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Who Is Responsible for Preventing Children's Sexual Harassment?

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Abstract

Background: Child sexual harassment in Indonesia continues to increase every year. Boys and girls have an equal potential to face the greatest risk of sexual harassment. Most cases occur in educational institutions and even at home, where the perpetrator is the closest person to the children. Even though legal actions for sexual harassment have been implemented, the incidents are still frequent and difficult to control.

Objective: This study aims to analyze the models of responsibility in the prevention of children's sexual harassment in various settings, such as at the governance, society, educational institution, and family levels.

Methods: This research adopts a qualitative approach. The data sources for this study are divided into primary data from the informants and secondary data from archive documents. The triangulation method is used with in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observation, and document reviews, and is analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model. The study involves the Technical Implementation Unit of the Integrated Service Center for the Protection of Women and Children (UPTD PPA), Resort Police Women and Children Protection Unit (POLRES), Head of the Department of Education, Research, and Culture, Task Force of Women and Children Protection Cadres (SATGAS PPA) in Mojorejo Village, and also from the community health service. This study was conducted in Sleman Regency.

Result: This study revealed that the models of responsibility for sexual harassment prevention were carried out in various stages, from the state and governance, which included provincial, district, sub-district, communities, educational institutions, family, and the children.

Conclusion: The responsibility for preventing children's sexual harassment starts from the state, provincial, district, sub-district, and village levels, which are supported by the community and educational institutions through community service as cadres for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (PKDRT), Women and Children Protection Task Force (PPA), as well as the responsibility of the extended or nuclear family, and also from the children according to their abilities.

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Introduction

The incidents of sexual harassment in Indonesia are increasing every year. Based on the Department of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (PPA), since January 1, 2022, 16,337 cases have been reported, with 2,635 male cases and 15,011 female cases [1]. This data still increases, and by October 2022, the number of cases that have been reported is 19,370, with details of 3,132 male victims and 17,733 female victims. The number of incidents of women and children's sexual harassment, according to the Department of Regional Development Planning, Research and Development Authority (BAPPEDA), DI Yogyakarta, at Sleman Regency in September 2022, recorded 34 male victims in the 0-17 age group and 11 cases in households. Meanwhile, there were 73 female victims aged 0-17 years, 61 victims aged 18-25 years old, and 192 cases aged 25 years or older. Based on the number of cases, 213 cases occur in households [2]. According to data outlined by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (PPA) in 2021, there were 594 reported cases of children's sexual harassment in the education sector [1]. The sexual harassment occurs in educational institutions with 717 victims, including 334 boys and 383 girls. The perpetrators of this harassment are 34.74% carried out by teachers and 27.38% carried out by boyfriends or girlfriends. The most common type of harassment that occurs in the educational institution environment is sexual harassment, with a percentage of 35.39% [3].

The regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) in the form of Permendikbud No. 82 of 2015 mentions the Prevention and Management Acts of Harassment within Educational Institutions. Several actions to prevent and deal with harassment, based on Permendikbud No. 82 of 2015 Chapter II, article 4, in the educational institution's environment are made for students, educators, education staff, parents, educational institution committees, the community, regional government, and the government. In Chapter III, article 6, acts of harassment within the educational institution's environment include physical, psychological, or online abuse, bullying, torturing, fights, both verbal and physical fights, sexual abuse, rape, racist behavior, religious conflicts between groups (SARA), and other actions specified in laws and regulations. Then, in the preventive actions mentioned in Chapter IV, article 8, one intervention that could be taken is to establish a team to prevent acts of harassment, including the principal, representatives of teachers, students, and parents [4].

According to the data, it is revealed that sexual harassment is one of the crimes that is difficult to control because most of it occurs in the immediate environment, namely the household and educational institutions. Regularly, sexual harassment against women and children is not reported because the perpetrators of harassment are the closest people to the victims,

such as fathers to children, brothers to sisters, and uncles to nephews [5]. Within the family, there are still many cases where fathers use rude or vulgar words towards their children, but many issues are not reported by victims to related institutions. Therefore, it can be concluded that many events that have been reported do not reflect the actual conditions in society [5].

