



## Verbal Abuse by Netizens on Social Media Against A Youtuber's Childfree Decision Statement Named Gita Savitri

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### Abstract

Verbal abuse is violence that hurts the other person verbally by saying harsh utterances that can impact the victim's psychologist. Social media is widely used to ease users communicating with others freely; this kind of platform found many utterances contain verbal abuse. This study aims to categorize and explain the types of verbal abuse directed against influencers as well as a YouTuber named Gita Savitri, who is committed to being childfree. The subjects in this study were words that contained elements of verbal abuse in the form of responses to comments or posts on social media, Twitter and Instagram towards Gita Savitri. The data were obtained using the observation method by observing verbal abuse utterances directed to Gita Savitri's childfree statement gathered from Twitter and Instagram. In this study, a qualitative research methodology was adopted, and the research phase included discourse observation, data collection, data filtering, and data analysis. The researchers found that verbal abuse utterances in this study contain various four types, namely direct verbal abuse, indirect verbal abuse, repressive verbal abuse, and alienative verbal abuse. The data obtained in this research showed as many as 82 data verbal abuse found on Twitter posts and Gita Savitri's Instagram comment section. From 82 data obtained, the researchers classified into 49 direct verbal abuse data, 24 indirect verbal abuse data, five repressive verbal abuse data, and four alienative verbal abuse data.

**Keywords** *Verbal Abuse, Social Media, Gita Savitri, Childfree*

### INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly, in this modern era, information is spread quickly and practically, which causes the advancement of thought from its users. This has resulted in the spread of foreign cultures and ideas that are different from the existing culture, so there is a possibility of causing controversy or debate. The dissimilarity of perspectives encountered in a new culture triggers debate over something (Purnomo, 2016). The freedom to use the internet, particularly social media platforms that allow anyone to express thoughts openly and share information broadly, only exacerbates this issue.

Furthermore, recently Indonesian social media was filled with news related to one of the influencers as well as YouTubers named Gita Savitri or commonly known as Gitasav. Gitasav is an Indonesian YouTuber who spent considerable time studying in Germany and now lives in the country with her husband for a career. Gitasav was the subject of public discussion due to her statement on social media and her Youtube channel, which stated that she and her husband were committed to not having children, also known as childfree. According to Ela (2022), childfree is an understanding or principle adopted by a couple committed to not having children from a legal marriage bond.

The understanding and principles held by each person can vary depending on the teachings of the surrounding environment. Indonesian society is accustomed to the stigma that married

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couples must have children to continue their descendants. This opinion is supported by the majority of Indonesian people adhering to Muslim teachings referring to demographic data on the (katadata.co.id, 2021) as many as 238 million Indonesians are Muslim. According to Sunarto and Imamah (2019), preserving good offspring from a couple who establish a legal marriage bond is one of the suggestions for marriage in Islam. This indirectly builds a stigma among Indonesians that married couples need to have children as heirs. The widespread exposure of Gitasav's statements with different perspectives on the principle of deciding to be child-free has drawn various responses, such as criticism and support from Indonesians who adhere to cultures contrary to this understanding. Many of these responses were verbal abuse by netizens on social media, such as Instagram and Twitter.

For example, one of Gitasav's statements in her Instagram comment section said, "Not having kids is indeed natural anti-ageing. You can sleep eight hours daily with no stress hearing kids screaming. And when you finally got wrinkles, you have the money to pay for Botox." This statement invited many responses, both negative criticism and constructive suggestions. Netizens' responses to this issue were very diverse, most of which were harsh utterances intended to insult, humiliate, put down, curse, and bully or also known as verbal abuse. According to Sutikno (2010), verbal abuse is a type of verbal violence directed at a person's inner self in the form of insults, threats, and slander that hurts the feelings and self-esteem of the other person. Verbal abuse can also be in the form of harsh words, physical insults that are bullying, or insults against differences in one's perspective on life. In fact, abusive speech can impact psychological disorders and destroy the mentality of the recipient (Soetjningsih, 2007).

In this study, netizens' responses against Gitasav on social media can be categorized into negative responses in the form of verbal abuse. The negative responses are related to the differences in perspectives between netizens and Gitasav regarding her life choice for childfree. The data collected in this study was obtained from posts and comments section on Twitter and Instagram that contains verbal abuse directed to Gita Savitri. Based on the data that has been collected, various types of verbal abuse will be classified based on their categories. Therefore, this study aims to identify what types of verbal abuse netizens throw to Gitasav on social media, Twitter and Instagram.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Definition of Verbal Abuse**

Abuse is not only limited to physical violence but can be done verbally to hurt the interlocutor through words psychologically. Based on Baryadi (2012: 20), symbolic violence can be classified into two types, namely non-verbal and verbal symbolic abuse, which means abuse committed through language elements to the interlocutor.

