Child Grooming News Coverage: Psychological Communication of Nikita Mirzani's Child on Instagram Social Media

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Abstract	Grooming is a systematic action carried out by perpetrators to build closeness and trust with prospective victims to manipulate or exploit them. This study aims to analyze the impact of psychological communication received by Nikita Mirzani's child involved in news coverage, both from the perspective of child developmental psychology and the social impact in their environment. This study used a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. Data collection techniques included interviews, observations on Instagram, literature studies, and documentation. The research results show the dimension of receiving stimuli through the senses: Informants learned about the Laura case from social media and further investigated to understand the events; the process mediating stimuli and responses triggered emotional and moral reflection, turned neutral attitudes critical and disappointed; predicted responses sparked initial empathy toward the perpetrator that then shifted to caution; sympathy moved toward the victim; affirmation of responses revealed that the victim's behavior is influenced by the environment, intensive communication, and relationships.
Keywords	Communication; Psychology; Sex Grooming

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1. INTRODUCTION

Grooming is a systematic act carried out by perpetrators to build closeness, instill trust, and establish an emotional bond with prospective victims, with the aim of manipulating, exploiting, or harassing them. Although it often appears to be a new form of crime, this practice is actually an evolution of previous crime methods, such as pornography, sexual violence, and immoral acts, which have transformed along with the rapid development of digital technology (Sintah Nuryah & Warsono, 2023).

Child Grooming can occur through various digital communication channels, such as instant messaging, social media, and community-based applications. In practice, perpetrators use psychological approaches and manipulation techniques aimed at building the child victim's trust,

making them more vulnerable to exploitation without realizing it. The increasing number of Child Grooming cases calls for the implementation of technology-based preventive measures to strengthen child protection systems (Azmi, 2025).

The use of communication technology and the Internet has changed various aspects of human life, including interactions and communication between individuals. Social media is one form of technological development that is often used by its users as a platform for wider self-expression (Septiliani et al., 2025).

Technological advances have driven the rapid development of social media, which provides convenience in communication but also causes negative impacts due to misuse by certain individuals. One form of such misuse is online sexual crime in the form of grooming, which has now become a serious issue and threatens the safety of children and adolescents in the digital age.

Sexual violence is a crime that can harm individuals and result in both physical and psychological trauma to the victim. According to information from GoodDoctor, sexual violence can be experienced and perpetrated by anyone, regardless of age, gender, or social status (Rahmadani & Flowerina, 2024).

Communication plays an important role in life, as it serves as a means of resolving various problems, including efforts to prevent sexual violence against children. Considering the increasingly concerning situation, open and constructive communication between parents and children is urgently needed, especially regarding early sex education (Nurfazryana & Mirawati, 2022).

Figure 1.1. The appearance of @vania's content is attractive and eye-catching.

Source: (Penthatesia, 2024)

In Figure 1.1, there is a news story explaining that the Laura Meizani case falls under the crime of Child Grooming. Laura Meizani, or Lolly, is the eldest child of Nikita Mirzani and her first husband, Nasseru. Since her mother entered the entertainment industry, her father's identity has been a mystery. It was revealed in a YouTube video with Gisella Anastasia that Lolly's father comes from a prominent political family in Indonesia, as Laura is only 16 years old and Vadel is 20 years old. In this relationship,

one partner is still a minor, which is not advised or permitted because it is highly vulnerable to Child Grooming. It has been explained that Child Grooming is a manipulative action from one partner in a relationship involving minors, whether it is luring them with offers or other manipulative acts.

The Laura Meizani case highlights the complexity of psychological, social, and legal issues, as well as how perpetrators exploit children through online communication. The impact is significant on victims psychologically, especially if the manipulation goes unnoticed. This underscores the importance of parental and community support for prevention and recovery.

Therefore, Child Grooming in this relationship must not be normalized. Another sign that someone may be experiencing Child Grooming is having more intense sexual urges than other children or teenagers their age.

In addition, children who are victims of Child Grooming can also experience various short- and long-term impacts, such as psychological trauma, sleep disturbances, anxiety, and even depression. Although most of the focus is on the symptoms of psychological trauma, for example, according to Verywell Mind, it is mentioned that CSA survivors tend to experience "hypersexuality or sex addiction" as a coping manifestation for psychological trauma symptoms (Hartney, 2023).

Identifying and analyzing the role of psychological communication in the process of sexual grooming crimes, by paying attention to the ways perpetrators use communication techniques to manipulate and shape the victim's perception.

