data on sexual violence against women is also available from the years 2016 to 2022. There was a substantial surge in sexual violence from 2016 to 2017. In 2016, there were 7,475 cases of violence, and in 2017, the number escalated to 17,948, representing an increase of approximately 10,000 cases. The years 2018 to 2019 witnessed a decline in cases of sexual violence. In 2018, there were 18,141 cases, which saw a decrease to 17,132 in 2019. Similarly, from 2021 to 2022, there was a significant increase. In 2021, there were 21,753 cases, and this figure saw a rise of about 4,000 cases, reaching 25,050. These figures underscore that sexual violence against women is an urgent issue.
in Indonesia (Rizaty 2022). Sexual violence has also risen in India due to the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in psychological distress and a surge in cases of sexual harassment within households due to lockdown measures (Nigam 2020). The escalation of sexual violence cases is further illustrated by the aforementioned data, indicating that Indonesia experiences an annual increase in sexual violence cases influenced by various factors, including the pandemic. Instances of violence against women and children in Indonesia are marked by cases that have been exposed through news coverage and have gone viral in the year 2022.

First, there is a case of a man kissing a young girl in a store. The case went viral due to a CCTV video circulating on social media. The perpetrator committed this act while the child’s parent was shopping at the store. The perpetrator then grabbed the victim’s hand when it was quiet, kissed her on the lips, leaving the young girl bewildered, and then fled. The perpetrator was eventually apprehended and taken into custody by the police (Quamila 2022). Second, there is a case of violence from an ex-partner. This violence from ex-partners against women represents the highest number of cases in the year 2022. According to Komnas Perempuan (the National Commission on Violence Against Women), young women, including teenagers and wives, have reported cases of violence committed by their ex-partners or former spouses. The majority of victims are between the ages of 16 and 24 (Saputra 2022).

Third, there is a case of sexual violence occurring within an educational institution. The perpetrator is a teacher who also holds the position of a student council advisor. The perpetrator carried out these acts through molestation while female students were engaged in learning activities in empty classrooms or restrooms at the school. Fourth, there is a case of sexual violence committed by a husband against his wife, which falls under domestic violence (KDRT), involving a celebrity in Indonesia. Fifth, another case involves sexual violence against a female celebrity in the country. Among these instances of violence against women in Indonesia, it is evident that issues of violence against women are becoming widespread in the country. Sexual violence also occurs in East Java province.

Sexual violence against women and children is relatively high in East Java. According to the Head of the Department of Women Empowerment and Child Protection (DP3AK), there were 1,362 cases of sexual violence against women and children. The majority of these cases involved women, totaling 968 cases of violence (Azmi 2022). This trend of sexual violence has also increased in the provincial capital of East Java, Surabaya. The Department of Women Empowerment and Child Protection, along with Population and Family Planning Control (DP3A-PPKB) of Surabaya, stated that there has been an increase in cases of sexual violence in the city. In 2021, there were 166 cases, which rose to 152 cases in 2022. The year 2022 is marked by cases of sexual violence against adult women involving various scenarios (Koloway 2022). These data highlight the prevalence of violence against women, including in the city of Surabaya. Surabaya is recognized as a modern industrial and metropolitan city that employs various marketing strategies to boost urban economic growth. One of these strategies involves the utilization of Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs).

In the modern era, companies and industries frequently employ Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs) for product marketing purposes. These SPGs are utilized in various sectors such as cosmetics, automotive, food and beverage products, real estate, and cigarettes through SPG agencies. SPGs are often encountered in shopping centers like malls, supermarkets, events, and central business districts (CBD). The phenomenon of utilizing SPGs as a marketing strategy is considered the “frontline” for entrepreneurs or industries striving for success. SPGs are characterized by their attractive appearance, beauty, tight clothing, miniskirts, and makeup. To secure SPG positions, certain qualifications are required in addition to physical appearance and sexy attire. SPGs are also expected to exhibit gentle manners and adept persuasion skills to attract customers and facilitate product purchases.

Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs) can be considered an attractive occupation and a potential primary source of income for women or individuals seeking relatively easy earnings. Becoming an SPG doesn’t require a high level of education. For women aspiring to work as SPGs, a senior high school or senior vocational high school (SMA or SMK) diploma is often sufficient, sometimes even junior high school education
(SMP) is accepted. This profession does not necessitate high academic skills; rather, its primary requirements involve physical attributes, provocative clothing, and an appealing facial appearance. The presence of SPGs can enhance a company’s image. SPGs hold significant value in terms of customer service and act as selling points, contributing to boosting product sales. The utilization of SPGs in the promotion of products such as cars, cosmetics, mobile phones, and cigarettes is seen as highly effective in driving product sales. However, SPGs often encounter sexual harassment from customers while carrying out their marketing roles.

