**DIGITAL THEORY, CULTURE & SOCIETY**

Center for Digital Culture Studies (C-DICS)

# Facebook spamming among teenagers and its impact on the learning activities at the Madrasah Islamiyah Pangkah Kulon, Ujungpangkah, Gresik

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*DOI: https://doi.org/10.61126/dtcs.v1i2.26*

**ABSTRACT**

This article examines the phenomenon of teenage students spamming through Facebook and the impact on their learning activities at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Islamiyah and Madrasah Aliyah Islamiyah, Gresik, Indonesia. This research uses qualitative research methods with a phenomenological approach, and the technique in determining informants is using purposive sampling techniques, and the method in collecting data itself is done through observation and interviews. As a reference in analyzing data and explaining related phenomena in this study, namely using Max Weber's Theory of Action. The results of this study show that students who commit spamming actions are motivated by the economic conditions of their families due to the pandemic and distance learning, as well as the influence of the actions of their friends and the environment around them, with some of the effects experienced by them, namely, often losing focus on learning, not paying attention to class and even sleeping in class during class hours, and skipping class, up to dropping out of school.

# Introduction

The phenomenon of spamming, which is a crime on the internet (cybercrime), was encountered by researchers in an area located in the northern coastal area of Gresik district, namely Ujungpangkah sub-district. Precisely in Pangkah Kulon village, which is a village included in the administrative area of Ujungpangkah sub-district, where most of the population works as fishermen and pond farmers. According to data from Ujungpangkah Subdistrict in Figures 2020, which researchers took from BPS Gresik Regency, it was recorded that since 2010 the dropout rate among teenagers was very high due to various factors, one of which was because teenagers were required to help make ends meet for their families.

In Pangkah Kulon village, Ujungpangkah sub-district, researchers encountered the phenomenon of spamming carried out by a group of young people who recognized themselves as spammers, and there were teenagers who joined and carried out the spamming action. Spamming is the activity of sending messages in the form of information, advertisements, products or services massively and continuously to other users without the request or consent of the recipient of the spam message, thus disturbing the privacy of individuals or companies and so on (Mu'min, 2018). The spamming action utilizes the internet network using a website or social media in the form of Facebook, and the content that is used as the content of the spam message is pornographic content in the form of images and then in the image embedded links with the aim that the recipient of the message is tempted and opens the link or link sent, so that the more clicks and visitors on the link will make money.

One of the cybercrimes was committed by teenagers who were still students at Madrasah Islamiyah in Pangkah Kulon Village, Ujungpangkah District, Gresik Regency. The teenagers who committed the spamming act did not purely do it individually and learned about spamming by themselves, but they joined a group in which there was an administrator (admin) and members, in the Spammer group, they were teenagers who were still students at first invited to help in spamming. Some of the tasks carried out by its members or those who are just learning, namely by helping from creating Facebook accounts, adding friends, to sending private messages (direct messages) directly to other people or through posts on the Facebook account timeline. Interestingly, the content used as the content of spam messages is pornographic content, where the content used as the content of spam messages is in the form of images or images of video screenshots with links included in them, so that the recipient of the message will be interested and then open, fill in and register on the link.

During the pandemic, researchers conducted a survey of teenagers at Madrasah Tsanawiyah and Madrasah Aliyah Islamiyah in Pangkah Kulon village, some teenagers were not only male but there were several women ranging from grade three Madrasah Tsanawiyah to grade three Madrasah Aliyah who were part of the spammers. According to them, Facebook spamming is a profitable opportunity when school is still being done online or distance learning during the pandemic yesterday, because the income they get is quite a lot, eventually it becomes a habit and continues until now. Even though they know that these actions can interfere with their learning process or even damage their psychological health. From the observations that the researchers made, the impact experienced by teenagers who participated in the spamming action experienced a decrease in their learning process to a decrease in their academic performance.