This research analyzes the psychological communication strategies used by grooming perpetrators to attract attention, build trust, and create emotional dependence in victims. The main focus is on manipulation techniques, such as gaslighting, love bombing, and gift-giving, as well as the gradual introduction of inappropriate sexual behaviors.
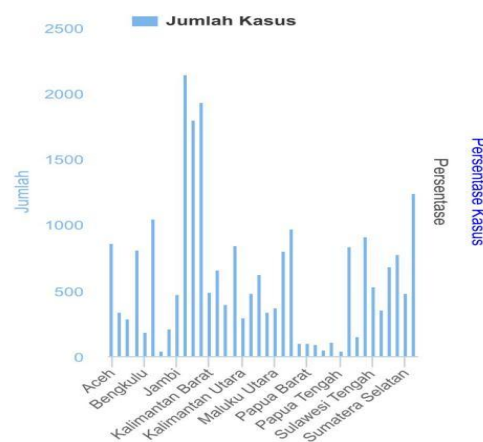

Figure 1.2. Empirical data on sexual crime against children.

Source: (Kementrian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak Republik Indonesia, 2025)

According to a report from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), in 2021, there were more than 1,000 reported cases related to child sexual exploitation, including grooming, which saw a sharp increase compared to the previous year. Additionally, based on data from the Indonesian National Police, from 2019 to 2022, there were more than 500 online grooming cases involving children as victims, with the majority of cases occurring through social media and instant messaging applications.

According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO), in 2010, it was estimated that approximately 20% of women and between 5-10% of men worldwide had experienced sexual violence during childhood. According to the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW), in 2012, approximately 9.3% of all cases of violence against children were categorized as sexual abuse, with a total of 62,939 cases of child sexual abuse reported in the same year (Septiani, 2021).

Based on data from the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), 2014, it is estimated that approximately 120 million children worldwide, or more than 100 million children under the age of 20, have been victims of sexual abuse. At the national level, the Chair of the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) revealed that in 2013, there were 925 cases of child sexual abuse handled by the institution, with perpetrators coming from the victim's immediate environment, such as relatives, teachers, or peers. In the past three years, the number of similar cases handled by the KPAI has reached between 3,500 and 3,600 (Indanah, 2016).

In 2012, there were 3,871 recorded cases of violence against children, with 1,028 of those being sexual violence cases. Meanwhile, in 2013, the total number of violence cases against children decreased to 2,673, but the number of sexual violence cases increased to 1,266. Data from the Ministry of Social Affairs in 2020 showed that during the pandemic, especially between June and August, there was a significant increase in violence and sexual abuse against children. There were 8,259 cases in June, which rose to 11,797 in July and increased again to 12,855 cases in August (Amelia et al., 2023).

Figure 1.3. Empirical data on sexual crimes against children.

Source: (Yamin & Susiana)

The number of cases of violence against women (KtP) in Indonesia shows an increasing trend over time. According to the 2024 Annual Record (CATAHU) from the National Commission (Komnas) on Violence Against Women and CATAHU partners, 445,502 cases were reported in 2024, up from 401,975 cases in 2023. In contrast, data from the Online Information System for the Protection of Women and Children (SIMFONI PPA) of the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection (KemenPPPA) recorded that from January 1 to April 21, 2025, there were 6,918 reports of violence, with 5,950 (equivalent to 86.01%) involving women as victims.

In cases of sexual grooming crimes, psychological communication plays an important role in understanding the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim. The impact can be both immediate and long-term, including emotional, social, and psychological disturbances, such as stress, anxiety, fear, and insecurity. These traumatic experiences also have the potential to cause serious psychological problems.

Child victims of grooming tend to experience psychological effects, such as low self-esteem, emotional and cognitive disturbances, and decreased motivation. In addition, grooming carries the risk of causing deep trauma that can hinder a child's long-term mental and emotional development (Ratnasari & Solehuddin, 2022).

The psychological impact on victims of sexual violence includes both physical and psychological disturbances. Although physical injuries may occur, the main focus is on psychological disturbances, which may not be visible but have a serious impact on the victims' emotional and social well-being, both in the short and long term (Hasibuan, 2022).

Victims of sexual violence, especially children, often experience psychological disturbances such as social withdrawal, fear, anxiety, despair, and loss of hope for the future. These conditions arise from traumatic experiences and affect both psychological and social aspects.

Child victims of sexual violence experience long-term disturbances if not treated immediately. Support, especially from parents, is very important, even more crucial than a counselor, who acts as a companion in the child's psychological recovery.

A previous study titled "Socialization of Child Grooming: Cyber Crime Lurking Children in the Digital Era" revealed that child grooming is a form of online sexual violence involving efforts by perpetrators to persuade children to engage in sexual activities. In Indonesia, this issue began to attract attention in 2019, with a common modus operandi involving seduction via social media to make children perform sexual acts via video calls or recordings. (Hardianti et al., 2023).

