

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Although it had been a great leap for the humanity in the last few decades, the exposure of sexual assault awareness and support for the victims had blocked out the opposite spectrum of female sexual assault and rape victims, which are the spectrum of male victims (Davies, 2000). Indeed, it cannot be entirely denied that majority of sexual assault and rape cases are being committed towards women as the common knowledge among the society that women are weaker and more exposed towards sexual crimes being committed to them, however there have been several cases where men became the victim of sexual assault and rape as well, regrettably those cases were inclined to be less exposed in the eye of news and society (Davies, 2000).

The recognition on why male sexual assault and rape victims being way less exposed or not being given a platform to express about what had happened to them were excused by two misconceptions according to Ellis (2002). The first misconception was that the act of sexual assault and rape in itself recognized as an act that attack his identity as a male and masculine entity, that stemmed from male rape myth where "*men cannot be raped,*" that had caused further fear and reluctancy instilled upon male victims in reporting the case. This peculiar mindset had watered down the subsequent impact and tangible harm male victims supposed to face in similar towards women victims, which

can be identified as physical and mental injuries (Groth & Burgess, 1980 as cited in Davies, 2000). Sexual assault and rape victimization also played a role, for even though the notion of victim blaming had been decreased due to awareness to women sexual assault and rape victims, regrettably it cannot be said towards men as victimization of male sexual assault and rape victims has also been reinforced with binary opposition, and thus the male victims tend to blame themselves for their assault as they may feel that they can prevent the act of sexual crimes from happening at the very first place (Davies, 2000). The second misconception was the lack of empathy and support from the supposed support systems such as medical and family support, where it also stemmed from the same male rape myth that had caused further harm towards male sexual assault and rape victims (Davies, 2000), since victimization and blaming also comes from the male victims' own family, friends, and society that supposed to act as a support system, which in the end resulting the development of secondary victimisation or sanctuary trauma (Ellis, 2002). The misconceptions also further strengthened by the evidence of male sexual assault and rape victims' reports tend to not being investigated seriously by the law enforcement (Mezey & King, 1989, as cited in Davies, 2000). As stated by Rogers (1998), the establishment of support services and systems for male sexual assault and rape victims was estimated to be more than 20 years behind female victims (Davies, 2000).

One of the most exposed and notorious case of male sexual assault and rape had happened and finally being reported towards the public by the beginning of 2020. As reported by *BBC News* (6 January 2020), The Crown Prosecution

Service (CPS) described the case as “*the most prolific rapist in British legal history.*” Reynhard Sinaga, the Indonesian-nationality foreign student was found guilty for 159 sex offences, including 136 rapes and was sentenced to a life in prison and must serve a minimum of 30 years in jail (*BBC*, 6 January 2020). Detectives who were in charge of the case had been unable to identify 70 more victims and ever since had been encouraging any men who believed they had been assaulted or raped to come forward and give their report regarding the case (*BBC*, 6 January 2020). To fulfil his deviant act, Sinaga would wait out for drunk men at the nightclubs and bars around Manchester, which also the area where he lived and offered them his place to drink together. Upon coming to his apartment, he would mix the drink with allegedly GHD, commonly known as drug rape to get his victims towards an out-of-conscious state before he proceeded to assault them (*BBC*, 6 January 2020).

Sinaga was caught in June 2017 after his last victim regained his consciousness and fought him back before calling for the police. By the time the investigators searched his home, they are able to obtain evidence of hundreds of hours worth footage of 800 videos as he recorded himself during the act of sexual aggression; leading to the investigation of the largest serial sexual assault case in British, or perhaps the world (*BBC*, 6 January 2020). During the trial, a few of his victims who stand against him in court stated that Sinaga had destroyed his life and expressing their desire for him to stay in the prison for the rest of his life (*BBC*, 6 January 2020). A large amount of his victims did not even unaware of being a sexual assault victim until the police

contacted and revealed the news to them. Because of his action, a lot of his victims had been in a denial stage, and some of them developing mental health issue and suicidal thoughts due to the hideous act that had been done towards them (*BBC*, 6 January 2020).