SPGs frequently experience violence as a result of societal stereotypes. The SPG profession is burdened by stereotypes associated with the attire – often sexy and minimal – and conspicuous makeup, as well as body language that appears flirtatious, attention-seeking, and coquettish (Safitri et al. 2020). The occupation is often deemed inferior and wrongly assumed to be simple, due to the misconception that the role primarily relies on physical attractiveness and a pretty face. The profession of SPGs is often devalued and carries a negative image within society (Haerudin 2013). Prior research, for instance, reveals instances of SPGs involved in the cigarette industry being invited to hotel rooms by customers to meet sales targets (Safitri et al. 2020). The presence of negative perceptions and stereotypes surrounding the SPG profession is believed by researchers to contribute to instances of violence faced by SPGs from customers. The sexual harassment carried out by customers towards SPGs stems from the embedded societal stereotypes and presents a risk associated with this occupation. The outward appearance of SPGs, characterized by beauty, allure, glamour, and sex appeal, is often belittled by customers, thereby leading to sexual violence against these individuals. Such sexual violence is frequently masked as symbolic violence by the perpetrators.

Symbolic violence is an imposition resulting from a system employing symbols and meanings (culture) upon a group or class that is considered normal or legitimate (Jenkins 2004:157). This symbolic violence is evident in the phenomenon of sexual violence against cigarette Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs) in Surabaya City. Observation outcomes reveal that there exists a perception within society that the SPG profession is easy to degrade and often belittled. The SPG profession bears negative stereotypes within the community. People perceive SPG work as having a darker side due to its tendency toward a provocative and revealing appearance. Certain customers of cigarette products view their advances or violence against SPGs as “normal.” They also perceive SPGs as tools used by companies to entice customers. Consequently, some customers consider themselves “kings” and feel entitled to go beyond boundaries, engaging in actions like verbal or physical harassment. This sexual violence occurs when cigarette SPGs offer products to customers in public spaces. Often, these SPGs experience verbal sexual violence, such as teasing or suggestive remarks that lead to sexual harassment. Similarly, instances of physical sexual violence involve male customers suddenly hugging or grabbing the hands of cigarette SPGs. The researchers selected cigarette SPGs because they are more susceptible to violence, with a higher risk associated with their job compared to SPGs in other product categories. This study aims to comprehend the conditions, experiences, and forms of symbolic violence encountered by cigarette SPGs in Surabaya.

Previous researchers have also conducted studies on violence against SPGs. Munir et al. (2020) conducted a study that described Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs) as a form of sensual marketing considered “normal” in Indonesia (Munir et al. 2020). Other studies highlight that the SPG profession involves exploiting the body as a selling point. The utilization of uniforms designed to be provocative, and intended to attract consumers, is a form of body exploitation (Samsudin & Sudrajat 2013). These findings also suggest that male customers often engage in sexual violence against SPGs. Instances of sexual violence include inviting SPGs for personal meetings, touching sensitive body parts, and uttering sexually suggestive words. Such circumstances underscore that the phenomenon of violence against women working as SPGs remains prevalent, often instigated by male customers.

From previous research studies, this phenomenon of violence also frequently occurs in various settings. Violence against women has been documented to take place in office spaces. Instances of sexual harassment in such environments manifest as suggestive gazes, pinching, groping, hugging, touching, and
winking (Kurnianingsih 2007). Violence against women is also observed within hospital settings. Such violence is often directed at nursing staff, doctors, and workers in emergency and clinical departments like psychiatry (Lu et al. 2020). Violence against women also permeates family dynamics. Incidents of violence have been noted in households with dual-career couples, wherein women sometimes take active measures to resist and foster resilience (Mas’udah 2022).

Sexual violence is also found within educational environments. In incidents of sexual violence, the majority of victims are unable to report to authorities, partly due to the unclear legal framework governing sexual violence in Indonesia (Artaria 2012). This situation underscores that issues related to violence against women can emerge anywhere, including within the workplace. Previous research has not explored violence occurring within the work environment of cigarette SPGs. The violence experienced within the workplace of cigarette SPGs is a crucial point of examination when considering the assurance of protection, safety, and freedom for women in their jobs. The social context of this study differs from previous research, focusing on cigarette SPGs in the city of Surabaya. This choice is motivated by several factors that have captured the researcher’s interest. Surabaya’s cigarette SPGs are known for their associated stereotypes, prevalent instances of violence, and the glamorous lifestyle adopted by these SPGs in a metropolitan city.