This study uses Fisher's Communication Psychology theory, which studies interactions between individuals by considering psychological aspects. Its goal is to understand the dynamics of communication from a psychological perspective to achieve effective communication.

1. Sensory Reception of Stimuli. Sensory reception of stimuli begins when the senses perceive stimuli from the environment, such as individuals, messages, sounds or colors. The main sensory organs involved are the eyes, nose, ears, skin and mouth.

2. Internal Mediation of Stimuli In this context, the stimuli received by the senses are processed by the brain and produce conclusions, which are reflected in physical responses such as a smile, applause, or jumping as an expression of happiness.

3. Prediction of Response At this stage, individuals have the ability to predict or anticipate other people's responses, whether these responses have occurred in the past or may occur in the future. The key to this process is understanding a person's past response patterns, which become the basis for anticipating subsequent reactions.

4. Reinforcement of Response. This stage refers to the role of memory in storing experiences, which functions as a bridge between an individual's past and present. Reinforcement of response reflects how other people's responses to an individual in the past become part of their personal history, influencing the individual's responses and behavior in the present (Putriana et al., 2021).

In communication psychology, inner communication includes information processing, such as sensing, perception, memory, and thinking. According to Ruesch and Bateson, inner communication is a special form of interpersonal communication centered on dialogue. This activity includes self-talk, silent reading, and repetition of information, all of which serve to improve concentration and focus during the thinking process (Kustiawan et al., 2022).

This study examines the influence of the perpetrator's psychological communication on the victim, particularly in the case of Laura Meizami. The focus is on the perpetrator's use of communication and the importance of education and prevention for children and parents. Through this understanding, it is hoped that society can create a safer environment for children and adolescents to thrive.

Through this analysis, readers are expected to gain a deeper understanding of the context of the Laura Meizami case and consider possible steps to prevent similar situations from recurring in the future. This is not only about the events that occurred but also about what we can learn for a better social and legal life.

Psychologists play a crucial role in assisting victims of sexual abuse through psychological analysis tailored to the victims' needs. In addition, psychologists serve as expert witnesses in court, supporting the jury with the application of relevant psychological theories to strengthen or refute the theories in the case.

2. METHODS

This study used a qualitative approach to analyze the role of psychological communication in the sex case involving Laura Meizani. The qualitative approach was chosen because cyber phenomena are highly subjective and involve many psychological factors that are difficult to measure quantitatively.

This study focuses on understanding how perpetrators use communication techniques to build relationships that ultimately manipulate the victim. The main data were collected through semi-structured interviews with people who followed the case and psychologists.

These interviews aimed to gather information about the news from the perspectives of those who have followed it and psychological experts. Researchers have also analyzed online conversations (chats, messages, or social media) between the perpetrator and the victim to understand the communication patterns used by the perpetrator to persuade and manipulate the victim. To ensure more valid results, the researchers also used source triangulation by comparing data from interviews, online conversations, and relevant literature.

Data analysis was conducted using two main techniques: thematic analysis, also known as interpretative thematic analysis, which is carried out through a series of stages to identify, analyze, and present emerging themes or patterns from the data (Sitasari, 2022).

Thematic analysis was used to identify the main themes in communication that indicate psychological manipulation, such as the use of persuasive techniques or reinforcement of emotional dependence. In contrast, narrative analysis helps researchers understand how the stories or narratives constructed by the perpetrator influence the victim's perceptions and actions.

To ensure the validity of the findings, the researchers conducted member checking by asking the informants to verify the results of the data interpretation. Although the research focused on the Laura Meizani case, the findings are expected to provide broader insights into the dynamics of psychological communication in cybercrime and serve as a reference for the prevention and handling of similar cases. The study involved two participants.

Informants were chosen based on certain criteria related to their understanding, experience, and involvement in digital communication issues, media coverage, and children's psychology. These criteria included the informant's relevant knowledge regarding news coverage of child grooming on social media, particularly in the context of Nikita Mirzani's account or posts on Instagram, as well as the informant's ability to provide a critical perspective on the impact of media communication on public perception and children's psychology.

No	Name	Occupation
1	Puji Dwi Damayanti	Student
2	Muhammad Rizki Hidayatuloh	Content Creator

Table 1. Informant Determination

In addition, this study involved sources with relevant knowledge and experience in the field of psychology, particularly child psychology. Sources were chosen based on their expertise as psychologists who understand the impact of media communication on children's psychological development, as well as their ability to provide an objective and accurate perspective on the research topic (Sariani Sinaga et al., 2023).

