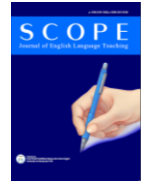




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Research Article

Online Hate Speech Targeting Celebrities: An Analysis of Hailey Bieber's Instagram Posts

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A B S T R A C T

Nowadays, social media has become an important and popular communication platform in society. However, many people do not use their social media properly, especially in commenting on social media. Hate speech is one of the bad phenomena of using the social media. Hate speech can be in the form of ridicules, body shaming, satire, hoaxes, and dishonorable act. The aim of this research is to find out the types of hate speech and how the hate speech is performed in social media. The object of this study is from the comment section of Hailey Bieber's Instagram account. This research used descriptive qualitative methods to analyze hate speeches. The Instagram posts is taken from Hailey Bieber's Instagram account posted on April 25th, 2023. The data was analyzed based on the concept of Hate Speech as stated in Indonesia Police Head of Chief Circular Number SE/6/X/2015. The results of this research found 22 data of the hate speech that consist of 5 types of hate speech such as insulting, provoking, body shaming, spread hoaxes, and unpleasant act.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the dissemination of news and information is no longer monopolized solely by television and mass media companies. Social media has empowered individual users to express their thoughts, experiences, and create engaging content (Ayomi, 2021; 2022).

As social media continues to gain immense popularity, people are increasingly devoting a significant portion of their time to consuming information and participating on these platforms. This has raised significant concerns about the societal impact of social media. In their daily lives, individuals often express their opinions, which can range from praise and criticism to expressions of hatred or

various other forms of commentary. Such interactions have always been a part of human social life. However, social media has transformed this dynamic into a public spectacle. People not only share their thoughts on their own accounts but also comment on the posts of others, often without knowing them or revealing their true identities. Unfortunately, many individuals misuse social media, especially when it comes to commenting on others' posts, resulting in numerous negative consequences. Linawati (2017) observed that when examining the nature of these comments, there are those that can be categorized as hate speech, while others are disrespectful or impolite but fall short of full-fledged hatred. One of the adverse effects of this behaviours is the proliferation of hatred.

Hate speech and cyberbullying have emerged as particularly troubling phenomena in the context of social media usage. Social media platforms have become tools commonly employed for spreading hatred. Hate speech constitutes a small but significant facet of the broader issue of impoliteness that disrupts social harmony. It involves the use of despicable expressions, often directed at someone with the intent to harm or hurt the feelings of the reader or listener (Oksanen & Räsänen, 2017). Hate speech can manifest in various forms, including spoken words, written content, or offensive and discriminatory behavior. Permatasari et al. (2020:63) describe hate speech as a type of communication used by individuals or organizations to provoke, incite, insult, defame, and disseminate falsehoods related to factors such as race, color, complexion, gender, ethnicity, physical disability, nationality, religion, and other characteristics. Some individuals' followers' resort to using harsh, offensive, and vulgar language to attack those they dislike.

Many studies have explored how people use language on social media, especially when it comes to hate speech. For example, Sari et al. (2020) conducted research on hate speech directed at Prince Charles and Camilla Parker. They looked at different types of hate speech and why people on social media use it. The study found several categories of hate speech, including those related to race, behavior, looks, social class, gender, ethnicity, disability, and religion. The researchers also discovered different reasons why people engage in hate speech, like making fun of, accusing, blaming, hinting at, and insulting others in the comments they post on social media.

In another study conducted by Wiana (2019), the focus was on hate speech during Indonesia's 2019 presidential election as it appeared on social media. The primary goal of this research was to identify the common hate speech expressions used by internet users (netizens) on platforms like Instagram and Facebook concerning the presidential candidate pairs. This qualitative study unveiled seven prevalent forms of hate speech, which includes insults, denigration, defamation, negative comments, provocation, incitement, and the spread of false information. Interestingly, the study highlighted that incitement was the most frequent type of hate speech observed on Facebook, whereas provocation dominated on Instagram.