The researcher utilized Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of symbolic violence to analyze the phenomenon of symbolic violence against cigarette SPGs in the city of Surabaya. Bourdieu elucidates that terms such as symbolic violence, symbolic power, and symbolic dominance all refer to the same concept of symbolic violence. There are two ways through which an individual or group perpetrates symbolic violence. Firstly, through euphemism, which involves subtle, imperceptible, and often unconsciously chosen forms of symbolic violence. Secondly, through sensorialization, wherein symbolic violence is preserved as a form of values considered to be ‘moral honor.’ In this context, moral honor refers to qualities like politeness, generosity, purity, and the like, contrasted with ‘low morals.’ The latter encompasses criminality, indecency, immorality, violence, and greed. This study diverges from prior research by employing a sociological perspective through Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of symbolic violence, whereas previous studies have largely employed legal, psychological, anthropological, health, and legal perspectives.

The aim of this research is to contribute to future studies and provide readers with an enhanced appreciation for and respect towards Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs) in the cigarette industry. It is hoped that this study can serve as a strategy to understand victims of sexual violence and help prevent such violence against women.

Research Method

The research methodology employed in this study is qualitative with a phenomenological approach. The qualitative research method was chosen to uncover and explore the phenomenon of symbolic violence occurring among cigarette Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs) in Surabaya in a descriptive manner. Qualitative research methods are well-suited for researchers to unveil the meanings attributed by individuals or groups to social or human issues. Meanwhile, the phenomenological approach was adopted by the researcher with the aim of understanding the significance of events and their interconnectedness for individuals situated within those circumstances.

The researchers employed purposive sampling in selecting research subjects. This technique was used to select the primary informants, including the cigarette SPGs and the SPG Agency. The criteria for selection were SPGs with a minimum of 1 (one) month of work experience. A total of 10 cigarette SPGs and 1 (one) SPG Agency in Surabaya were chosen as informants. Data collection techniques utilized encompassed observation and in-depth interviews. The data analysis technique employed in this study is a qualitative data analysis technique commonly used in Creswell’s approach. The researcher will personally interpret the data, drawing from reality, culture, theory, history, and personal experience.
The resultant interpretations, forming the research findings, will be linked to relevant literature or theory (Creswell 2017:276-284). The data conclusions are drawn by scanning and categorizing data, comprehensively coding data, and interpreting data through theoretical analysis.

Results and Discussion

The chapter on results and discussion has been divided by the researchers into two sub-chapters. The first category provides a general overview of the SPG Agency and the socio-economic conditions of cigarette SPGs. The second category delves into the forms of symbolic violence experienced by cigarette SPGs in Surabaya City. Below are the results and discussion of the phenomenon of symbolic violence against cigarette SPGs in Surabaya.

SPG agency and cigarette SPG social economy

An SPG Agency is an entity that provides services for supplying Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs) for product marketing purposes. An SPG Agency serves as a bridge connecting companies in need of SPG services for their promotional activities. Within an SPG Agency, there exists a categorization in the usage of SPGs for companies. The Agency offers three types of SPGs. Firstly, there is the Acer type, which involves SPGs tasked with welcoming guests without engaging in product sales, also known as non-selling SPGs. Acer SPGs typically possess attractive features resembling models and have a height above 165cm. Secondly, the Grade A SPG category encompasses those responsible for selling and promoting products but without a specific sales target. Grade A SPGs are required to be above 165cm in height and possess a striking appearance. Lastly, the Grade B SPG type entails selling-oriented SPGs with a specific sales target for the products they promote. Grade B SPGs have a height below 165cm and exhibit an appealing appearance.

Regarding the recruitment of SPGs, the Agency employs a casting selection system. The SPG Agency emphasizes that becoming a cigarette SPG entails undergoing training and roleplay sessions. Specifically for the cigarette SPG category, there are higher associated risks compared to other SPG types, consequently justifying a fee structure above the average for other SPG categories. Cigarette SPGs must be above 18 years of age since they will primarily market cigarette products to customers aged 18 and above. They must also possess the confidence to present products to customers. The Agency clarifies that the term “confidence” in this context does not imply encouraging customer advances. Instead, cigarette SPGs should be “confident” in offering and selling products to customers, as customers often attempt to flirt with them. Furthermore, cigarette SPGs are expected to maintain professionalism according to the Agency’s Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). This includes adhering to proper greetings, maintaining a courteous demeanor towards customers, refraining from sharing personal information with customers, and other related guidelines.