No	Name	Occupation
1	Nedia Felicia Damayanti	Psychologist at Garut Social Services Office
2	Nadzar Sigit	Psychologist at the Office Badan Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Keluarga Berencana (BPPKB) Garut

Table 2. Source Determination

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Sensory Reception of Stimuli

Based on field findings, informants first learned about this case from social media reports about Laura Meizani, who allegedly provoked her biological mother using language considered inappropriate. This initial information prompted informants to investigate further to gain a deeper understanding of the incident.

> *"Initial knowledge about this case was obtained through social media, which featured Laura allegedly provoking her mother with harsh words. The curiosity that arose drove the author to seek further information through online news and netizens' comments." (Puji, Student, Interview, 2025)*

This case highlights concerns about the behaviour of minors who, despite receiving good education, engage in inappropriate actions toward their parents and make them public on social media. This situation raises questions related to moral values, family supervision, and the role of the media in shaping adolescent behaviour.

This news encourages an understanding of the factors influencing a child's behaviour toward their biological mother, especially when it exceeds social norms. Such behaviour is influenced by the presence of a male figure in the child's life, raising questions about the impact of personal relationships, emotional conditions, parenting styles, and family values in shaping the child's attitudes and decisions.

"People have begun to question the factors that drive a child to be disrespectful toward their parents, allegedly influenced by a close male figure in the child's life. This leads to further questions regarding emotional conditions, family upbringing, and the development of values since childhood." (Rizki, Content Creator, Interview, 2025)

Internal Mediation of Stimuli

The informants were interested in delving into this case because the issue has attracted widespread attention in Indonesian society. The controversy surrounding Laura Meizani's mother has intensified the focus on the case, prompting deeper reflection on the root causes and dominant roles in the conflict between the mother as a parent and the child as an individual.

"This case has drawn public attention because it has become a widespread discussion on social media, influenced by the mother's controversial background. This has led people to consider whether the conflict is more influenced by the mother's negative role, or by the child, who is still in the process of identity formation and emotional stabilization." (Puji, Student, Interview, 2025)

The informant experienced a shift in perception after understanding the context of the problem, moving from a neutral attitude to feeling more disappointed towards the child and the man suspected of influencing the child's behaviour. The informant believes that the mother has tried to provide the best education and upbringing.

After the child pursued education far from the mother's supervision, there were significant changes in mindset, speech style, and character that no longer reflected previous values. These changes are regarded as the result of strong external influences, even being linked to a process of "brainwashing" by someone close to the child.

"Initially, the public took a neutral stance towards this case, considering each individual's background. However, after tracing the chronology, disappointment grew, especially towards the child and the man close to her. Her mother seemed to have tried to provide the best upbringing, but after her daughter went to school far away and without direct supervision, her behavior changed significantly in the way she spoke, thought, and interacted socially." (Rizki, Content Creator, Interview, 2025)

In the context of a case involving a perpetrator who acted in a highly detrimental manner, several aspects need careful consideration. First, the perpetrator's act of separating a daughter from her mother shows deep indifference and cruelty. This is exacerbated by reports of sexual violence experienced by Laura Meizani, which led to pregnancy.

Additionally, there are indications that the perpetrator financially benefited from the situation by taking possession of money earned by Laura. The involvement of the perpetrator's family in the

situation adds further complexity, as they tried to keep Laura under the perpetrator's supervision in the pretence of protecting her mother.

"A review of the chronology of the case shows the perpetrator's actions were highly detrimental and cruel, including separating the child from her mother, alleged sexual violence, and teenage pregnancy—a serious violation of children's rights. The perpetrator also took control of the victim's earnings, indicating hidden exploitation, while the support of the perpetrator's family, under the guise of protection, actually worsened the victim's physical and psychological state." (Puji, Student, Interview, 2025)

Furthermore, after this case gained public attention, the perpetrator's action of hiring a lawyer to defend himself demonstrated a lack of responsibility and empathy towards Laura's suffering. There is no sign that the perpetrator feels any remorse for his actions, which further reinforces negative perceptions.

In this regard, it is important to highlight the psychological and social impacts of the perpetrator's actions on the victim and how the legal system can provide protection for vulnerable individuals.

Media plays an important role in shaping individuals' emotional responses through information delivery, even though the accuracy of the data can sometimes be in doubt. The media's influence is affected by strong public figures, such as Laura Meizani's mother Nikita Mirzani.

If the media unethically presents information, Nikita Mirzani is believed to take action to protect her daughter. The author's experience shows a change in attitude from neutral to supporting Laura Meizani after being influenced by media narratives, illustrating the media's impact on individual perceptions and emotions regarding an issue.