### **Types of Verbal Abuse**

Verbal abuse can be divided into four types of abuse in speech acts. According to Baryadi (2012: 37-38), verbal abuse is divided into four groups, namely direct verbal abuse, indirect verbal abuse, repressive verbal abuse, and alienative verbal abuse.

#### ***Direct Verbal Abuse***

In general, direct abuse is a direct action against the victim that can affect them physically and psychologically. According to Baryadi (2012: 37), direct verbal abuse is violence perpetrated by speakers who directly harm their victims through direct communication, such as cursing, yelling, railing, accusing, threatening, mocking, insulting, belittling, rebuking, expelling, demanding, refusing, opposing, forcing, terrorizing, humiliating, prying, harassing, slapping, trapping, scolding,

demonizing, making fun of, silencing, saying, and blaming.

### ***Indirect Verbal Abuse***

Indirect verbal abuse refers to the violent use of language in the words uttered by the speaker against the interlocutor. Indirect verbal abuse does not immediately affect its victims directly but through media or chain processes as intermediaries, such as stigmatization, slander, and stereotyping (Baryadi, 2012, p. 37).

### ***Repressive Verbal Abuse***

According to Baryadi (2012:38), repressive verbal abuse is a form of speech that aims to suppress or intimidate its victims involving various types of utterances in this category, such as instructing, forcing, commanding, yelling, frightening, scolding, threatening, saying, provoking, terrorizing, judging, and cornering.

### ***Alienative Verbal Abuse***

Alienative abuse is a form of communication that aims to get rid of or even eliminate the victim from the community or society. In this case, direct verbal abuse is also included in the category of alienative verbal abuse (Baryadi, 2012, p. 38). Violence involves actions in the form of silence, isolation, embarrassment, and defamation.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The method used to analyze the object of discourse is a qualitative method. According to Ramdhan (2021), the qualitative method is a type of descriptive research method that requires an in-depth analysis of the object of discussion obtained through interviews or field observations with a theoretical basis as a reference in preparing research results. This research includes four work stages: 1) discourse observation, 2) data collection, 3) data filtering, and 4) data analysis. The object of this research is verbal abuse uttered by netizens on social media posts and comment sections related to Gita Savitri's child-free statement.

The data collected for processing were 82 data from the social media platforms Instagram and Twitter. The data collection in this study uses the observation method as a foundation. According to Sudaryanto (1993), the observation method is a data collection method in which researchers collect data by observing the use of language in the research object. The object of research is not only the use of spoken language, such as conversation, but also the object of observation in writing or text.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the data obtained, researchers identified and classified the data into four types of verbal abuse, according to Baryadi (2012), namely direct verbal abuse, indirect verbal abuse, repressive verbal abuse, and alienative verbal abuse. The researcher described some of the data findings into the four types of verbal abuse as follows:

### **Direct Verbal Abuse**

In this study, 49 data on direct verbal abuse were obtained from Instagram, 18 data and Twitter 31 data. The data obtained included eight types of verbal abuse: 'insulting', 'ridiculing', 'accusing', 'belittling', 'cursing', 'mocking', and 'blaming'. However, because of the page limitation, the researchers only analyze two types of direct verbal abuse that consist of each type of verbal abuse on Twitter and Instagram.

### ***Direct Cursing Verbal Abuse***

Direct cursing verbal abuse is violence the speaker commits to express emotions through inappropriate words in the form of swearing. Cursing is defined in the Cambridge Dictionary as the utterance of "harsh and vicious language to express rage or irritation". The following is an example of direct cursing verbal abuse found in comments on a Twitter post:

(38) @anggadwipeaaa: *Gitasav si pemborong opini **tolol***

(38) @anggadwipeaaa: Gitasav is a **cockeyed** opinion pollster

Data (38) shows an utterance of direct cursing verbal abuse by disclosing that "Gitasav is a cockeyed opinion pollster". The word *tolol* (cockeyed) in KBBI V (2018) means 'very stupid'. The word cockeyed is usually used to express annoyance towards someone with a harsh connotation. Thus, the word cockeyed in data (38) makes the sentence fall into the direct cursing verbal abuse category.