Figure 1.
Cigarette SPGs offering cigarette products to customers
Source: Author documentation
Women who choose to work as cigarette Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs) have various reasons for their decision (see Figure 1). Based on research findings, widowed cigarette SPGs tend to work to meet the needs of their children, and families, and to achieve independence. On the other hand, unmarried SPGs work to supplement their college allowance, address family issues, overcome economic challenges, pursue hobbies, engage in freelance or non-committal work, and appreciate the exploratory and non-monotonous nature of SPG jobs. cigarette SPGs play a role in seeking customers, introducing products or demonstrating product knowledge, selling products, and engaging in sales activities according to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) established by the Agency. There are different venues where cigarette SPGs sell their products, each with its own level of associated risk. Commonly frequented locations by cigarette SPGs include coffee shops (Warok), markets, Bungkul Park, billiard venues, food courts (PKL centers and Aiola), Kodam Golf area, billiard strike venues, and nightclubs that collaborate with cigarette brands (Holywings and Brasery). During events, SPGs can often be found at mall booths, DBL Arena booths, and other locations depending on the event being held. Despite the associated risks and duties, there are compelling factors that lead women to choose to work as cigarette SPGs, and one of these is the fee or salary they receive.

The job of a cigarette SPG is attractive due to the substantial fee or salary they earn. Cigarette SPGs receive a fee or salary that is approximately twice the minimum wage in Surabaya, amounting to around 7 (seven) million to 8 (eight) million Indonesian Rupiah per month. The existence of a “substantial” fee or salary from being a cigarette SPG emboldens women to take risks associated with the job, as the potential rewards from being a cigarette SPG outweigh the risks. Research results indicate that when women decide to work as cigarette SPGs, it leads to both support and opposition from their families and parents. There is also a minority of SPGs who are allowed to work in this field by their parents and families. Families and parents grant permission for women to work as cigarette SPGs because most residents in the Petemon Surabaya area work in the cigarette industry. Some families adopt a “democratic” attitude, allowing their children to work wherever they choose. However, the majority of SPGs face rejection from their families and parents due to the stereotypes associated with being a cigarette SPG.

Forms of symbolic violence of cigarette SPGs in Surabaya City

Symbolic violence indeed occurs among cigarette SPGs in Surabaya. There are two types of symbolic violence, namely symbolic violence of euphemism and symbolic violence of sensorization, according to Pierre Bourdieu’s theory. In this study, the researcher identified the development of Pierre Bourdieu’s theory in the form of the categorization of two types of symbolic violence, euphemism, and sensorization, experienced simultaneously by cigarette SPGs. Here is an explanation of the three types of symbolic violence that occur among cigarette SPGs in Surabaya.

The first type of symbolic violence is euphemistic symbolic violence, which refers to a form of symbolic violence that exhibits characteristics of subtlety, invisibility, and unrecognized aspects, and is often chosen unconsciously (Martono 2014:40). Euphemistic symbolic violence occurs when an Agency
and a Company enter a contract of cooperation and implement a system for cigarette SPGs. There are three forms of euphemistic symbolic violence observed among cigarette SPGs in Surabaya. *First*, the provocative and revealing clothing worn by cigarette SPGs, attributed to Company X, constitutes a form of symbolic violence. These revealing and provocative clothes embody a form of symbolic violence against the female body. Cigarette SPGs may not be consciously aware that such revealing and sexy clothing constitutes the exploitation of women’s bodies and is a form of violence against women. This pattern of dress for SPGs aligns with previous research findings. The attire of SPGs is often characterized by being revealing, tight, and provocative. Regardless of agreement or disagreement, companies require SPGs to wear such attire to attract customers (Samsudin & Sudrajat 2013). Farokhah & Wardhana stated in her research that the image of SPGs is often demeaned by companies, and intentionally portrayed to attract buyers’ interest (Farokhah & Wardhana 2019). Companies engage the services of SPGs through agencies not only for marketing purposes but also to establish a positive corporate image. SPGs for cars and cigarette products, for instance, are known for projecting an image of luxury, glamour, and class, and serve as symbolic representations for men to achieve success. Therefore, cigarette companies compete against each other to showcase and market their products so as not to be overshadowed by competitor brands.

*Secondly,* the cooperation contract between Company X and the Agency incorporates elements of sexuality. The establishment of a partnership between the agency and the company can give rise to a form of symbolic violence. The client or company in question not only offers a formal partnership but there are also non-formal collaborations taking place. For instance, after the company proposes a partnership contract to the agency and the agency agrees and is ready to sign the contract, non-formal collaboration aspects are then introduced to the agency. This non-formal collaboration entails requests or demands that involve acts of violence against women. For example, the company might request the agency to provide an SPG for sexual purposes. Agencies often decline such non-formal requests from clients, as they take measures to protect the SPGs from being trapped in such demands. On the occasion that an agency acquiesces to the company’s request, the agency’s reputation or integrity might be compromised, as word of this information could spread through word of mouth. This constitutes an act of symbolic violence committed by the company against women working as SPGs.