"At first, the public remained neutral because of the conflicting media reports. However, with increasing coverage, public emotion and concern have escalated. Media plays a major role in shaping perceptions, even though information can be modified. The presence of public figures like Nikita Mirzani makes the media more cautious so that the resulting narrative generates sympathy toward Laura." (Rizki, Content Creator, Interview, 2025)

This case has had a significant impact, particularly because of frequent discussions and information exchanges regarding various perspectives among those closest to it. Various developing opinions reflect the intriguing yet highly sensitive nature of the case, resulting in a range of perspectives within society.

Prediction of Response

The informant's initial reaction upon hearing the perpetrator's statement was a feeling of empathy toward the perpetrator, which led the informant to believe the explanation, considering the convincing expression on the perpetrator's face.

This raises the question of whether that expression was the result of the perpetrator's ability to manipulate others' feelings or if the information conveyed actually contained truth. This case has significantly impacted the public's perception of the perpetrator, particularly as the actions taken are

seen as having crossed the line of propriety and portraying the victim as if she were at fault and powerless.

This has led to a decrease in sympathy toward the perpetrator among various groups, even though on the other hand, there is concern for the perpetrator's family. Moreover, this case also increased public awareness of similar issues, prompting greater caution and attention to cases of violence and exploitation. This statement was supported by the informants' remarks.

"The public's attitude toward the perpetrator has worsened because their actions are seen as excessive and harmful, making Laura seem powerless and to blame. People sympathise more with the victim and feel more concerned about the perpetrator's family. This case has also raised awareness of similar phenomena in society." (Rizki, Content Creator, Interview, 2025)

The perpetrators' efforts to influence public opinion appeared quite intensive, but their effectiveness was considered low. Most people tended not to be swayed, as they had sought out information more deeply and ultimately trusted the victim's side, namely Laura Meizani and her mother. This was supported by credible evidence and statements, further strengthening the belief that the perpetrator was involved in actions that harmed the victim.

The perpetrator attempted to build an innocent image and attract public sympathy by positioning the victim's supporters as unfair. They portrayed themselves as wronged, while support for the victim was considered excessive. This strategy is a form of self-defense aimed at diverting attention from the root of the issue.

Reinforcement of Response

The development of the case showed significant behavioural changes in the victim. Initially, the victim rejected her mother by limiting interactions, posting negative statements on social media, refusing to return home, and reacting emotionally when picked up, reflecting family tensions. However, after returning under her mother's care, the victim showed behavioural improvement, displaying more positive, calm, and friendly attitudes, reminiscent of her emotional state before the conflict. This change indicates the influence of the environment on the victim's emotional condition and behaviour.

"At the beginning of this case, Laura underwent significant behavioural changes, often posting criticisms of her mother and being reluctant to communicate. After returning home, Laura became calmer, warmer, and more open. This shows the major influence of social and family environment on mental condition and personal behavior." (Puji, University Student, Interview, 2025)

Significant behavioural changes were observed in the victim under the influence of the perpetrator, marked by increased aggression and temperamental attitude. This phenomenon suggests that victims may have experienced some form of psychological manipulation, either verbally or non-verbally, of a controlling nature.

After the victim was relocated to a safer environment, regained the care of her immediate family, and underwent rehabilitation, her behaviour showed clear improvement. She became calmer, more obedient, and displayed more positive and warmer emotional attitudes. This transformation highlights the crucial role of the environment in affecting an individual's psychological stability and behaviour, particularly in the context of violence and exploitation victims.

"While under the perpetrator's influence, Laura showed increased aggressiveness and irritability, suspected to be due to psychological manipulation. After moving to a safer environment and being cared for by her family, her behaviour improved, becoming calmer and emotionally positive. This emphasizes the importance of environment for mental and behavioral stability, especially for victims of violence and exploitation." (Puji, University Student, Interview, 2025)

Research indicates the existence of a strong but unhealthy emotional and psychological attachment between the perpetrator and victim, as shown by the victim's support of the perpetrator's statements, even when separated geographically. When the biological mother forcibly collected the victim, the perpetrator acted confrontationally and seemed protective of the victim despite direct biological involvement. The perpetrator's display of anger while the victim was emotional strengthens the impression of manipulative closeness.

On the other hand, when the victim's mother conveyed negative information about the perpetrator, the victim reacted defensively in an extreme fashion, using inappropriate language toward her own mother. This pattern of interaction suggests the possibility of relational dynamics influenced by psychological control, indicating that.

"When the victim's mother gives negative information about the perpetrator, the child actually defends the perpetrator using harsh language toward her mother. This reflects a complex relationship involving personal conflict and emotional manipulation, with interaction patterns controlled psychologically, resulting in extreme and contradictory responses." (Rizki, Content Creator, Interview, 2025)

Throughout the process suspected as a form of this, there are clear signs of strong dependency from the victim on the perpetrator, as reflected in various social media posts. The victim displays excessive obedience and intense emotional attachment, as if unable to live without the perpetrator's presence. This is further reinforced by symbolic statements, such as promises of lifelong togetherness, as well as the victim's income being entirely managed by the perpetrator.