The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, Article 28 B, paragraph (2) (UUD NKRI), authorizes that “every child has the right to survival, growth, and development and is entitled to protection from harassment and discrimination” [6]. Meanwhile, in the family, the harassment that occurs is exploitation and domination due to differences in status and roles. This clearly violates the right to be free from discrimination. In addition, in society, children who experience sexual harassment from the closest person in their family face disgrace and must be hidden from the wider community [7]. Sexual harassment against children and women is basically preventable human behavior as it is a manifestation of emotional behavior in society, so actions to prevent sexual harassment need to be improved [7].

The Government Regulation in Lieu of Law (Perpu) Number 1 of 2016 is a regulation promulgated by President Joko Widodo, with the main reason being to address urgent situations of sexual harassment, especially those experienced by children. This regulation mentions aggravating punishment for the perpetrators of sexual harassment, including a minimum of 10 years in prison and a maximum of 20 years in prison, life imprisonment, capital punishment, and defines three additional punishments, including announcing the identity of the perpetrator to the public, chemical castration, and establishing electronic detection devices or electronic chips [8].

According to the above description, even though legal actions for sexual harassment have been implemented, the incidents are still frequent and difficult to control. The increase in children’s sexual harassment cases becomes a threat to the welfare and safety of Indonesian children. These incidents could impact the next generation of the country. They need to be provided with an optimally supportive and safe environment for their growth and development. The role of the family, educational institutions, and the community must be emphasized. Therefore, the main problem in this study is “Who is responsible for preventing sexual harassment in the family, educational institution, and the community?”

Methods

This research adopts a qualitative approach. The data sources for this study are divided into primary data from the informants and secondary data from archive documents. The source of primary data is the result of interviewing the informants. The secondary data are obtained from the archive documents, observation notes, and procedural operations related to the object of the research, and analyzed using Miles and Huberman’s interactive model. This involved the Technical Implementation Unit of Integrated Service Center for the Protection of Women and Children (UPTD PPA), Resort Police Women and Children Protection Unit (POLRES), Head of the Department of Education, Research and Culture, Task Force of Women and Children Protection Cadres (SATGAS PPA) in Mojorejo Village, and also from the community health service. This research was conducted in Sleman Regency from October 2019 to January 2020. The license for this research, according to Ethical Clearance No. Skep07/KEPK/III/2019 Jenderal Achmad Yani University

Yogyakarta.

Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on the researcher's assessment of people required, considering objectiveness, problems, and research model.

The informants who are involved in this research are: the Technical Implementation Unit of Integrated Service Center for the Protection of Women and Children (UPTD PPA), Resort Police Women and Children Protection Unit (POLRES), Head of the Department of Education, Research, and Culture, Task Force of Women and Children Protection Cadres (SATGAS PPA) who have experience with children's sexual harassment.

The instruments in this study were: field observation notes, interview guides, focus group discussions, and observations.

Result and Discussion

a. Result

1. Responsible Forms for the Prevention of Children's Sexual Harassment

Based on the results of the interviews and focus group discussions, an overview of the accountability model in the prevention of children's sexual harassment is shown in Figure 1.

Below are statements from our informants:

"...the existence of child protection shows that the state has overall responsibility" (Mrs. A)

"....government in this case, related agencies, through the women's empowerment service, child protection, population control, and family planning..." (Mr. Es)

Indonesia has taken action by signing the Convention on Children's Rights on January 26, 1990, and ratifying Presidential Decree Number 36 of 1990. The steps that have been taken to implement the convention include making the Second Amendment of The 1945 Constitution of the State of the Republic of Indonesia, including Article 28B Paragraph (2): "Every child has the right to survival, growth, and development and is entitled to protection from violence and discrimination" [6]. Another aspect of state accountability is the promulgation of Regulation Number 12 of 2022, which mentions sexual harassment [9].

Cooperation between the government and society is required to prevent children's sexual harassment. The government has the responsibility of preparing various rules and regulations related to children's protection. The applicability of the rules and regulations will be reviewed first, providing a legal basis for establishing various related regulations and funding their implementation. For better implementation, the government needs to coordinate with the government systems under it at various stages, starting from the central government to the provincial government, district, sub-district, and also the

village, as a government system that is in direct contact with the community. During implementation, it involves various levels of society, including non-governmental organizations (LSM) [9].