“Then, there are various types of clients. Some make unusual requests. For instance, when extending a contract, they might request an SPG) for sexual purposes. However, right from the beginning, I am committed to myself and my team, so I do not entertain such requests if they come up. I refuse them, fearing that it might spread through word of mouth. Once the contract is in place, and once the memorandum of understanding is signed with a legal stamp, only then would I agree with the client’s terms”. (SPG Agency).

*Thirdly,* the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) by the Agency and perpetrator of Company X creates violence against women. The SOP provided by the Company and the SPG Agency often invites sexual violence. For example, the SOP requires cigarette SPG to be obligingly friendly and always smiling toward customers. When cigarette SPG experiences sexual violence from a customer, she is expected to remain friendly and only smile. If cigarette SPG reports incidents of verbal or physical violence to the authorities, the victim, who is a cigarette SPG, will be blacklisted by the cigarette brand or her services will no longer be used.

Bourdieu also explains that there is a power relationship that arises from legitimacy and creates coercion as a success. By considering violence as something legitimate and supported by culture, it can enhance power relations (Martono 2014:40). The company is the primary authority to hire SPG services from the Agency with the aim of marketing its products. The company here plays a role and holds a power relationship to enforce success in marketing products with the assistance of the SPG Agency. The existence of SOPs such as the use of sexy and revealing clothing by SPGs is a form of violence and exploitation of women’s bodies. Non-formal requests from the perpetrator of Company X to provide an SPG that can be used for sexual purposes constitute symbolic violence and fall under the category of “human trafficking”.

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In conducting its social practices, the perpetrator of Company X also possesses habitus, capital, and field. The habitus held by the perpetrator of Company X involves turning attractive women into “objects of sexuality” to attract customer interest. There are several forms of capital possessed by the perpetrator of Company X, including economic capital (operational funds), symbolic capital (cultural elements in branding), and prestige capital (the use of attractive women and wealth as symbols of product success). The field utilized by the perpetrator of Company X is the SPG Agency in the form of the collaboration contracts established. This habitus, capital, and field together give rise to the social practice of symbolic violence through euphemism. The violence stemming from this structure is also prevalent within families, where power relations among agents can result in imbalanced relationships and dominance by the ruling party, such as a husband over his wife. The dominant party tends to create a structure for the wife that confines her within a hierarchical framework (Mas’udah 2021).

The second type of symbolic violence is symbolic violence through sensorization, a form of violence that appears as a means of preservation and a representation of the ‘moral honor,’ often contrasted with ‘low morals.’ Moral honor here refers to concepts like decency, politeness, generosity, purity, and the like. On the other hand, low morals encompass criminality, indecency, obscenity, violence, and greed (Martono 2014:40). This form of symbolic violence is often observed and experienced by cigarette SPG in Surabaya. Symbolic violence through sensorization occurring among cigarette SPG in Surabaya takes the form of physical sexual violence by the perpetrator of the customer.

This form of symbolic violence is characterized by physical touching in exposed areas like arms and shoulders, groping of sensitive areas like the breasts, sudden back hugs, and the rubbing of male genitalia against the thighs of the SPG. This physical sexual violence occurs in public places such as coffee shops, markets, billiard places, bars, and nightclubs, which serve as venues for cigarette SPG. The risk of experiencing physical sexual violence also exists for cigarette SPG working at crowded events. Instances of physical sexual violence also extend to private locations like cigarette warehouses and photography studios. While such incidents of physical sexual violence do not occur universally, they can indeed take place while cigarette SPG is performing its duties. The act of offering and selling products to customers carries no assurance that cigarette SPG will be immune to physical sexual violence. Only Field Teams (TL) and security personnel can work towards minimizing such occurrences and safeguarding cigarette SPG from acts of sexual violence.

“Then, cigarette SPG are often subjected to derogatory treatment from individuals, like ‘Oh, cigarette SPG, their hands must be mischievous.’ When it comes to comments about our physical appearance, you see, we cigarette SPG, our clothing, from the arms to the shoulders, is often open, so those parts are frequently touched.” (Cigarette SPG).