### ***Direct Blaming Verbal Abuse***

In Cambridge Dictionary, blame means "to say or think that someone or something did something wrong or is responsible for something bad happening". Direct blaming verbal abuse is carried out by the speaker to make the victim feel guilty. The following is an example of direct blaming verbal abuse obtained from the comments section of Gita Savitri's post on her Instagram account:

(45) ramdnaf23: *Lah mending ada generasi walaupun agak rese drpada ga ada generasi **gara2 cewek sok paling fenisim yg anti melahirkan***

(45) ramdan f23: It is better to have a generation even though it is a bit worse than not having a generation **because feminist women who is anti-childbirth**

Data (45) shows that there is directly blaming for verbal abuse because the speaker seems to blame Gitasav's decision not to have children or be child-free. The speaker commented, "it is better to have a generation even though it is recessed, rather than no generation." Apart from that, direct verbal abuse can also be seen in how speakers blame Gitasav by calling her a "feminist woman who is anti-childbirth".

### ***Indirect Verbal Abuse***

This study obtained 24 indirect verbal abuse data from Twitter, with 22 data and two from Instagram. The information gathered covers three different types of verbal abuse: stigmatization, defamation, and stereotype. However, because of the page limitation, the researchers only provide the analysis of two types of indirect verbal abuse which the data seems more complex to be analysis.

### ***Indirect Stereotyping Verbal Abuse***

In Cambridge Dictionary, stereotype means "the conception of a group based on subjective and irrational judgments". Stereotyped direct verbal abuse arises because of negative perceptions that have been widely spread and generally accepted. The following is an example of indirect stereotyping verbal abuse obtained from the comment section on Gita Savitri's Instagram account:

(51) snack\_point.kendari: *Kok pada bilang ngga ada yg salah? Ini jelas2 **ideologi yang sudah menyimpang***

(51) snack\_point.kendari: How come you say there is nothing wrong? This is clearly **a deviating**

## ideology

The stereotyped indirect verbal abuse in the data above is contained in the sentence, "this is clearly a deviating ideology". The word deviates in Cambridge Dictionary means "to do something different from the usual or common way of behaving". Hence, data (51) means that Gitasav's decision for childfree is a distorted ideology. Therefore, data (51) is categorized in indirect verbal abuse stereotypes because the sentence in the data is a subjective assessment, just an assumption from the outsider.

### ***Indirect Stigmatization Verbal Abuse***

Stigmatization in Cambridge Dictionary means "the act of treating someone unfairly by publicly disapproving of them". Indirect stigmatization of verbal abuse can occur because of dislike for someone. Therefore, indirect stigmatized verbal abuse is carried out by speakers to label the negative characteristics of their victims. The following is an example of indirect verbal abuse of stigmatization obtained from the comment column on Gita Savitri's Instagram account:

(54) Ibnu Bathutah Amien: Childfree=***lemah iman***

(54) Ibnu Bathutah Amien: Childfree=**weak faith**

Indirect stigmatization of verbal abuse does exist in the data (54). The sentence in the data reveals that Gitasav's decision for childfree is a form of weak faith, well said as "childfree=*lemah iman*" in the sentence above. The word lemah (weak) in KBBI V (2018) means 'not strong'. Thus, the speaker considers childfree decisions to be a form of someone's faith that is not strong or simply weak. This is a negative characterization that the speaker gives to Gitasav, which we cannot categorize another's faith as a human. Therefore, data (54) is categorized into indirect stigmatization verbal abuse.

### **Repressive Verbal Abuse**

In this study, 5 data on repressive verbal abuse were obtained from 1 data on Instagram and four on Twitter. The data obtained includes four types of verbal abuse, including judging, provoking, ordering, and derisive. However, because of the page limitation, the researchers only analyze two types of repressive verbal abuse that consist of each type of verbal abuse on Twitter and Instagram.

### ***Repressive Judgmental Verbal Abuse***

Judging in Cambridge Dictionary means "to decide about something or someone's repressive verbal abuse committed by someone to punish the victim by behaving like a judge". This verbal abuse usually occurs when the speaker feels he is more righteous. The following is an example of repressive verbal abuse obtained from the comment section on Gita Savitri's Instagram account:

(75) Sukzezq: *Pedoman kita quran hadits bukan perkataan influencer, waspada agen2 perusak aqidah n moral yg skrg tdk lagi berpakaian seksi tp bermuka alim & brkerudung seolah2 mencerminkan wanita muslimah modern. Tapi aqidah n mindset menyimpang jauh dr syariat islam.*

(75) Sukzezq: Our guideline is the Quran and Hadith, not the words of influencers, be wary of agents who destroy faith and morals, who no longer dress sexy but have pious-face and veiled as if they reflect modern Muslim women. But the aqidah and mindset deviate far from Islamic law.

