

Pageu Gampong: Risk Mitigation in Preventing Children Violence in North Aceh Regency

Iromi Ilham^{1,*}, Abdullah Akhyar Nasution², Richa Meliza³, Dinda Rosaleha⁴, Ragil Nur Rahmalia⁵

^{1,2,3.} Lecturer of Anthropology Department, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Malikussaleh University, Aceh, Indonesia

^{4,5.} Student of Anthropology Department, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Malikussaleh University, Aceh, Indonesia

*Corresponding author. Email: iromi.ilham@unimal.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The series of incidents of violence against children become a social fact that surrounds our lives. It appears in many forms, namely: physical violence, sexual violence, psychic violence, and social violence. The government has made various efforts to minimize cases of violence against children. However, a structural approach is not enough, it must be accompanied by a cultural approach. This article discusses how the cultural approach, in this case strengthening the pageu gampong system, can be used as a mitigation of the risk of violence against children. This study was conducted in North Aceh Regency using a qualitative approach. Data were collected using observation techniques, interviews, and literature studies. Socialization of the importance of the existence of the pageu gampong system must be carried out to all elements of society to raise collective consciousness in protecting the village from the influence of negative things. Efforts to reactivate the pageu gampong system encourage the formation of a community order that advises each other in kindness, takes care of each other community members, helps each other in terms of kindness, supervises each other suspicious things in the village environment, and can resolve disputes in the community indigenously.

Keywords: *Pageu Gampong, Local Wisdom, Violence against Children, North Aceh*

1. THE PHENOMENON OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN; AN INTRODUCTION

An online newspapers in Aceh published heart-wrenching news at the end of 2021. A 16-year-old girl in North Aceh Regency became a victim of human trafficking by forcing her to become a lustful woman to a jerk. There were nine perpetrators arrested in connection with the case. One of the perpetrators is suspected to be a pimp, who is known to be a housewife by profession. The case began with the victim's father getting a call from a relative and informing him that the victim was pregnant. Without waiting for a long time, the victim's father, who had been working outside the area, immediately went home to see the victim until it was finally revealed that he had been raped and forced to serve other perpetrators by the pimp. Worse, this has been going on since June with a rate of Rp. 50,000 to Rp. 200,000 for one date[1].

The above phenomenon is only one of the many cases of violence against children that occur in North Aceh Regency. According to Harry, the Prosecutor who serves in the Lhoksukon District Court Office, there are many cases handled in the prosecutor's office for child abuse cases, including rape, sexual abuse, and domestic violence. Data from P2TP2A (Integrated Service Center for the Protection of Women and Children), North Aceh Regency Social Service, also states that there were as many as 150 cases related to violence against children in various forms that occurred from 2018 to February 2022. The types of cases of violence in the form of rape, sexual harassment, persecution, sodomy, and incest [2].

Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning child protection defines a "child" as someone who is not yet 18 (eighteen) years old and a child who is still in the womb. Meanwhile, violence against children is any behavior towards children that results in physical, psychic, sexual, and/or neglect or suffering, threats to commit acts,

coercion, or deprivation of liberty committed unlawfully [3]

Today, collective values are increasingly eroded in the social institutions of society. As a result, various kinds of social pathologies can grow more freely. The collective way of working together to protect the village from bad influences is increasingly difficult to find in every region, even in rural areas. On the other hand, the people of Aceh have a village guard system carried out by all their communities as a form of local wisdom known as the pageu gampong system. In Qanun North Aceh Regency Number 4 of 2009 concerning the Gampong Government, it is stated that pageu gampong is a youth group that maintains peace or security, including those who support all activities in gampong. It is part of the customary institutions formed at the village level. In article 88 in the same Qanun also explained some of the duties of the pageu gampong, namely: a) leading and regulating youth concerning the capacity building of youth; b) maintaining peace or security in the village; c) supporting the government in all activities in the village; d) enforcing the customary law of the village with imum meunasah (prayer place leader), and e) resolving disputes between youth in gampong in social life [4].

This paper discusses how the existence of pageu gampong is one of the legacies of local wisdom that can function as risk mitigation in preventing violence against children in North Aceh. This cultural approach is important considering that according to several studies, it is stated that reviving the values of local wisdom in the community can be a solution to problems [5]. Promoting a formal legal approach in handling cases of violence against children is just not one way to minimize the number of violence. A study conducted by Nathanael Sumampouw, et al related to the rule of law against 179 cases of violence in Jabodetabek showed that only 58 cases, or about 32% of cases were successfully tried. This reality confirms to us that legal efforts in solving cases of violence against children are not easy to do. Therefore, efforts to control society through preventive forms should be prioritized above all else [6].