The village government, as a system in direct contact with the community, has a synergistic and cooperative role with its subordinate organizational structures, involving RT/RW, where the management comes from the community. The family, as the smallest system in the community, has the most important role and responsibility to educate and protect their children so that they have the ability to support themselves in the process of maturation and development [10].

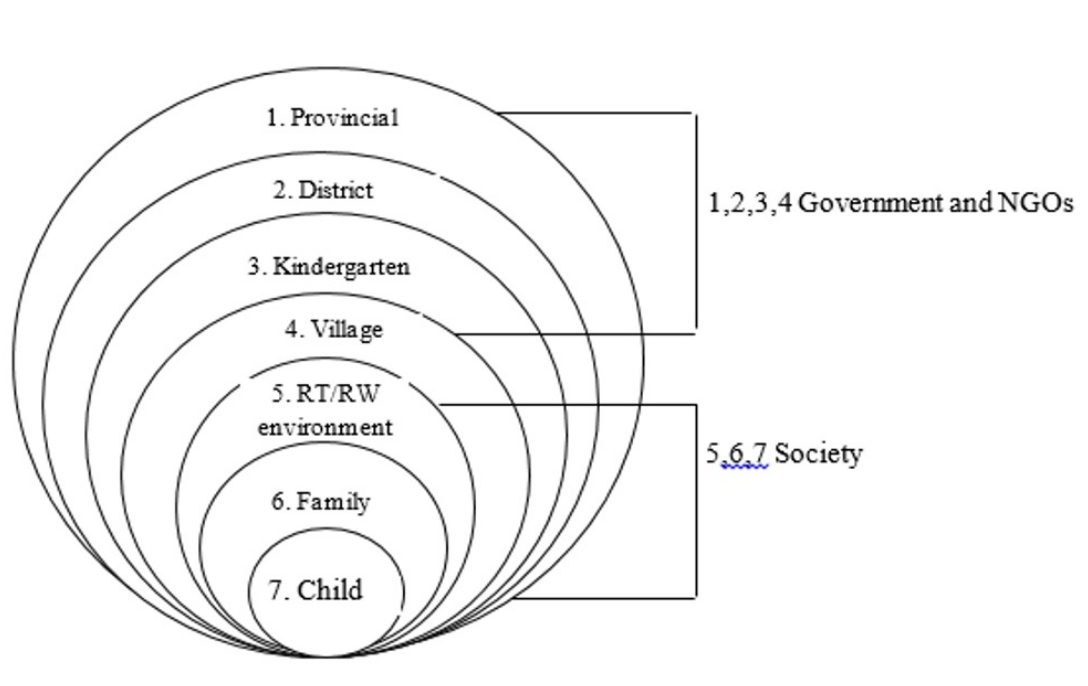


Figure 1. Responsible Forms for the Prevention of Children's Sexual Harassment

The results of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with the informants about the responsibility for preventing children's sexual harassment revealed that:

1. The role of responsibility in preventing children's sexual harassment is clearly aligned with the domain of regional organization, including case management of sexual harassment, establishing and developing cadres for Prevention of Domestic Violence (PKDRT) and Women and Children Protection Task Force (PPA).
2. At the village level, the apparatus who have responsibility for preventing children's sexual harassment include Babinsa, Babinkamtibmas, PPA, PKDRT, and the extended or nuclear family.
3. The related facilitators to prevent children's sexual harassment, such as government organizations, act as facilitators. These organizations include the empowerment service, Technical Implementation Unit, Public Service, Police, Healthcare centers and hospitals, Education Office, and even child care institutions (The Institute of Children Protection Foundation) (YLPA) and other similar institutions.

2. Models of Responsibility in the Prevention of Children's Sexual Harassment in Families and Communities

According to the results of interviews and group discussions with all informants and observations in Sleman Regency in two villages located in two different sub-districts, it shows that the prevention of children's sexual harassment is oriented towards family and community, as shown in Figure 2.

Below are statements from our informants:

"...responsible for the community's immediate environment is the village head, including the head of the neighborhood association (RT) and the head of the community unit (RW)" (Mrs. Y).