Visual documentation in the form of photos and videos depicting closeness and intimate interactions further clarifies the dynamics of this relationship. During this period, the victim also appeared to have completely cut off access to her mother, both emotionally and through direct communication, which reinforces the suspicion that psychological manipulation had taken place systematically and deeply. This statement is corroborated by the informant's testimony.

"During that process, Laura appeared very submissive and significantly dependent on the perpetrator. This was reflected on her social media content, which showed emotional and financial dependence, including

promises of lifelong commitment, control of earnings by the perpetrator, and photos and videos that displayed intense closeness and intimacy between them." (Puji, Student, Interview, 2025)

The perpetrator's communication significantly affected the victim's psychological state, exhibiting signs of emotional dependency and fear of loss. The perpetrator's attitude toward the victim's mother also shaped the victim's perspective. After returning to Indonesia, their relationships became even closer and more exclusive, reflecting an unbalanced relational dynamic filled with psychological control

Discussion

Sensory Reception of Stimuli

In general, victims have no anticipation or suspicion of potential threats at the beginning of an interaction. This process tends to occur in individuals who are already in vulnerable situations, usually due to neglect, whether physical or emotional, from those closest to them, such as family. This state of vulnerability is often marked by feelings of loneliness and the need for affection.

Perpetrators typically initiate interactions with a gentle approach and intense attention (love bombing) to build the victim's trust. Owing to a lack of affection, the victim receives this attention as emotional warmth with no negative presumption. In this context, the victim's emotional needs outweigh their age, thus increasing their vulnerability to manipulation by those offering intensive affection.

The results of this research align with previous studies showing that grooming perpetrators start by building closeness through intense attention, excessive compliments, and persuasive communication, similar to love-bombing tactics. This method effectively penetrates the emotional defences of victims lacking affection, so victims perceive the perpetrator's approach as the fulfilment of their long-unmet emotional needs (Rohmah et al., 2024).

At the early stage of interaction, victims have difficulty recognising the perpetrator's true character, as they focus on gentle treatment and a non-aggressive attitude. According to sources, the perpetrator's true character with malicious intent begins to emerge after one to six months, differing from well-intentioned individuals who consistently demonstrate positive behaviour throughout the relationship.

"At the start of a relationship, victims generally are unable to identify the perpetrator's true character because they focus more on positive treatment displayed, such as gentle behaviour, attentiveness, and polite speech. However, if there are ulterior motives, the perpetrator's authentic nature usually emerges within one to six months. This differs from individuals who are sincere, who tend to consistently show positive behavior from the beginning to the end of the relationship." (Nadia, Psychologist, Interview, 2025)

Perpetrators generally possess the ability to observe and identify the types of behaviour that the victim desires, such as attention never previously received, a gentle manner, giving gifts, and the habit

of spending significant time with the victim. Additionally, perpetrators are often able to imitate these behaviours to build emotional closeness and gain the victim's trust.

However, if the perpetrator's intentions are not good, this manipulative behavioural pattern is usually unsustainable in the long run, and over time, the perpetrator's inherent tendencies or true intentions begin to show. Each individual faces different challenges; however, the main concern is the extent to which the individual is in a risky situation.

Individuals in risk groups tend to exhibit emotional dependence on the perpetrator, often reasoning that only the perpetrator truly understands them. Within this dynamic, perpetrators usually commit acts of violence which are followed by an apology.

This pattern repeats itself, forming a cycle of violence that resembles a vicious circle. On the other hand, individuals with healthy interpersonal relationships, such as strong bonds with parents, support from peers, and the ability to voice problems to trusted parties, have greater resilience to manipulation. In such cases, individuals who are not in vulnerable situations generally become aware of violence more quickly and tend to exit within a relatively short amount of time.

> *"Every individual faces different life challenges, but it is important to recognise those who are considered at risk. This group generally shows a high degree of emotional dependence on the perpetrator and believes that only the perpetrator understands them, thus becoming trapped in a cycle of violence and repeated apologies. On the other hand, individuals with healthy relationships, social support, and emotional openness tend to have stronger psychological resilience and are able to break free from harmful relationships." (Nadzar, Psychologist, Interview, 2025)*

In Laura Meizani's case, one important indicator of communication that should be recognised early from a psychological perspective is the ability to identify the intentions of individuals trying to get close. In conventional sexual violence cases, perpetrators generally show signs of aggressive or violent behaviour from the beginning, which can be recognised as a typical trait of sexual predators with a high level of danger. However, it is often more dangerous because it involves a manipulative process that makes the victim feel comfortable with the perpetrator.