Oktaviani et al. (2022) conducted a study on hate speech found in comments on @Indrakenz's Twitter account. They specifically focused on analyzing illocutionary speech acts and the different types of hate speech present. The analysis identified three types of illocutionary acts in comments related to tweets posted on @Indrakenz's Twitter account, which aligned with Searle's theory of speech acts: Assertive, Directive, and Expressive. The

most frequently occurring illocutionary act was Directive, and the prevalent types of hate speech included insults, blasphemy, and unpleasant actions, with insults being the most common.

Finally, Pasaribu (2021) looked into hate speech on Joko Widodo's Official Facebook page and focused on how people of different genders used impolite language differently. Based on Culpeper's theory of impoliteness strategies (1996), the study found that male users tended to use direct, straightforward impolite language when expressing their dislike for Joko Widodo. They primarily used positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, sarcasm, and bald on-record impoliteness in decreasing order. On the other hand, female users were more inclined to employ positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, sarcasm, and bald on-record impoliteness strategies. These findings highlight that male users often express their hate speech in a more direct and harsh manner compared to female users.

The most recent research, conducted by Lase in 2020, examined the hate speech present in comments made by netizens on Lucinta Luna's Instagram account. The primary objectives of this study are to identify various impoliteness strategies employed in netizens' comments and to categorize the different types of hate speech prevalent in these comments. Additionally, the research also explores which impoliteness method is the most frequently utilized and categorizes the types of hate speech accordingly. The findings of this earlier investigation reveal the existence of five distinct impoliteness strategies, namely, bald-on-record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, sarcasm, and withhold impoliteness.

In general, hate speech tends to target well-known individuals, such as celebrities, YouTubers, artists, actors, or even political figures like the president. One notable figure who frequently encounters hate comments is Hailey Bieber. Hailey Bieber is a celebrity that has 50,4 Million followers. She often gets hate comments because she is a celebrity who is also known as Justin Bieber's wife. She got a lot of hate comments because of her problem with Selena Gomez, her husband's famous ex-wife lately. According to Bonner's account in 2023, the conflict between Selena Gomez and Hailey Bieber appears to have its origins in a situation where fans inferred some tension. This speculation emerged when Hailey posted a TikTok video, which she promptly removed, that depicted her and her friends lip-syncing to the audio, "And I'm not saying she deserved it, but God's timing is always right." Fans interpreted this as a possible reference to Selena, who had been subjected to body-shaming comments in response to her recent vacation photos.

In this study, the writer addresses hate speech found in the comments section of Hailey Bieber's Instagram account as the topic. The types of hate speech identified by the writer align with the categories of hate speech outlined in the Indonesia Police Head of Chief Circular Number SE/6/X/2015 (National Police of Indonesia, 2015). This circular explains the handling of hate speech and outlines that hate speech can manifest in various ways, as follows:

1) Insult

This occurs when derogatory statements are directed at an individual or a group based on characteristics such as religion, race, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. Insults may include words that damage one's reputation and honor, inciting hostility, discrimination, or violence, thereby causing shame and offense.

2) Denigration

Denigration involves attacking an individual's dignity and reputation by expressing harmful statements that can harm a person's reputation, either directly or indirectly due to the content of hate speech, which may lead to hostility. A statement is considered denigrating if it contains false or improper allegations and defamatory elements.

3) Defamation

Defamation involves degrading others through acts, actions, or words that are degrading to an individual or group. It may take the form of accusing someone of disgraceful actions or denouncing matters to make them known to the public. Defamation can be related to aspects such as religion, beliefs, gender, and sexual orientation.

4) Unpleasant Acts

These are speeches that contain threats, coercion, violence, or oaths. Such behaviors indirectly disrupt the well-being and safety of individuals and groups.

5) Provocation

Provocation is the act of inciting discrimination, violence, and hostility through speech. It involves using words to agitate individuals or community groups, creating fear and anxiety within the community. Such speech can lead to public misunderstanding and potentially result in hostility or conflict.

6) Incitement

Similar to provocation, incitement involves subtler forms of speech that influence others, aiming to make them believe and become emotionally charged, resist, or rebel against certain individuals or groups. It stirs up anger and opposition.