“I’ve experienced being touched, and I even cried. Well, there’s nothing much to be done about it. It didn’t happen in public; I was inside the warehouse. There are male employees there. They kept teasing me. They kept teasing, and I couldn’t report it; all I could do was cry.” (Cigarette SPG).

Bourdieu explains that within symbolic violence, power relations originate from legitimacy and create a form of coercion as success. Symbolic violence emerges when the dominant class exercises power within the social structure. This situation leads to violence and power becoming two inseparable concepts (Martono 2014:40). In this context, perpetrators of Customers position themselves as ‘kings’ to exert physical sexual violence upon cigarette SPG. They believe that as ‘kings,’ they can exercise their authority to purchase and be served by cigarette SPG, feeling that possessing money to buy cigarettes grants them impunity. Symbolic violence, in the form of sensorial violence, takes the shape of physical sexual violence and can be categorized as morally reprehensible. This physical sexual violence constitutes acts of impropriety, indecency, violence, and voracity. However, the dominant party, perpetrators of Customers, construe this form of physical sexual violence as an aspect of ‘moral honor’ encompassing propriety. For instance, the concept of not shaking hands implies a lack of brotherhood, which is exploited by perpetrators of Customers to carry out physical sexual violence against cigarette of SPG.
The formation of sensorial symbolic violence by perpetrators also involves the interplay of habitus, capital, and field. The habitus of perpetrators relates to actions that demean women, show a lack of respect, and possess an attitude of ‘no care’ or ‘mischievousness.’ Two forms of capital possessed by these perpetrators are economic capital (money) and social network capital (friends who are familiar with cigarette SPG’s routes, and share the same culture and mindset). Hence, a power relation is established among customers to discuss the venues frequently visited by cigarette SPG, fostering a social practice known as sensorial symbolic violence, manifested in the form of physical sexual violence.

The third form of symbolic violence is the symbolic violence of euphemism and sensorialization, which encompasses the meanings of both these definitions. In this study, the researcher defines symbolic violence of sensorial euphemism as a subtle form of symbolic violence that operates through an unconscious system in the subjects under study. However, when the subjects experience a discernible form of violence, they become aware of it. This form of symbolic violence of euphemism and sensorialization also preserves values deemed as ‘moral honor’ and contrasts them against ‘low’ morals. This takes the form of verbal sexual violence inflicted by the perpetrator of Customers upon cigarette SPG. Verbal sexual violence against cigarette SPG qualifies as symbolic violence of euphemism and sensorialization because it manifests as ‘teasing’ or ‘violence’ experienced by cigarette SPG. Verbal sexual violence is subtly packaged and often not clearly evident to customers, conveyed through jokes and teasing, and normalized within the interactions with cigarette SPG.

On the other hand, cigarette SPG is also required to be friendly and consistently smile, leaving them unable to reject or avoid verbal sexual violence. This verbal sexual violence amounts to sexual harassment, yet cigarette SPG tends to overlook it and opt for a neutral or positive response. Instances of this symbolic violence of euphemism and sensorialization include remarks like “How about joining me for karaoke after your shift?”, “What’s the price of the cigarettes and you?” “Your behind looks like this, huh?”, “Your breasts are quite large too,” “I don’t smoke, sorry, but how about oral sex?”, “I’ve got cigarettes, ‘meat’ cigarettes (meat cigarettes = penis),” “Can I have your number? Do you have a boyfriend?” and “You don’t need to sell cigarettes; just come with me to a hotel.” Perpetrators of customers often package this verbal sexual violence as ‘jokes,’ fostering a culture of what they consider ‘normal’ and ‘acceptable’ behavior when buying cigarettes from cigarette SPG.

“Quite often, Sir. It’s about being teased, Sir. The longer we work, the more accustomed we become to such temptations. Yes, there have been instances, through words. What’s frequent is something like this, ‘I don’t smoke, sorry, miss, but how about oral sex?’ or ‘I’ve already got ‘meat’ cigarettes (meat cigarettes = penis), miss.’” (Cigarette SPG).

“Customers often act arbitrarily and engage in teasing. It happens frequently, sir. It’s like this: ‘I don’t smoke, miss, but ‘oral sex.’’ And there was this time when someone bought something, they would say, ‘If I buy the cigarettes, how much will you cost? If I buy this from you, how much will you charge?’” (Cigarette SPG).

Bourdieu elucidates that there are dominant social actors who apply a certain social meaning and representation of reality, which are internalized by other actors, thereby becoming something natural and legitimate. This social meaning is subsequently deemed correct by other actors (Martono 2014:39). This condition is reflected in the relationship between perpetrators of customers, where they perceive verbal sexual harassment as something “normal” and feel out of place if they don’t engage in it when purchasing cigarettes from SPG. This perspective is also understood by the SPG Agency, considering it normal for cigarette SPG to face such teasing from customers. However, verbal sexual harassment constitutes a legal violation when directed toward others.