On the other hand, a study conducted by Simbolon, et al with the theme of empowering local wisdom to prevent violence against children in the family in the Batak Toba Community shows that the concept of local wisdom pauli uhum (correcting mistakes) and manopoti sala (correcting violations) can be a solution in preventing violence against children in Toba society. That is, even if violence against children is triggered by violations and mistakes committed by the child himself, then the solution is not to apply penalties that give birth to new violations for parents. However, you must take a wise path in correcting children's mistakes [7]. Another study was conducted by Handayani, et al which also raised a similar theme. The results of his study showed that the Muna community is known for the Katoba ritual organized by parents when their child enters the age of 7-12 years. The ritual becomes the child's gate to enter the

early phase of adult life. In the ritual, the child's parents invite a priest (religious figure) to convey religious values, patriotic values, ethical values, and the value of affection so that one day the child can take care of himself in navigating life. The content of katoba values becomes the basis and guidance in life. Therefore, if a child in adulthood commits immoral acts, then the sentence that comes out of society is "mina namandehao ihino katoba, bea datumobae tora" (not knowing the essence of katoba, unless it has to be toba again). The remark shows how important the katoba tradition is to a child because it will be the basis of preparation to become an adult human being [8]. This shows that local wisdom is an effort to prepare and equip the child so that he has noble behavior in living so that he does not grow into a person who plays a role in giving birth to violence, both as a perpetrator, and a victim.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. The location of study was carried out in the North Aceh Regency area with the consideration that North Aceh Regency was identified as having the most cases of violence against children from January to March 2022, reaching 26 cases [9]. Data collection techniques are carried out through observation, interviews, and document studies as well as literature studies. Researchers made observations in the village that holds the status of a "child-friendly village", namely Gampong Blang Karieng which is located in Nisam District. Meanwhile, in-depth interviews were conducted to obtain information related to 1) forms of violence against children in North Aceh; and 2) the current work and sustainability system of the pageu gampong program in North Aceh. Informants consisted of Blang Karieng village devices, the North Aceh Customary Assembly, the North Aceh Social Service, prosecutors, community leaders, and other informants deemed relevant. To add to the wealth and richness of data, open interviews or unstructured interviews are also conducted by researchers, where this kind of interview activity is more incidental. In establishing informants, researchers used purposive sampling and snowball sampling techniques. Meanwhile, the study of documents and literature is carried out by utilizing documents and literature that are considered relevant to the research topic as a secondary source of data, be it documents issued by the government, such as North Aceh in Numbers, online newspapers, or other records relevant to the research theme [10].

After all the data were collected, the researchers carried out the data analysis process using an interactive model as described by Mill and Huberman, namely through three stages: 1) the stages of data reduction; 2) the Stages of data display, and 3) Stages of affirmation of conclusions [11]. To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, researchers use the data triangulation process by thoroughly combining all the data obtained.

3. CAUSES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

The results of field studies show that the types of violence against children that occur in North Aceh Regency can be categorized in the form of sexual violence, psychic violence, physical violence, and social violence. The occurrence of any form of violence against children can be caused by the following factors:

First, economic factors. Employing minors on economic grounds is a form of child exploitation. The economic limitations faced by a family trigger the birth of bullying in children. Second, the perpetrator and the victim are consensual. This condition usually begins with a courtship relationship or other illicit relationship established between the victim and the perpetrator. The closeness between the victim and the perpetrator psychologically creates a sense of comfort, so that the victim, who is usually a woman, is willing to obey what the perpetrator asks, including giving up his honor. Third, the presence of opportunity (the state of the house in an empty or deserted state). This condition usually also occurs in cases of courtship, rape, or forced relationship between the stepfather and the child. Fourth, the wrong paradigm in society when it feels taboo to talk about things that are considered sensitive to children is also the reason for the easy occurrence of sexual abuse. Children do not know which parts of the body should not touch by strangers. The lack of socialization and education because some people still think that the introduction of body organs and sexual functions is taboo.

Fifth, take advantage of the dominant power possessed. Examples of cases like this occur in people who use early childhood for their benefit, such as asking them to buy drugs, employing children to generate rupiah coffers, bullying practices, be it in the public arena, or school environments carried out by peers or friends who are older by age. All of the above examples of cases fall into the category of social violence.

Sixth, the divorce of parents. Some cases of parental divorce have an impact on child neglect. The child becomes a victim of disharmonious parental relationships. A father often commits violence against children as a form of venting his anger toward his wife [12]. Family integrity is needed in improving the welfare of children. An incomplete family has implications for the form of affection obtained by the child, especially for psychic and social needs [13].

Seventh is the lack of social control. Apathy and individualistic attitudes in the social environment have an impact on indifference between fellow members of society which in turn can allow the perpetrator to commit violence against children. Sympathy in society begins to fade so that in the event of a case of violence, people will prefer to avoid it rather than to directly help.

