

Revitalizing Family Functions in Efforts to Prevent Children Violence in North Aceh

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ABSTRACT

North Aceh Regency is the region with the highest number of cases of child violence in Aceh Province. Of course, there are many factors behind it, one of which is the existence of a family that has not functioned optimally. This study examines how efforts to revitalize the functioning of family institutions to prevent violence against children. The research, which took place in North Aceh Regency, used a qualitative approach with observational data collection techniques, in-depth interviews, and document studies. Key informants in the study were stakeholders in the North Aceh Social Service, traditional leaders, religious leaders, and the general public. The data was analyzed using an interactive analysis model, namely: data reduction, data display, and conclusion affirmation. The results of the study found that the forms and types of violence against children that occurred in families in North Aceh were: a) physical violence; b) neglect; c) psychic violence; and 4) sexual violence. It's caused by factors of parental background and education level, family economic factors, and parental divorce. One form of social intervention that can be carried out to minimize cases of violence in the family is to restore the function of the family as the first madrasa and a shield of protection for the child. Therefore, the socialization of family functions should be improved with the main targets being families of young couples and families with a low level of education.

Keywords: Child Abuse, Family, Parenting, Local Wisdom, North Aceh.

1. INTRODUCTION: THE PHENOMENON OF CHILD VIOLENCE IN NORTH ACEH

This article discusses how the existence of the family should be a shield in minimizing violence against children. It is not a new phenomenon of social life, even in a society known to strongly uphold the values of spirituality and customs. North Aceh District is one of the areas with customs and strong of the value of spirituality, however, it does not guarantee a minimum number of cases of children violence. It is noted as one of the areas where cases of violence against children are fairly high. Based on data from P2TP2A (Pusat Pelayanan Terpadu Perlindungan Perempuan dan Anak [Integrated Service Center for the Protection of Women and Children]), Social Service of North Aceh Regency, there were as many as 150 cases related to violence against children in various forms from 2018 to February 2022, as shown in the following table: [1]

Table 1. Number and Types of Cases of Children Violence in Aceh Utara

No	Case	Year				
		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 / February
1	Child Rape	24	6	22	22	10
2	Child Sexual Abuse	11	9	18	5	2
3	Child Molestation	3	1	6	4	3
4	Sodomy	1	0	0	0	0
5	Incest	0	2	1	0	0
Number/Year		39	18	47	31	15

Source: P2TP2A North Aceh, 2022

The above reality confirms that the behaviours that lead to violence against children thrive and are so familiar in the life of our society. Not to mention a case that is not revealed to the public and is latent. It is like an iceberg phenomenon that is small on the surface, but large if explored deeper.

According to Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, violence against children is defined as "any action against a child that results in physical, psychological, sexual, and/or neglect or suffering, including threats to commit acts, coercion, or unlawful deprivation of independence". The regulation also states that what is meant by "child" is someone who is not yet 18 (eighteen) years old, including a child who is still in the womb. [2]

Violence against children is an urgent matter that must be addressed immediately. The reason is that the violence experienced by children will have a broad impact on mental health, trauma [3], [4], physical development, and social well-being of victims [5]. Furthermore, violence against children also has implications for psychosocial problems and gives birth to other risky behaviours [6]. Another implication is that the child's relationship with the family will also be tenuous, especially with the abuser himself which ultimately nourishes feelings of resentment. This will lead to new problems, for example, many parents are abandoned in old age. It is like a time bomb that will explode at any time.

Comprehensive solutions and interventions are needed in solving the problem of violence against children. One of them is to restore the family function to its supposed dimensions. The family is the smallest unit in a society whose existence aims to meet the needs of love, religiosity, protection, education, and various other positive things. According to Berns, there are five family functions, namely: 1) reproductive function; 2) socialization and education functions; 3) The function of assigning social roles; 4) Economic support function, and 5) Emotional support and maintenance functions. Given the importance of the existence of the family, every May 15, the world community commemorates family day since the establishment of the United Nations in 1993 with the main objective of maintaining the international community's relationship with its family [7].

Documentation and inventory of the handling of violence against children through strengthening family institutions is important to carry out and present in the academic literature. Re-functioning social institutions by reviving local wisdom values are considered to be a solution to community problems [8]. Every culture has noble values based on local wisdom as a result of the generic heritage of previous generations. These locality values become a buffer that can then act as a tool of social control that can eventually be promoted into a model and reference in living.

2. STUDY METHOD

2.1. Research Location

This research was conducted in North Aceh Regency. The location determination is carried out based on several considerations, namely: 1) North Aceh Regency is the area identified as having the most cases of violence against children from January to March 2022, reaching 26 cases [9]; and 2) Studies related to the revitalization of family function based on local wisdom values related to the prevention of violence against children are still very limited.