"...the family and the children themselves must be able to prevent it... of course, in accordance with their growth and development" (Mr. E).

Society is one of the environments in which children live. There is a government structure, namely RT and RW, as the baseline of the village administration, which has direct contact with the community. Cadres for Prevention of Domestic Violence (PKDRT) and the Task Force for the Protection of Women and Children collaborate with other community organizations such as PKK, Dasa Wisma, and Karang Taruna. These organizations take action in preventing children's sexual harassment through counseling and home visits when necessary.

Family is the closest system to the children, including the extended or nuclear family. The family has the most important role and responsibility to educate and protect their children so that they have the ability to support themselves in the process of maturation and development. Sometimes, in parenting, the nuclear family involves the extended family. With all the support of the surrounding community and family, children would receive protection to prevent sexual harassment.

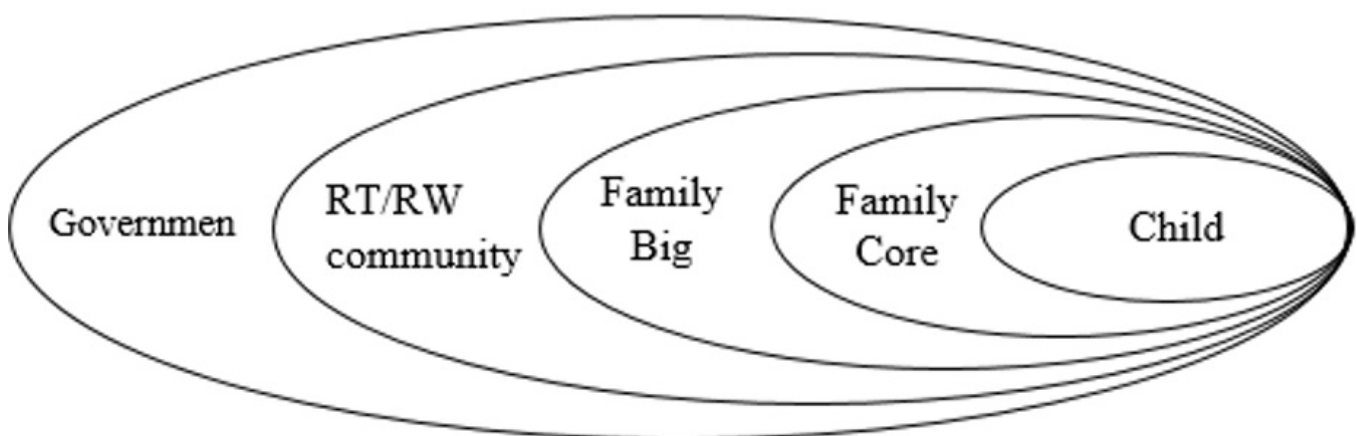


Figure 2. Models of Responsibility in the Prevention of Children's Sexual Harassment in Families and Communities

The results of in-depth interviews with the informants about the responsibility for preventing children's sexual harassment in the family and community revealed that:

Within the community, prevention was carried out through the cadres directly to the family. The cases and the location of the incidents always coordinate with the related apparatus such as the Regional Technical Implementation Unit for the

Protection of Women and Children (UPTD PPA). Specifically, for the task force, they must hold a direct facilitator for:

1. Counseling about sexual harassment prevention to reduce the potential incidents.
2. At the family level, the family must provide early education to their child about sexual harassment according to their abilities.

3. Models of Responsibility in the Prevention of Children's Sexual Harassment in Educational Institutions

According to the results of the interviews and focus group discussions with all the informants and observations in two villages in different sub-districts in Sleman Regency, the prevention of sexual harassment in public educational institutions and educational institutions with dormitory systems is shown in Figure 3.

Below are statements from our informants:

"The school, in this case, has all its staff from the principal to the teacher, janitor" (Mr. E)

"The child himself must be able to protect himself, of course beforehand must receive instruction from teachers and parents" (Mrs. A).

In public or private educational institutions with a boarding educational institution system, there are educational institution committees and counseling guidance forms to help supervise and protect children while they are at the educational institution. During learning and extracurricular activities, living in a dormitory is also part of the educational institution. Additionally, the Educational Institution Health Unit (UKS), which coordinates with Puskesmas, must improve the reproductive health corner with age-appropriate media for children's growth and development. This way, children would have the ability to protect themselves and prevent sexual harassment. With the support of teachers, administrative staff, gardeners, extracurricular coaches, and the entire environment around the educational institution, children will be protected from sexual harassment.