For he was an Indonesian student and citizen, the news gained massive attention and exposure in his home country, in which according to *The Jakarta Post*, had resulted in collective feelings of shame and indignity towards their fellow Indonesian citizen for committing such hideous crime in a foreign country (*The Jakarta Post*, 8 January 2020). Several Indonesian students expressed their distress concern towards the case and repercussion they feel they had to face as it inevitably creates a stigma and stereotype towards them as Indonesian students who took their education to Britain, and they expressed a self-obligatory sense to prove their colleagues and acquaintances there that they are not behaving alike Sinaga (*The Jakarta Post*, 8 January 2020). One of the Indonesian students in Britain also expressed their embarrassment as Sinaga was revealed to be a PhD student in Britain, that had been widely known took a lot of effort and work in order to achieve the degree. They commented in regard of the crime that Sinaga had committed; his degree that was supposed to make his country proud, instead he was discredited due to the crime he had committed (*The Jakarta Post*, 8 January 2020). Indonesian embassy as well had given out an announcement of assistance and law support for him as part of Indonesia citizen, and would fully coordinating with British's court in dealing with Sinaga's case (*The Jakarta Post*, 8 January 2020).

The other news article from *The Jakarta Post* expressed their admiration towards British media news and their law enforcement. The Manchester Police force and prosecutors who are in charge for Reynhard Sinaga's investigation were able to work in silence as well as the media news who obeyed the police's restriction and kept the news out from the public's sight and ears until the court trials were done and Sinaga was found guilty, since they commented that the same thing would not be able to be done in Indonesia (*The Jakarta Post*, 10 January 2020).

The voice of reason behind the massive exposure of Reynhard Sinaga's case came from both British and Indonesian news media as they are both heavily linked towards the serial sexual predator and his victims. As stated by Fairclough (1995), mass media possess the power "*to influence knowledge, beliefs, values, social relations, and social identities.*" Media had the power to direct societies' attention, opinion, and perspective from the manner of representation in connection with the news. Media is capable of massively exposing a situation or an event, alongside giving their own differences of interest and main point of the news, similar to the distinctive representations between *BBC* and *The Jakarta Post* in representing Sinaga's case.

*BBC* news articles (*BBC*, 6 January 2020) had voiced Reynhard Sinaga's news from the hideous nature of the crime as he assaulted and raped victims, the accentuated numbers of victims he had and the audacity to record every single unconsented sexual intercourse between him and his victims, reemphasizing his nickname as "*evil serial rapist*" to show the tangible harm

he had created towards his victims and the society, and life in prison he had to bear for the rest of his life to show that justice has been served. The news article also stated the experiences that the victims had gone through to eliminate the possibility of victim-blaming surrounding the nature of crime.

On the contrary, *The Jakarta Post* news begin their voice of Reynhard Sinaga's news by expressing the shame and humiliation that Indonesian citizens had to face as the result of Sinaga's act of crime in foreign country (*The Jakarta Post*, 8 January 2020). The news then continued on towards the opinion of several Indonesia students who took their education in Britain, who expressed self-obligatory feeling to prove themselves that they are not like Sinaga, and what Sinaga had done towards their victims had discredited himself as a PhD student who was supposed to make his country proud. Another news in *The Jakarta Post* showed their admiration towards British law enforcement who were able to make sure the public had not known the news and publicize them only after Sinaga's had been found guilty, all to make sure the victims' identities would not be exposed and to give them full confidence to show themselves in the court (*The Jakarta Post*, 10 January 2020). But throughout the news articles, the focus of the news can be seen shifted from the view of sexual crimes and the spectrum of victims, into the view of public's reaction and admiration to British media news and law enforcement for keeping the case away from the public until the case was finally closed and Sinaga being sentenced to a lifetime prison (*BBC*, 6 January 2020).

These news descriptions showed the main concern and their political disposition of each respective countries of Britain and Indonesia lies. *BBC* news from Britain articulated the severity of Sinaga's act of crime towards series of his victims to give the readers an insider perspective and show them the tangible harms that Sinaga had done towards those victims. Concerns and support towards the victims are visible, as instead of directing the attention towards the victims' profiles, their experiences upon meeting Sinaga were pushed forward to provide further evidence onto why they deserved the justice (*BBC*, 6 January 2020). *The Jakarta Post's* news articles focused on the wider perspective at the range of Sinaga's nationality, which is Indonesia. The main concern within the news that had been expressed by the journalists was the negative stereotype and shame that Reynhard Sinaga had brought to Indonesia, entailing general narrative on Sinaga's crime (*The Jakarta Post*, 8 January 2020). The other news article also directing their attention, and subconsciously the public's sight as well onto the maximum effort and secrecy that British police force had done for Sinaga's victims by not publicized the case until the court trials were done and their identities remained unnamed (*The Jakarta Post*, 10 January 2020).