These dominant actors are also evident in the hierarchical structures created within institutions or organizations. This condition has been observed in previous research, such as domestic violence, where the dominant actor, the husband, imposes a social meaning upon the wife, particularly in decision-
making. As the husband, he constructs a social role that positions him as the head of the family with the authority to make decisions, while the wife is relegated to handling various aspects related to the children (Mas’udah 2021). Organizations or institutions with hierarchical structures also harbor the potential for violence. In the context of workplace violence, the relationship between superiors and subordinates within a hierarchical structure can foster an imbalance that results in violence against women. In corporations, women’s positions are often perceived as “objects” of sexual practice, making them victims of oppression or degradation due to their subordinated status and the male-dominated hierarchical structure (Grosser & Tyler 2022).

Bourdieu also explains that symbolic violence emerges when the dominant class exercises its power within the social structure. This condition leads to violence and power becoming two inseparable concepts (Martono 2014:40). Verbal sexual harassment constitutes a form of exercising power through the perpetuation of dominance, carried out by the dominant actors, namely the perpetrator of customers. The cigarette SPG comprehend that verbal sexual harassment is violence against women, yet they consider it commonplace and perceive it as “normal” or legitimate behavior. Consequently, this form of symbolic violence, specifically euphemism sensorialization, in the context of verbal sexual harassment, has become a “culture.” These dominant actors possess habitus, capital, and field in carrying out symbolic violence.

In cases of violence in healthcare settings, professionals such as nurses, medical assistants, and doctors are at a high risk of experiencing sexual harassment from patients/families, and vice versa. This is attributed to the power wielded by dominant actors that have been normalized and perpetuated as a “normal” cultural practice. Such sexual violence can be mitigated through violence management involving the improvement of conducive work conditions, formulation of policies, and establishment of boundaries between doctors and patients to prevent occurrences of violence (Lu et al. 2020). This violence management serves to constrain the habitus, capital, and field possessed by perpetrators of symbolic violence.

The habitus possessed by the cigarette SPG, involving the obligation to serve customers with a friendly attitude, politeness, and a constant smile, contributes to a culture that perpetuates the stigma that women are subservient to men, and often women are expected to serve men. On the other hand, the perpetrator of customers possesses a habitus characterized by behaviors that disregard women, oppress women, and display a desire to dominate women. The field in which perpetrators of customers operate is the venues frequently visited by cigarette SPG while they are working. The capital possessed by cigarette SPG comprises cultural capital and social capital. Cultural capital includes training and role-play provided by the SPG agency, encompassing aspects such as greetings, product offerings, and product knowledge introduction. Meanwhile, the social capital of cigarette SPG consists of social networks, including venues that have collaborations with products, as well as Field Teams (TL) and security personnel who oversee the places where cigarette SPG sell their products.

Conversely, the capital held by the perpetrator of customers includes economic capital, social capital, and symbolic capital. Economic capital refers to the money they possess to purchase cigarettes, while social capital involves utilizing social networks, including friends from the same circle, to learn about venues frequently visited by cigarette SPG. Symbolic capital pertains to the perception that the perpetrator of customers possesses the prestige to engage in any conversation with cigarette SPG, thus giving rise to the social practice of verbal sexual harassment from the perpetrator of customers toward cigarette SPG. This generates a conflict, but the behavior is accepted, normalized, and considered legitimate by cigarette SPG, as verbal sexual harassment has become a cultural norm perpetuated by perpetrators of customers. This situation contributes to the power dynamic where men tend to assert dominance over women.

This study finds that symbolic violence indeed occurs among cigarette SPG (Sales Promotion Girls) in Surabaya City. Two types of symbolic violence manifest among cigarette SPG, in accordance with Pierre Bourdieu’s theory: symbolic violence of euphemism and symbolic violence of sensorialization.
Furthermore, this study identifies a novel category of symbolic violence stemming from the extension of Pierre Bourdieu’s theory. This symbolic violence occurs when cigarette SPG experiences both types of symbolic violence simultaneously, termed by the researcher as “symbolic violence of euphemism sensorialization.” Consequently, this study discerns three types of symbolic violence experienced by cigarette SPG in Surabaya City.