The purpose of this research is to describe the phenomena that occur in Facebook spammer teenagers and their impacts on their learning activities at Madrasah Tsanawiyah or Madrasah Aliyah Islamiyah. By using Max Weber's theory of social action, this research will be analyzed and described in accordance with the results of interviews with key informants and supporting informants.

## Method

In this study, the type of research that researchers use is qualitative research. Researchers use qualitative research to adjust to the object of research, namely teenage students who commit spamming, because the data collection process is carried out by interviewing as well as direct observation of the informants concerned. According to Sugiyono (2020: 10) qualitative research methods are also called constructive methods, because with this qualitative research method researchers can construct phenomena that are unclear and scattered into new buildings so that they are easily understood. Qualitative methods do not emphasize generalization, but rather emphasize the uniqueness of the object under study.

The phenomenological approach is a method or way to look at human relationships and the environment around them and study the relationship. Through the phenomenological approach, it is possible to reveal teenage students who do spamming and its impact on their learning activities. In determining informants, researchers use purposive sampling techniques, namely by determining a sample of informants or sources that are in accordance with the theme, topic, and title, so researchers make informant criteria as a limitation to obtain data that is in accordance with the topic and title of the study. The informant criteria

include the following:

a. Participated in spamming for more than 1 year
b. Ages approximately 14 years to 19 years.
c. Students of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Islamiyah and Madrasah Aliyah Islamiyah.
d. Feeling or experiencing a decrease in learning activities and or a decrease in achievement due to spamming activities.

Data analysis in this study used qualitative descriptive analysis. Which according to Wirartha (2006: 55) qualitative descriptive analysis method is to analyze, describe, and summarize various conditions as well as situations from various data collected either through interviews or observations regarding the phenomena under study and in accordance with what happened in the field.

## Results and Discussion
### *Spammers and Facebook spamming*

Spamming comes from the word spam, which is the sending of electronic messages massively and continuously through internet networks and/or social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and so on. Spam messages themselves are generally in the form of junk mail, which is a misuse of electronic messaging systems by sending information or advertising news and the like en masse (Wardhani, 2012). Spam actions generally send information continuously without being asked and against the will of the recipient, so spam can cause inconvenience to website users (Jatmiko, 2010). Spammers will benefit greatly in addition to only requiring small costs and not requiring extra energy, in the context of Facebook spamming they benefit from the spam income. Conversely, from the many cases of spamming, spam recipients will be harmed by this, although there are also spam

recipients who are not harmed by this. Spam is categorized as follows (Wardhani, 2012):

- Junk mail is an e-mail or electronic message sent on a large scale from a business company. The message is sent as a means of promoting the products sold by the company, but the message is not wanted by the recipient.
- Non-commercial spam is electronic messages that are sent en masse without a specific commercial purpose. Examples of this type of spam include broadcast messages or serialized humor stories.
- Pornographic spam is an electronic message that contains pornographic content, either images or videos and is sent in bulk.
- Spam viruses are electronic messages that are sent in bulk and contain viruses. This spam virus is used for users who have an existing and active mail address.

The act of spamming committed by teenagers in this study is included in pornographic spam. The form of Facebook spamming activities technically carried out by teenagers starts from preparing a large number of empty Facebook accounts and then setting up the profile account with photos of women wearing underwear and seem vulgar and quite erotic, then they spammers look for targets by filtering according to the country they will target as spam victims, then they will send messages with content in the form of screenshots of pornographic videos or images accompanied by links. The image containing the link is sent via the inbox feature on Facebook and the timeline of the Facebook account profile.

## Background of students committing Facebook spamming

### Social environment influence

Environmental factors are one of the external factors or outside of students that have an important role in the student learning process. Environmental factors can be in the form of a family environment, school environment, community environment, and the environment where students carry out their daily activities. This can have a strong influence on students in the learning process. For a teenager, external influences, especially the influence of friends of the same age, are very influential, both good and bad influences (Dalyono, 2005).