7) Spreading Hoaxes

Expressing hatred by disseminating false or deceptive news, also known as hoax news, with the intention of deceiving others and causing them to trust the false information. In recent times, false news has become increasingly common, making it challenging for people to distinguish between truth and falsehood.

This study is important as it explores hate speech targeting female celebrities, focusing on Hailey Bieber, who faces frequent online harassment. These attacks often go beyond criticism, reflecting issues like misogyny, body shaming, and double standards for women. By analyzing the types of hate speech directed at her, this research aims to understand the reasons behind such behavior and its broader impact. It seeks to promote respectful online interactions and help create safer digital spaces for women especially in social media.

METHOD

This research employed descriptive qualitative methods to analyse hate speech. In line with the research objectives, the writer examined the types of hate speech within the comments section of Hailey Bieber's Instagram Account and how they were expressed.

The primary source of data consisted of the top 100 comments on a post from Hailey Bieber's Instagram Account dated March 6th, 2023. In this particular post, Hailey shared details about her makeup look and hairstyle, expressing her love for the ribbon she wore in her hair.



The secondary data sources consist of online articles discussing the feud between Hailey Bieber and Selena Gomez. These articles assisted the researchers in understanding the context of hate.

Data collection was performed through the observation method, involving the researcher closely examining all comments in the post and documenting those categorized as hate speech. In qualitative research, data analysis relies

on comprehensive interpretation rather than statistical analysis, as outlined by Cresswell (2008), based on the definition of hate speech derived from government law and other theories.

The researcher employed both formal and informal approaches to convey the study's findings. The incidence of various types of hate speech is presented in a table or image using the formal technique, while the explanation of the meaning behind the hate speech is conveyed in paragraphs using the informal technique.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the researcher identified a total of 22 instances of hate speeches, which are detailed in the table below:

Table 1 Types of Hate Speech

No.	Types of Hate Speech	Total	%
1.	Insult	10	45,4%
2.	Provoking	4	18,1%
3.	Body Shaming	3	13,6%
4.	Spread Hoaxes	2	9%
5.	Unpleasant act	3	13,6%
Total		22	100%

Based on the table, it can be observed that there were 22 utterances found in the comment section. This analysis identified 4 types of hate speech according to Indonesia Police Head of Chief Circular Number SE/6/X/2015, however there is an additional type found which cannot be categorized in any criteria in the circular, which is body shaming. The study found 10 instances of insults, 4 instances of provocation, 3 instances of body shaming, 2 instances of spreading hoaxes, and 3 instances of unpleasant acts. The way hate speech is expressed on social media can be further explained as follows.

Insulting

An insult is a statement or action deliberately made to hurt or offend someone. In verbal communication, it is indicated using expressions of hatred that verbally attack or put down individuals or institutions.

Data 1:

@tazxxx: *Mean girl*

Data 1 was the comment written on the post about Hailey Bieber's makeup and hairstyle. However, the comment was not about the post. It reflects the ongoing feud between Hailey and Selena Gomez. Fans of Selena often criticize Hailey, even on unrelated posts, showing how personal disputes between celebrities can lead to online hate.

Based on the data presented above, one Instagram user insulted Hailey Bieber by characterizing her as a "mean girl". This assessment comes from the ongoing feud involving Hailey Bieber attempting to bully Selena Gomez over her eyebrows. The term "mean girl" typically refers to girls who engage in bullying and doing various forms of "girl aggression," such as making hurtful comments, playing tricks, spreading rumors, excluding others from activities, engaging in deceitful behavior, or even attempting to steal boyfriends, to manipulate and control their peers.

Data 2:

@tazxxx: *worst eye makeup ever*

Based on the data provided above, an Instagram user attempted to insult Hailey Bieber by leaving a comment on her Instagram post about her makeup. The user expressed that Hailey Bieber's eye makeup was the worst they had ever seen.

Provoking

Provocation means doing something on purpose to make someone angry or get a response from them. It is about trying to stir up emotions or reactions from people, often by doing things with a clear intention or goal. An action is provocative when it incites anger in people or the public and it is done with a specific purpose in mind.