2.2. Data Collection and Analysis Techniques

The data in this study were collected through participatory observation techniques, in-depth interviews, and literature reviews. Participatory observation or direct observation is considered necessary to observe empirical phenomena that occur related to symbols of local wisdom of the community in parenting patterns. In this case, the researchers observed the patterns of childcare carried out by educational institutions and those in the culture of the people in the North Aceh region. While the interview aims to gather information, the views and stances of the informants are related to the research topic. Before conducting an interview, the study prepares for some key questions. In addition, an important aspect that needs to be considered is that researchers must be 'friends' to informants so that personal interactions are established between researchers and informants [10]. In the interview segment, the researcher uses a list of key questions, while the derived questions will be developed from the answers provided by the informant. To add to the wealth and richness of the data, open interviews or unstructured interviews are also conducted by researchers, where these kinds of interviews are more incidental when the researcher is in the field. The informants in this study were stakeholders under the auspices of the North Aceh Social Service, traditional and community leaders, the North Aceh Customary Council, and other informants who were considered relevant. In establishing key informants, researchers used *purposive* sampling and *snowball sampling* techniques.

The document study was carried out by utilizing documents that were 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, newspapers, magazines, and other relevant records [11]. Researchers also utilized supportive electronic documents for the study.

interactive model of Mill and Huberman, which is through three stages: a) Data reduction process aimed at sorting and sharpening the empirical facts obtained in the field. At this stage, the researcher also intends to sharpen and organize data into a specific pattern or theme; b) the second is to *display data*. At this stage, the researcher presents data in the form of narratives, sketches, and synopses to facilitate exposure efforts; and c) Stages of affirmation of conclusions [12].

3. FORMS AND FACTORS CAUSING DOMESTIC CHILD ABUSE

3.1. Forms of Domestic Violence Against Children

The violence that occurs in children is also known as *child abuse* or *child maltreatment* [13]. Violence against children is an act that can damage the development of the child, physically, psychically, and sexually. This will affect the development of the child's future life. Based on Law No.35 of 2014 concerning child protection, article 15a states that violence is any act against a child that has the effect of physical, psychic, or sexual misery or suffering, including threats to commit acts, coercion, or deprivation of independence unlawfully [2]. Therefore, the state and all its citizens must actively participate in guaranteeing and protecting a child and its rights to live, grow, develop, and participate optimally with dignity and humanity, as well as receive protection from violence and discrimination.

The following is an example of a case of violence against children that occurs in the household as told by Harry, prosecutor at the Lhoksukon District Court, North Aceh. Once upon a time, I (45 years old), a resident of Teumpok Peureulak Village, Matangkuli District, was detained in the North Aceh Police Station because of a case of mistreatment of his biological son. The case started when the chief of Teumpok Peureulak Village, Ridwan, found F (5 years) with his two sisters sleeping in front of a resident's house. When asked to take them to their parent's house, the three children admitted that they dared to go home, so the village chief tried to meet his parents to find out about what happened. Initially, the child's parents admitted that they did not know if their child had moved away from home. The same incident repeated on January 29, 2022, F was again found by residents in Rayeuk Village, Matang Kuli District, in a limp condition and covered with bruises and burns on his body. At that time, residents reported to the police and took the child to the Matangkuli Health Center for medical treatment. Police called the victim's mother, and from the police investigation, it was revealed that the perpetrator of the abuse was the victim's biological father. A day later, the police found the perpetrator and arrested him.

The above case is only one of the many phenomena of domestic violence in the North Aceh region. The results of field studies show that forms of violence against children in the family can be classified as follows: 1) physical abuse, in the form of cigarette smoking, beatings, and the like; 2) neglect or neglect; 3) psychological or verbal violence, in which parents scold, cursing and various other negative stigmas; and 4) sexual assault. Various forms of violence that occur are in line with what Agustin said, where typical common acts of violence can be grouped into 1) verbal violence; 2) physical violence; and 3) emotional violence (*psychological maltreatment*) [14]. Huraerah groups *child* abuse into several forms, namely: physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual violence, and *social* abuse [13].

3.2. Factors Causing Child Abuse in the Family

As previously explained, forms of violence against children in the family can be divided into physical violence, neglect, psychic violence, and sexual violence. The various forms of violence are caused by the following factors, namely:

First, the level of education of parents. Parents do not yet know how a parenting process is carried out according to the needs of the child. Not infrequently, parents say they "want to educate children", but the opposite is done. For example, when the child does not get a champion at school or does not match the expectations of the parents, it is easy for a negative stigma to be thrown at the child. The saying "Stupid boy...; fucking child" and various similar swearing will be accepted by the child. In addition, parents also unconsciously often commit physical violence intentionally. For example, when a child is cranky, the parent then jerks or pinches the child to keep it quiet. Sometimes, the weld behind these actions tends to be selfish, such as being ashamed of being seen by people because they are noisy or afraid of being perceived as not being able to teach children well. This is as stated by Huraerah, where physical violence in the form of torture, beatings, and abuse of children generally occurs because it is triggered by the behavior of children who do not like their parents, such as being naughty or cranky, crying, and so on. In society, there are different perspectives on interpreting "educating" among parents.

For some parents, hitting a child is considered part of educating, while in the perspective of the state, hitting, let alone leaving scars is an act of violence against the child [13].