This sense of safety and emotional closeness creates a high level of vulnerability, increasing the risk of future sexual violence. Moreover, this kind of relationship pattern can be repeated and form a cycle, where the victim not only experiences abuse, but in some cases may also become a perpetrator due to the internalisation of a deviant relational dynamic.

Internal Mediation of Stimuli

The perpetrator exploits this vulnerability by providing false attention so that the victim becomes emotionally attached. Once this bond is formed, the perpetrator commits acts of violence that trigger emotional reactions from the victim. This pattern is repeated, forming an ongoing cycle of emotional

and psychological abuse that is difficult to break.

> *"Perpetrators often exploit the victim's basic need for love and attention by offering false affection to establish an emotional bond. Afterwards, the perpetrator engages in violent acts that trigger emotional responses, such as crying, anger, or psychological distress. This pattern creates a cycle of repeated violence and manipulation that is hard to stop." (Nadia, Psychologist, Interview, 2025)*

In interpersonal communication, the conflict between comfort and suspicion influences how a victim interprets a perpetrator's intentions. Victims do not always realise the perpetrator's intentions, even though losses occur repeatedly. Some victims may be aware of the perpetrator's bad intentions, but their limited psychological and social capacity makes it difficult for them to break free, since they believe that emotional comfort can only be found with the perpetrator.

Victims with high levels of vulnerability tend to find it difficult to recognise harmful relationship patterns, in contrast to those who have healthy emotional support from parents or their social environment, and who are quicker to realise and distance themselves from perpetrators.

Emotions play an important role in strengthening the victim's attachment, beginning with trust, which is manipulated by the perpetrator through false affection. The perpetrator exploits the victim's lack of affection to create emotional dependence, which is reinforced by the narrative that the victim cannot leave a relationship.

Within these dynamics, there is an unequal power relationship that enables the perpetrator to manipulate, including providing financial assistance and other forms of attention. The perpetrator also consistently carries out emotional manipulation that creates feelings of loneliness in the victim, deepening their dependence and strengthening their control over them.

> *"Emotions are used as a primary tool in manipulative relationships, where the perpetrator shows affection to victims lacking emotional support, fostering attachment and dependence. Despite warning signs, victims persist because of established trust. The perpetrator reinforces control through financial help and manipulation, creating an unequal power relationship and psychological control that often goes unnoticed by the victim." (Nadzar, Interview, 2025)*

This statement is supported by previous research, namely, Child Grooming on Social Media as a New Mode of Child Sexual Abuse in Kedungpeluk Village, which revealed that victims of grooming on social media interact with perpetrators because they desperately need attention and affection not met within the family environment. Perpetrators exploit this emotional need to build trust and initial emotional bonds (Sintah Nuryah & Warsono, 2023)

In Laura Meizani's case, the dominant emotions that emerge are feelings of safety and intense affection towards the perpetrator, who is considered to provide a more comfortable emotional experience compared to her family environment. Laura interprets the perpetrator's attention as greater love than that of her family, thus fostering the belief that the perpetrator truly cares for her. The

relationship formed involves not only sexual aspects but also overall economic, physical, and emotional dependence.

> *"In Laura Meizani's case, the perpetrator created a sense of safety and affection that felt more comfortable than her family, causing Laura to feel the perpetrator cared for her even if it was sometimes negative. Their bond involved affection, sexuality, and strong economic, physical, and emotional dependence." (Nadia, Psychologist, Interview, 2025)*

The perpetrator's approach to communicating with the victim takes place gradually, starting from light attention that escalates into intensive manipulation. This process creates emotional attachment in the victim, making it difficult to distinguish genuine affection from inappropriate behaviour. The perpetrator systematically manipulates the victim's perception, causing confusion in interpreting the perpetrator's intentions, strengthening emotional dependence, and reducing the victim's capacity to leave the harmful relationship.

Individuals raised in supportive environments with adequate affection tend to make decisions about ending harmful relationships with perpetrators quicker. This is because they have a cognitive understanding that good behaviour must be consistent and not accompanied by harmful actions. Additionally, strong social support allows them to share their experiences and receive emotional support, making it easier to take steps to protect themselves.

> *"Individuals from healthy environments realise irregularities in relationships more quickly because they understand that affection must be consistent. Strong social support makes them more open to sharing and getting emotional support, making them braver in protecting themselves." (Nadzar, Psychologist, Interview, 2025)*

Prediction of Respons

According to the informant's experience, victims initially feel happy and confused by the perpetrator's attention, making it difficult to recognise their true intentions. Negative intent only becomes apparent over time through inconsistent behaviour from the perpetrators. However, victims are often vulnerable and have difficulty building awareness of this manipulation.