Data 3:

@lenxxx: *Unfollow*

Data 4:

@shrxxx: *Unfollow her guys*

Data 5:

@maaxx: *I'm thinking about unfollowing u*

Based on the data provided earlier, the form of hate speech employed here is provocation. This is evident as the Instagram user intended to incite others to unfollow Hailey Bieber's account and instead follow Selena Gomez's Instagram account.

Body Shaming

Body shaming is when someone makes a negative physical judgment about another person. (Puluhulawa & Husein, 2021; Shafira & Oktavianti, 2023) It is frequently classified as verbal or written bullying. This can be seen in the comment below:

Data 6:

@654xxx: *Like a dude*

The most common negative comment made by some internet users about Hailey's appearance is that they believe

her face has masculine features. In the statement mentioned, it was straightforwardly suggested that she resembles a man. This is undesirable because Hailey is a model who presents herself as having an ideal feminine image.

Data 7:

@lunxxx: *she has more masculine features than Justin*

Another example above is a comment from an Instagram user that suggests that Hailey's features are more masculine than those of her husband, Justin Bieber, which takes the form of physical humiliation. This form of hate speech is one of the most common forms of cyberbullying (Damanik, 2018). It involves attacking and criticizing someone's body image and is considered embarrassing as it goes against society's ideal body image.

Spreading Hoaxes

Spreading false news involves sharing untrue information. A key indicator of disseminating false information, often known as hoaxes, is presenting inaccurate or untrue facts to others, institutions, or actions, potentially leading to harm to others.

Data 8:

@khaxxx: *stalker*

Data 9:

@stexxxh: *You're a stalker*

The examples above are hoaxes. The Instagram user claimed that Hailey Bieber is a stalker but there are no facts about this. Therefore, this kind of utterances are called hoaxes.

Unpleasant Acts

A type of hate speech includes engaging in unpleasant behavior by either an individual or an institution directed at another individual or institution. A sign of such unpleasant actions is when someone or an organization disturbs the peace or comfort of another person or entity, or when they undertake actions that lead to discomfort or harm for another individual or entity.

Data 10:

@ayrtxxx: *I hate you*

This kind of utterance is an unpleasant act. The Instagram user said that she hates Hailey Bieber. This comment also disturbs the comfort of another and for Hailey Bieber herself.

Data 11:

@araxxx : *u're so insecure*

The example above also kind of unpleasant act. The Instagram user said that Hailey Bieber is so insecure. This kind of utterances is tried to compare her beauty with Selena Gomez.

This study's findings both support and expand upon previous research on hate speech. Consistent with studies like Oktaviani et al. (2022), this research identifies common categories such as insults and provocation, confirming patterns in how hate speech appears on social media. However, it also introduces body shaming as a distinct category, not explicitly covered in frameworks like the Indonesia Police Head of Chief Circular Number SE/6/X/2015. This category underscores the gendered nature of hate speech, reflecting societal pressures on women's physical appearances and often targeting female celebrities like Hailey Bieber. The hate speech also centers around a stereotypical narrative of women's rivalry over a man, tied to her alleged feud with another female celebrity. Additionally, while aligning with Wiana's (2019) analysis of provocation and hoaxes, this study highlights how these forms are weaponized to amplify personal attacks, such as encouraging others to unfollow or making unfounded accusations like "stalker."

CONCLUSION

This research focuses on hate speech used in comments on issues related to Hailey Bieber's posts on her Instagram account. The analysis categorizes this form of hate speech according to the classification developed by the Indonesia Police Head of Chief Circular Number SE/6/X/2015. The most prevalent type of hate speech identified in the comment section is insults.

In conclusion, hate speech on social media, exemplified by comments on Hailey Bieber's Instagram posts, can manifest in various forms and have adverse effects on individuals and online communities. Social media users need to recognize the consequences of their words and actions and promote respectful and constructive interactions online. Social media platforms also bear a responsibility in addressing hate speech and ensuring a safer online environment for all users. Further research and awareness campaigns are necessary to combat the issue of hate speech on social media and foster a more inclusive and respectful online culture.

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