In Max Weber's theory of action, according to Weber, every person's actions are carried out oriented to the influence of others (Scott. 2012). In the context of this research, students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah and Madrasah Aliyah Islamiyah who commit spamming are influenced by their social environment such as their friends or even their closest family who first participated in spamming and received rewards from what they had done. Therefore, some of the students who participated in spamming were influenced by social environmental factors, namely being influenced by their friends in the same madrasa or friends who were in the same village with themselves and even from their own families.

### Family economic condition

The consequences of poverty have a huge impact on human life, especially on aspects of education and other life needs. The poverty experienced by families often causes children to work to help their families make ends meet, even though they still have an obligation to study education at school, where sometimes the family itself attracts the attention of their children to help make ends meet by inviting their children to earn money such as going to the sea as fishermen and other productive things outside the capacity and obligations as children.

In the book *Social Theory* written by John Scott, Max Weber's Theory of Action

is divided into four types, one of which is traditional action. Traditional action is a type of social action that is carried out because it has become a habit and is related to all forms of culture that have been applied by the community for a long time. The population of Ujungpangkah, which is mainly located in the coastal area, is mostly middle to lower economic class and parents often involve their teenage children in earning income from ponds or from the sea. Therefore, teenagers who are in families with below-average economic conditions feel inadequate and are encouraged to do things that they think are productive to help increase their family's income.

*Distance learning*

Distance learning is a government regulation or policy to minimize the spread of the Covid-19 virus since the Covid-19 Pandemic entered and spread in Indonesia and was designated as a non-natural disaster by the Presidential Decree of the Republic of Indonesia in 2020. With distance learning conducted online via the internet, increasing the proximity of students to the internet that has no limits, it also creates new problems. Supported by the rapid and unreachable development of information and communication technology, it makes a parallel world, namely the real world and the virtual world, which sometimes teenagers or even children who are addicted to technology will be cool with their own world, namely the virtual world, where they can freely express their feelings without any restrictions, so that even bad things cannot be filtered properly.

With everything that becomes free and unlimited for anyone, it causes various kinds of delinquency experienced by teenagers, adults or even children who have now shown many kinds of delinquency that are not only mild such as lying but stealing, brawls, free

sex, drugs, and so on, and leading to acts of criminality in cyberspace or cybercrime. And under the pretext of Covid-19 and government regulations that require the learning process to be carried out online, this is the reason for some Madrasah Tsanawiyah and Madrasah Aliyah Islamiyah students to commit spamming. Three of the six key informants interviewed by researchers have in common that they committed spamming because at that time there was a Corona virus pandemic and the teaching and learning process was carried out online.

### *The impact of spamming on learning activities in Madrasahs*

The impact of spamming by teenage students of Madrasah Islamiyah can be analyzed using Max Weber's Theory of Action. The spamming actions carried out by teenagers can be seen as actions that violate social rules and values, through the analysis of the following social actions some of the impacts that occur:

1) Social Impact: Spamming by teenagers can lead to mistrust and insecurity among fellow internet users, which can damage social relationships between users and create conflict in online communities.
2) Psychological Impact: Adolescents who engage in spamming feel a sense of satisfaction and power from being able to earn income from the act of spamming, but the long-term psychological impact of these adolescents will be guilt, decreased self-esteem, or regret when the act is uncovered.
3) Educational Impact: The act of spamming can disrupt the educational environment if the adolescent students are using their time and energy for harmful activities, this can affect their academic performance and decrease the quality and activity of their studies in Madrasahs.

4) Legal Impact: Spamming is a legal offense in many jurisdictions. Teens who engage in spamming may face legal consequences such as law enforcement or lawsuits that could be detrimental to their future.

The impacts of spamming by teenage students in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Islamiyah and Madrasah Aliyah Islamiyah include the following:

1) *Decreased learning spirit*

The decline in students' enthusiasm for learning is influenced by many things, it can be caused by impaired concentration because they have too many activities at night and lack of sleep, so that in the morning the body feels weak and does not have the enthusiasm to learn or pay attention to the teacher when delivering material in class.