There have been several previous studies done in correlation with the topic of sexual predators and their victims, alongside the source of data that comes from media news outlet. The first study is done by Renee M. Shelby (2013), where she discussed the media effect upon passing the act of Megan's Law, where media directed the moral panic around the society as an invisible hand to ensure the act would be passed. The researcher tried to show the context on

sexual predators being stereotyped through gender structure and the impact these convicted sexual assaulter would have to face, in the scenario of the act being passed by the legislation who are having a polarized stance upon the act. The research aligned with mine from the perspective on how an article news and media had the power to create portrayal of crime and the criminal for the readers to be able to comprehend the severity of the crime by positioning themselves within the news, and simultaneously directing public's attention by centring their report news towards specific subject they intend spread among the public, with dissimilarity that is going to separate our researches by our source of data.

The last previous studies that have been done and aligned with the researcher's source of data was done by Ahmad Ramdhani (2020), where he discussed the representation of Reynhard Sinaga as in *The Guardian* news outlet. In his research, he shown the actors within the news, began with Reynhard Sinaga who is a convicted serial rapist, his victims that he had wronged and demanded for justice through the court, and the law enforcement as the main actors of the news, since they are the crucial part that had made the case come to light. The researcher used exclusion and inclusion theory to extract the discourse within the news, regarding the representation of Reynhard Sinaga by the British online news, *The Guardian*. Despite the similar issue that had been brought up, which is the sexual assault and rape case of Reynhard Sinaga, the news article used in my research were extracted from different news platform, *BBC News* and *Jakarta Post*. Distinction between our researches also



existed from the theory used to analyse the discourse within the news, which are textual-oriented discourse analysis and appraisal theory to analyse the political disposition of *BBC* and *The Jakarta Post* news pertaining to Sinaga's case that had not existed in Ramdhani's research.

Therefore, this research will analyse the political disposition of Reynhard Sinaga's case and his victims voiced by *BBC* and *The Jakarta Post* news. Textual oriented discourse analysis by Norman Fairclough will be used alongside appraisal theory developed by J.R. Martin and P.R.R. White to analyse the journalists' intention and media's objective in directing and reflecting public's opinion regarding the case of Reynhard Sinaga's sexual assault and rape case.

## 1.2 Research Questions

Derived from the background of study presented above, research questions that are going to be answered are:

- (1) How is *BBC* news voicing the political disposition in the news of Reynhard Sinaga in *Reynhard Sinaga: 'Evil sexual predator' jailed for life for 136 rapes* and *Reynhard Sinaga: How the Manchester rapist found his victims?*
- (2) How is *The Jakarta Post* news voicing the political disposition in the news of Reynhard Sinaga in *UK's 'most prolific rapist' Reynhard Sinaga shocks, shames Indonesians at home and abroad* and *Sinaga case: What Indonesia can learn from the UK in handling sexual violence?*

- (3) How is the comparison of political disposition of Reynhard Sinaga's case in *BBC* news with *The Jakarta Post* news online represented?

### 1.3 Purpose/Aim of the Study

The objectives of study are to:

- (1) To analyse the political disposition of Reynhard Sinaga's case voiced by *BBC* news
- (2) To analyse the political disposition of Reynhard Sinaga's case voiced by *The Jakarta Post* news
- (3) To compare the differences and similarities between *BBC* news editorial and *The Jakarta Post* news editorial in showing political disposition of Reynhard Sinaga's case

### 1.4 Scope of the Study

The researcher will analyses the political disposition of Reynhard Sinaga's sexual assault case in article news titled *Reynhard Sinaga: 'Evil sexual predator' jailed for life for 136 rapes* and *Reynhard Sinaga: How the Manchester rapist found his victims from BBC News* and news articles titled *UK's 'most prolific rapist' Reynhard Sinaga shocks, shames Indonesians at home and abroad* and *Sinaga case: What Indonesia can learn from the UK in handling sexual violence from Jakarta Post News* by utilizing text-oriented discourse analysis theory by Norman Fairclough and appraisal theory by J.R. Martin and P.R.R. White.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The significance of the research aimed by the researcher is to give a thorough apprehension regarding the clear distinction and similarity from two news editorials from different countries in representing a news of serial sexual predator with male victims, and to gain a perspective on how the same crime news might bring out different interpretations and interpersonal purpose made by the journalists in order to reach the objective to dominate people's opinion regarding Reynhard Sinaga's sexual assault and rape case.