> *"Victims initially feel happy and confused because they see the perpetrator as a caring figure, making it difficult to recognise bad intentions. The difference between sincerity and manipulation only becomes clear over time, but victims are at risk of often having trouble realizing it because of emotional factors and a lack of support." (Nadia, Psychologist, Interview, 2025)*

In the early stages, the perpetrator used love bombing in the form of intense attention and gifts that mimicked genuine affection, making it easy for the victim to be deceived. The perpetrator then takes advantage of the victim's responses to craft further manipulations, eventually leading to sexual, economic, psychological, and physical exploitation.

This process forms a repeated cycle between love bombing and minding. The perpetrator intentionally confuses the victims to make them doubt their intentions. When victims lack a healthy

understanding of their relationships, these manipulative patterns are often considered normal.

Reinforcment of Response

Repeated communication from the perpetrator reinforces the victim's emotional response, which gradually influences changes in the victim's behaviour. This process begins with the perpetrator's gentle and attentive approach to build the victim's trust while hiding their true intentions so as not to arouse suspicion. Common behavioural changes in the victim include increased trust in the perpetrator, as well as curiosity and uncertainty about the perpetrator's motives in the sexual process experienced.

> *"In sex grooming cases, repeated communication by the perpetrator that begins with a gentle approach builds the victim's trust. The perpetrator hides their true intentions, causing behavioral changes and confusion in the victim over the perpetrator's motives." (Nadzar, Psychologist, Interview, 2025)*

The long-term risks experienced by victims of sexual violence due to the perpetrator's communication include difficulty building healthy interpersonal relationships, often rooted in previous relationship trauma. Victims with poor family ties try to learn to form positive relationships. However, interactions with individuals with harmful intentions can exacerbate trauma and lead to complex psychological problems. A lack of healthy experiences in managing interpersonal relationships leads to emotional and cognitive barriers in forming new relationships, resulting in negative perspectives and distrust of others.

The findings of this study align with those of previous research, which show that most victims experience a lack of attention and affection. This causes them to feel bored, weary, and emotionally neglected. Victims have no place to express their feelings or share stories, as family members are preoccupied with their own affairs. This situation drives victims to seek a substitute figure who can fulfil their emotional needs outside the family environment (Nuryah & Warsono, 2023).

4. CONCLUSION

Laura Meizani highlighted that adolescents' vulnerability to psychological manipulation in grooming is heavily influenced by unmet emotional needs, parenting patterns, and exposure to social media. Grooming victims are often individuals who feel lonely and in need of affection, which makes them more susceptible to receiving attention from the perpetrator. The perpetrator starts with a love-bombing approach, providing excessive attention, praise, and gifts to build strong trust and emotional bonds. This creates emotional dependency in victims, making it difficult for them to distinguish between genuine affection and manipulation. Once an emotional bond is formed, the perpetrator exploits the victim in various aspects (sexual, economic, psychological, and physical). This pattern often repeats in a cycle of love bombing and minding, where the perpetrator intentionally confuses the victim with their true intentions.

Under the perpetrator's influence, victims show significant behavioural changes, such as rejecting their parents, acting aggressively, and being temperamental. This indicates the presence of deep psychological manipulation, both verbal and nonverbal. Victims display excessive obedience and intense emotional attachment to the perpetrator, feeling that they cannot live without them. The perpetrator's management of the victim's income and promises of a lifelong relationship further reinforce suspicions of systematic manipulation. Victims recover after returning to a stable and safe environment, such as being cared for by their mother. The victim's behaviour improved, becoming calmer, more obedient, and showing positive emotional expressions. This underlines the importance of emotional support and healthy relationships in building adolescents' psychological resilience and breaking the cycle of manipulation.

Grooming victims are at risk of experiencing long-term psychological effects, such as low self-esteem, disrupted thought patterns and emotions, decreased motivation, deep psychological trauma, sleep disorders, anxiety, and depression. They also found it difficult to build healthy relationships in the future. The psychologist's role is crucial in assisting victims through psychological analysis and providing support during court proceedings.

Support from parents and the closest environment is also needed to overcome the prolonged psychological barriers faced by victims. Understanding communication techniques used by perpetrators is essential for the education and prevention of children and parents. Individuals with strong social support and a healthy cognitive understanding of relationships tend to recognise and exit harmful relationships more quickly.

Further research could focus on comparing news coverage of child grooming cases involving children of celebrities with those from non-celebrity backgrounds. This would provide deeper insight into how differences in social status, popularity, and media exposure influence public perception, as well as the psychological impact on children.

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