Firstly, symbolic violence of euphemism occurs when companies engage with SPG agencies concerning contracts, policy determinations, and the establishment of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for SPG. Three forms of symbolic violence of euphemism are identified: (1) The provision of revealing and sexy attire by the company. (2) The contractual collaboration between the perpetrator of Company X (the company entity) and the SPG agency involving elements of sexuality. (3) The implementation of SOP by the agency and the company, contributing to violence against women.

Secondly, symbolic violence of sensorialization unfolds between cigarette SPG and the perpetrator of customers. This form of symbolic violence is visually apparent through physical sexual harassment inflicted by the perpetrator of customers upon cigarette SPG. Symbolic violence of sensorialization is discernible and palpable to cigarette SPG when they experience physical sexual harassment. Several manifestations of this physical sexual harassment include hand-grabbing, breast-touching, sudden hugging from behind, abrupt pushing, and genital rubbing against the thigh area of cigarette SPG. In response to such incidents, some cigarette SPG exhibit resistance or avoidance behavior. The study’s findings indicate that clothing choices, particularly those that are revealing or deemed sexy, along with non-verbal cues such as body language and gestures of women, contribute to the symbolic violence of sensorialization.

Lastly, the third type of symbolic violence experienced by cigarette SPG involves both categories of euphemism and sensorialization. This type, termed “euphemism sensorialization,” is a novel discovery derived from the extension of Pierre Bourdieu’s theory. The researcher critiques that Bourdieu’s typology of symbolic violence does not sufficiently elucidate cases in which individuals experience both types of symbolic violence concurrently. Euphemism sensorialization is defined as a subtle form of symbolic violence that operates through a system not consciously recognized by research subjects. Yet, when these subjects perceive visible indications of violence, they become cognizant of the underlying dynamics. Euphemism sensorialization perpetuates certain values deemed to embody “moral dignity,” juxtaposed with values considered “low.” Victims of euphemism sensorialization consciously view such violence as “normal” and passively accept it as part of their reality.

This form of symbolic violence, euphemism sensorialization, occurs between cigarette SPG and the perpetrator of customers. Euphemism sensorialization constitutes a subtle yet observable form of symbolic violence, packaged as verbal sexual harassment perpetrated by the perpetrator of customers. Various manifestations of this verbal sexual harassment include statements such as: “Miss, would you like to join me for karaoke after work?”, “How much for the cigarettes and yourself?”, “What’s your price, miss?”, “I don’t smoke, but I enjoy ‘being smoked’ (oral sex)”, “I already have cigarettes, your cigarettes (‘meat cigarette’= penis)”, “Don’t bother selling cigarettes, come with me to the hotel!”, “How about spending time with me, miss?”, “Can I have your number, miss?”, “How many cigarettes for you? I’ll buy one but I’ll bring a friend”, “I’ll buy one, but join me for a drink, okay?” Euphemism sensorialization, conveyed through verbal aggression, has been normalized by cigarette SPG and perpetrators of customers as acceptable behavior during cigarette sales.

This study also proposes that when cigarette SPG repeatedly experience verbal sexual harassment, they tend to accept it as something routine, due to the prevalence of “sexual jokes” that have been normalized by perpetrators of customers. cigarette SPG who experience physical sexual harassment tends not to report it to authorities. This suggests that women’s positions are often undermined within the system that governs them. When cigarette SPG report cases of sexual harassment to authorities, their careers can be halted, they can be blacklisted, and their services may no longer be used.
Conclusion

The researchers comprehend that women who frequently encounter symbolic violence often find themselves unable to resist. This study demonstrates that sexual violence against women cannot be entirely eradicated but can be minimized. Women can engage in resistance against sexual violence perpetrators. In the case of verbal sexual harassment, women can explicitly criticize the perpetrators, stating that such comments are impolite and in violation of the UU TPKS (Law No. 12 of 2022). Similarly, when women face physical sexual harassment, they can keep their distance, avoid crowds, shout, defend themselves, or retaliate against the sexual violence perpetrators.

Through such resistance from women, it is hoped that the culture of symbolic violence ingrained within society towards women can gradually be eradicated and not perpetuated. In responding to the phenomenon of symbolic violence against cigarette SPGs, this study recommends that the government should consider adding and enacting a specific Labor Law for women. This specialized Labor Law aims to regulate proper rights and ensure protection for female laborers. Additionally, society should raise awareness that female workers deserve respect. This study also concluded that the negative stigma attached to cigarette SPGs is not entirely accurate. Cigarette SPGs are ordinary individuals who simply want to work diligently in accordance with workplace regulations. Therefore, if the government supports the creation of a Labor Law specifically for women and society respects female workers, female laborers can be spared from symbolic violence and can work comfortably and prosperously.

References