Data (75) shows that the speaker claims Gita Savitri as an agent who destroys faith and morals. The speaker behaves as a judge in criticizing Gita Savitri's appearance, which reflects modern Muslim

women with deviant beliefs and mindsets. Therefore, the sentence uttered by the speaker in data (75) is categorized as judgmental repressive verbal abuse.

### ***Repressive Provoking Verbal Abuse***

In Cambridge Dictionary, provoke means “to cause a reaction, especially a negative one”. Speakers usually provoke verbal abuse to provoke the emotions of their victims by inciting the public. The following is an example of provoking repressive verbal abuse obtained from the comment column on Twitter

(76) @sunriseul: **Doain aja** gitasav mandul biar dia ga susah2 muter otak biar ga hamil

(76) @sunriseul: **Just pray** that Gitasav is infertile so that she doesn't have trouble racking her brain to not get pregnant

Data (76) is a provocation where the speaker uses the word *mandul* (infertile), which means in KBBI V (2018) ‘cannot have children’. The word *mandul* is inappropriate to be given to the other person. In this data, the speaker invites the public to pray for Gita Savitri being infertile to provoke Gita Savitri's emotions as the speaker's target, as seen in the phrase just pray. Therefore, the data is categorized as provoking repressive verbal abuse because the speaker has pressured the victim.

### ***Alienative Verbal Abuse***

In this study, 4 data on alienative verbal abuse were collected from 2 data on Instagram and two on Twitter. The data gathered includes two sorts of verbal abuse, namely cornering and expelling.

#### ***Alienative Cornering Verbal Abuse***

The speaker uses this kind of alienative verbal abuse to corner the victim so that the victim cannot fight back. The following is an illustration of alienative cornering verbal abuse gathered from Twitter.

(81) @daddysharks: *Emang bagus gitasav childfree aja, biar pemikiran2 kayak dia ga berkembang biak*

(81) @daddysharks: Let her be childfree, so such her thoughts won't breed

The clause “so such her thoughts won't breed” in data (81) shows that there is cornering alienative verbal abuse by unintended meaning that the speaker wants a similar thought as Gitasav belief will not spread broadly in society. This sentence can be interpreted that people with thoughts like Gita Savitri must be eliminated, including Gitasav. By saying those kinds of words, the speaker indirectly makes a statement that refers to corner Gitasav and makes her small in society by having her own belief, childfree.

#### ***Alienative Expelling Verbal Abuse***

The violence the speaker uses to evict their victims forcibly is known as alienative verbal abuse. In Cambridge Dictionary, the verb expel is defined as “to force someone to leave”. Expelling alienative verbal abuse aims to alienate the victim from a community. The following is an example of Expelling alienative verbal abuse derived from a comment on Gita Savitri's Instagram account.

(82) sukzezq: *Pemikiran yg mengancam kelangsungan hidup manusia, hrs dimusnahkan dr muka bumi!! Lbh berbahaya dr bom atom!!*

(82) sukzezq: Thoughts threatening human survival must be eradicated from the earth!! More

dangerous than an atomic bomb!!

The sentence uttered by the speaker in data (82) indicates the presence of expelling alineative verbal abuse. The speaker claims that Gita Savitri's ideas can harm the future of humankind by saying "thoughts which threaten human survival". Therefore, the speaker emphasizes the statement of expelling by saying indirectly that individuals with the same thoughts as Gitasav "must be eradicated from the earth". Additionally, the speaker claims that Gitasav's belief posed a greater threat than an atomic bomb. This implies that the speaker wants to destroy Gita Savitri by persuading the public to believe that Gitasav is dangerous.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data obtained by the researchers, there were 82 data from the total number, with 59 verbal abuse data obtained from Twitter and 23 verbal abuse data obtained from the comments column on Gita Savitri's Instagram account. There were 49 data on direct verbal abuse obtained from Instagram with 18 data and Twitter with 31 data. Moreover, as many as 24 data on indirect verbal abuse were found, including 2 data from Instagram and 22 data from Twitter. While repressive verbal abuse found 5 data obtained from Instagram as many as 1 data and Twitter as many as 4 data. In addition, 4 alienative verbal abuse data were obtained from Instagram with 2 data and Twitter with 2 data.

In conclusion, this study has provided some data, including several types of verbal abuse found from social media platforms Twitter and Instagram related to Gita Savitri's childfree statement. However, the study of verbal abuse in this research is limited to only discussing the analysis of verbal abuse on the surface. Therefore, this research can be continued by analyzing the data using further linguistic theory.

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