Second, the family's economic conditions are not good. This condition causes neglect of the child's physique because he is unable to meet the needs for nutritious food for the child's growth and development, and also tends to ignore other needs, such as proper clothing and education. Third, Divorce of parents. Parents who decide to separate because of a problem will also have an impact on the survival of the child. Divorce causes household problems such as the issue of the right to maintain children, the provision of affection, the provision of a living, and so on. The consequences of divorce will be felt by children especially when their parents remarry and the child must be taken care of by the mother or stepfather [15].

Agustin sees that violence that occurs in children is influenced by internal and external factors. Internal factors include the individual characteristics of the child, while external factors include media influences, parental parenting, school characteristics and background, peers, and environmental pressures [14]. On the other hand, Bhagawan also revealed that the root causes of violence against children include economic, social, cultural, and political problems. Domestic violence that occurs is violence committed by husbands (fathers) against mothers and parental violence against children, or violence by older children and younger children [16]. Praditama added that violence against children in the family is also caused by, namely: 1) Inheritance of violence between generations; 2) Cultural background, in the sense that it is the relationship of position in society that always puts the child at the bottom [17]. According to Suyanto, another contributing factor to why there is a lot of child abuse and child neglect is that it comes from old people who were raised with violence [15].

4. REVITALIZATION OF THE FUNCTIONING OF FAMILY INSTITUTIONS

Child abuse is wrong behavior, which can be carried out by parents, caregivers, or others around them in the form of physical and mental abuse such as abuse, neglect, exploitation, threatening, and other bad things that affect the child's physical and mental health [18]. Comprehensive solutions and interventions are needed in solving the problem of violence against children. One of them is to restore the family function to its supposed dimensions. The family is the smallest unit in society, its existence is aimed at meeting the needs of love, religiosity, protection, education, and various other positive things. A family is the main group of two or more people who have a network of interpersonal interactions, blood relationships, marital relationships, and adoption relationships.

Families must maximize the function and role of childcare as part of efforts to prevent violence against children. According to Berns, there are five family functions, namely: 1) reproductive function, this function aims to maintain the population and continue the sustainability of life; 2) socialization and education functions; as a means of transmitting values, beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors in life; 3) The function of assigning social roles; 4) The function of economic support, in this case providing for needs, be it physiological needs, or social needs for the guarantee of survival; and 5) The function of emotional support and nurturing, where the existence of the family provides a sense of security because it functions to nurture and protect. Given the importance of the existence of the family, every May 15, the world community commemorates family day since the establishment of the United Nations in 1993 with the main objective of maintaining the international community's relationship with its family [7]. The failure of the family with its role and function has implications for the birth of various deviant behaviors presented by the child (sociopathic) [19]. Especially in the current disruptive era, where immoral behavior in society is so easy to find as a result of the crisis of models that can be used as role models [20].

Knowledge of proper parenting is very important for parents. As explained earlier that in some cases found in the field, parents feel that what they are doing is part of the educational process, even though if explored further, the condition already enters the context of violence against children. Strengthening the capacity and skills of parents in caring for children can change attitudes and increase awareness of parents in terms of educating children so as not to prioritize corporal punishment for children who are considered disobedient [21]. Increasing knowledge related to childcare patterns contributes significantly to child protection [22]. For this reason, strengthening knowledge related to proper parenting must be conveyed to parents. In other words, the formation and social engineering are carried out so that parents can set an example and can become problem solvers for problems experienced by children.

Strengthening parents' understanding can be done through regular discussions held at the village hall. The recitation discussed parenting based on religious values, customs, and local culture. Themes covered can include how to be a good parent, children's rights, positive parenting and discipline patterns, creating warmth and

guidance, how parents behave, good fathers and mothers work together, including involving fathers in daily parenting. Parents must also understand the child's development and behavior, as well as understand the child's way of learning. Parents should also provide playtime with the child. This is a way to build closeness between parents and children. Therefore, it is necessary to have a collective agreement built together to revitalize the values of local wisdom that once lived in the community, so that family institution can function as they should. The results of the study by Herawati, et al, several factors affect the implementation of family functions, including age, marital status, employment status, level of education, family knowledge, and access to information [23].

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Violence against children is an act that should be avoided and watched out for early because the effects caused are tremendous. The forms and types of violence against children that occur in the household in North Aceh are: 1) physical violence; 2) sexual violence; 3) psychic violence; and 4) neglect or neglect, which is influenced by factors of the parents' background and level of education, family economic factors, and parental divorce. One of the things that can be done to prevent violence against children is to restore the function of the family as the first madrasa and a shield of protection for children. For this reason, the socialization of family functions must be further improved and carried out intensely with the main targets being families of young couples and families with low levels of education.

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.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work would have not been possible without the financial support of the Project Advanced Knowledge and Skills for Sustainable Growth Project in Indonesia – Asian Development Bank (AKSI-ADB), Malikussaleh University. We also thank the committee of the 3rd Malikussaleh International Conference on Multidisciplinary Studies 2022 (3rd MICoMS 2022).

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