Eighth, parents' lack of understanding of parenting science. Differences in perspectives in interpreting "educating" among parents also affect increasing the number of cases of violence against children. For some parents, hitting a child is considered an educational process, even if it is done inappropriately. In this case, the level of education of parents greatly influences the presence of cases of violence against children. Older people protect children, not do the opposite. This is as stated by Margareta in her study in Kertapati which found that violence in children is caused by parental factors, the environment, and the child's factors. Parents punishing children physically by not being based on proper knowledge will have a devastating impact on the child [14]. This is also in line with the opinion of Agustin et al, who state that the circumstances that also influence the occurrence of violence are the background of the family education level and the parenting pattern [15]. And ninth, the cause of the violence that occurred in North Aceh can also come from historical conflicts, where at that time there was a lot of violence that caused people to think violence was a common thing until it was carried over to this day.

4. PAGEU GAMPONG AS A RISK MITIGATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

In terms of protecting children from violence, alternative measures are needed other than what has been regulated by the state. The alternative concept relies heavily on the collective value of the community in the form of local wisdom. Of course, it has a philosophical meaning that is manifested through symbols, be it in the form of words, deeds, or artifact matter.

Community development exists as a movement to improve unfavorable conditions, which is characterized by the ability to solve problems at the community and environmental levels. Religious values, culture, and local wisdom are important in terms of community development [16]. If it is at this stage, a society can be categorized as a civilized society. According to Cicero, the concept of civil society is a civilized community, in which certain values are the basis for survival. The concept of civil society is also characterized by the existence of social institutions or non-governmental organizations that have a function of control and responsibility for people's lives [17].

One of the customary systems that can be used as a strategy to prevent violence against children based on local wisdom is to reactivate the pageu gampong system in the community to strengthen social control. Pageu gampong is one of the local wisdom found in Acehnese society. *Pageu gampong* can be interpreted as a tradition that aims to protect the village from bad influences that occur, both internal, and external. According to Abdurrahman, *pageu gampong* is a collective and protective system of life management to anticipate and

provide solutions to social problems of society [18]. The *pageu gampong* system can work in two dimensions, namely as a preventive system, and as a system for solving living problems (repressive). The preventive system is implemented through building togetherness and creating a sense of mutual belonging between community members, while the repressive system is presented through restoring balance and harmony in society by creating a safe, comfortable and peaceful atmosphere. Its existence aims to maintain the customs prevailing within the territory of a village [19].

The results of a study conducted by Alamsyah, et al (2020) stated that the *pageu gampong* system can be one of the effective ways to protect a village from illicit drug trafficking. According to him, the community has tried various ways to overcome the drug problem, but the results have not been optimal because the activities carried out are individual [20]. Therefore, it needs a collective movement with an active role in all walks of life. The participation and collaboration of all elements of society can be realized through the *pageu gampong* system. In society, the *pageu gampong* system not only works in a cultural context but also functions in a socioeconomic dimension. Its implementation is presented through mutual assistance between fellow communities, be it through giving alms, or other social protection agendas, such as zakat, waqf, or land cultivation rights [19].

Today, individualistic attitudes thrive in society, not only in urban areas but also in rural communities. As a result, society has begun to be indifferent to each other, society only takes care of the core members of the family and ignores the members of society who are not core members of the family. Some people are already reluctant to reprimand when other members of society behave outside the prevailing traditions and customs. The spirit of collectiveness of the Acehnese people must be strengthened again. This spirit already exists, which can be seen from the expression *hadih maja* (local language of the Acehnese people) "*Tulong meunolong sabei keudroe droe, tapeukong nanggroe sabei syedara*" (fellow communities must help each other so that they can strengthen the country together).

Revitalizing the *pageu gampong* system in the community can be done through: a) presenting an authoritative and charismatic village leader; and b) socializing, educating, and internalizing the importance of the existence of the *pageu gampong* system to the community. Finally, a common hope can be realized, which is to create a commitment to both carry-out supervisions. The *pageu gampong* program will run if all elements in the community are willing to move and are committed to protecting the village from unwanted things. The trick is to strengthen human resources and involve all elements of society, ranging from community leaders, clerics, women, and young people.

5. CONCLUSION

Violence against children is not a matter that can be underestimated. The impact of violence is not only felt by individual victims but also has a broad impact socially. Violent treatment of children will affect the formation of the child's personality and future life. The experience of violence experienced by the child can give birth to traumatic feelings and lead him to become unstable person, and depressed [21] [22]. Socially, the level of violence experienced has an effect on the social well-being of victims [23] and psychosocial problems that give birth to other risky behaviors [24]. Therefore, given the magnitude of the impact, alternative prevention through a cultural approach must be encouraged, one of which is by activating the *pageu gampong* system.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Iromi Ilham conceived and designed the investigation, as well as analyzed and interpreted the data. Abdullah Akhyar wrote the original draft. Meanwhile, Richa Meliza conducted the literature review and developed the framework. Dinda Rosaleha and Ragil Nur Rahmalia contributed to the writing of the illustrative case study sections in particular and assisted with the overall writing process. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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