According to the explanation of a key informant named Kevin (pseudonym), he said that he was not excited to go to school, because at night Kevin spammed until the early hours of the morning. Another case with Nina (pseudonym), one of the students whose spamming activities she did not do until late at night or even until the morning, because Nina only helped create a Facebook account and at times she was often asked by her brother to send spam messages but at the same time, namely before late at night or before Nina's break time, so Nina's activities at the madrasa were not too disturbed by her Facebook spamming activities.

2) *Not paying attention in the classroom*

In this phenomenon, students do not pay attention to the lessons delivered by the teacher in class mostly because they feel bored in class, either because the teaching method of educators is less interesting, or because the students themselves do not have the passion to pay attention or even follow the lessons in class. So, they are busy with their gadgets or are having fun with other classmates, and some even sleep in class.

As a student who spammed at night, according to information from a supporting informant named Agus (pseudonym) who is one of the students who did not participate in spamming, said that the cause of the focus of lessons in class was reduced or even did not pay attention to lessons in class, because their sleep or rest time (teenage spammers) at home was reduced, because their rest time was used for spamming Facebook.

3) *Sleeping during class time*

Lack of sleep or rest is often the reason why students are often sleepy in class. Usually, they sleep less than eight hours a day. The lack of sleep tends to cause concentration problems, fatigue and mood disorders that make students fall asleep in class during learning hours.

Some students who were spammed admitted that they slept in class because they were sleepy, while others slept in class because the teacher was boring. Here is one informant who is quite diligent, but he often sleeps in class, namely Okek (pseudonym). Through the interview, Okek explained that he often spammed at night and slept during class time or during breaks.

4) *Skipping class during class time*

The skipping behavior referred to in this study is not attending school without reason or permission while class hours are in progress. As researchers know at Madrasah Aliyah Islamiyah, the majority of students who skip leaving the classroom during class hours or even skip out of the madrasah environment starting in the morning are students who carry out spamming actions, because according to the recognition of one of them, it is not enough to spam at night

but during the day or in the afternoon they also need to create a Facebook account (nge-create) or add friends to be used as spamming targets at night.

One of the informants who provided information that he had skipped class with several classmates at Madrasah Aliyah Islamiyah, because it was late, they preferred to skip class in the canteen and not be present during class hours rather than having to go to class. This is a statement from one of the informants by the name of Azar, a student of Madrasah Aliyah Islamiyah.

There is another explanation from a supporting informant named Ocol (pseudonym). Where Ocol is the only teenage informant who dropped out of school, he said that he often skipped school during class hours, even sleeping in class. Through an interview with Ocol he explained that when he was in the third grade of madrasa Tsanawiyah he was already spamming, and often skips classes or even misses school just to continue spamming in the morning or afternoon.

## Conclusion

The phenomenon that occurs in Pangkah Kulon Village, Ujungpangkah, Gresik Regency is a phenomenon where teenagers who are still students in Madrasah commit spamming on a website or social media that we commonly known as Facebook, where they do this motivated by the economic conditions of their families and the influence of their social environment, especially the influence of their friends both in the madrasah environment and the environment where the teenagers live.

The teenagers who are spamming Facebook are not only male, but some of the female teenagers are also spamming the Facebook website. The act of spamming containing pornographic content is carried out by teenagers intensely and no matter the time, they do it at night and sometimes during the day and evening. The link between social action theory and the impact of spamming itself includes psychological, social, legal, and educational impacts. This is what gives influence so that it has a negative impact on learning activities, to a decrease in their academic achievement at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Islamiyah and Madrasah Aliyah Islamiyah, including decreased enthusiasm for learning, not paying attention to lessons during class, sleeping during class hours, skipping class during class hours, and dropping out of school.

## Declaration of Ownership

This article is our original work.

## Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest to declare in this article.

## Ethical Clearance

This study was approved by the institution.

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