When children are in the educational institution, they interact apart from their families. With awareness from various elements, including the community, family, and educational institutions, children should receive protection and have the ability to secure themselves from sexual harassment.

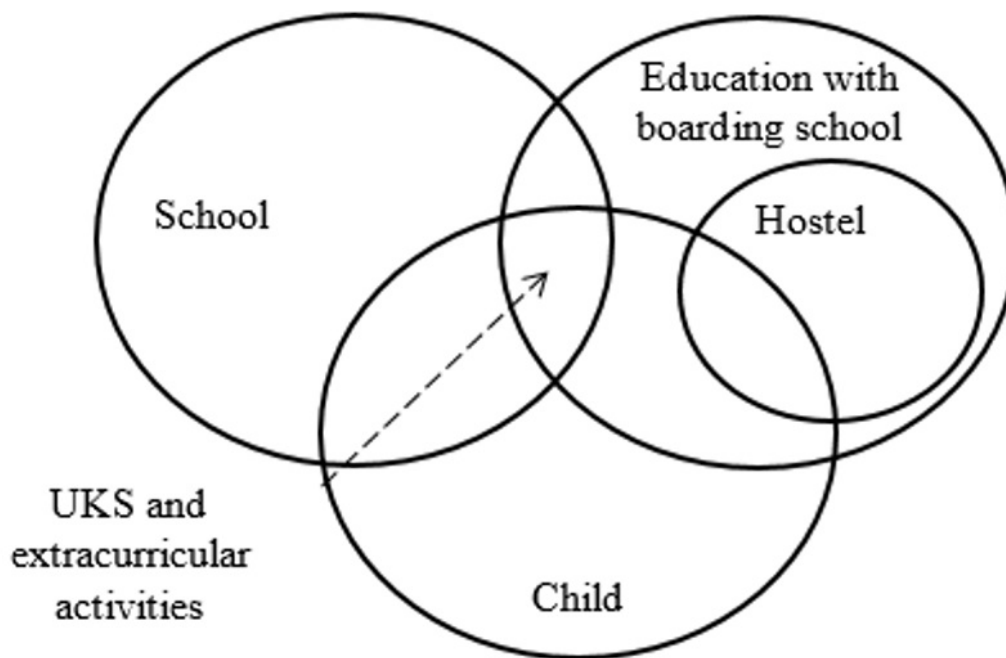


Figure 3. Models of Responsibility in the Prevention of Children's Sexual Harassment in Educational Institutions

The results of interviews with the informants about the responsibility for preventing children's sexual harassment in school showed that:

1. The child-friendly school program has been carried out as a means of communication between parents and schools. At the beginning of each year, a meeting is held with one of the topics related to child abuse. The police will support this action as a resource persons to conduct counseling.
2. Once a year, Social Workers go to school, especially Junior and Senior High Schools, to hold an activity called "Peksos Goes to School" in addition to preventing sexual harassment in children. Each school needs to be followed up through the Youth Counseling and Information Center (PIK-R), School Health Unit (UKS), and also the Student Organization. A task force must be established to prevent sexual harassment in school if necessary.

b. Discussion

1. Responsible Forms for the Prevention of Children's Sexual Harassment

So far, sex education for young children is still considered taboo^[10]. Many believe that sex education is not suitable for young children. However, sex education from an early age has a great influence on children's lives as they enter adolescence. Children today are highly curious, critical, and judgmental. Often, their parents redirect the conversation when children ask about sexual things due to their curiosity. Many parents rebuke and forbid their children from asking taboo questions^[11].

Based on the research results, it can be seen in Figure 1 that preventing children's sexual harassment is secured by the state with cooperation between the governance and the community. State responsibility is regulated in the 1945

Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia in Article 28B Paragraph (2) and is further mentioned in Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Crimes of Sexual Harassment.

In Law number 12 of 2022, Article 4 Paragraph (1) mentions that “Criminal acts of sexual harassment consist of; non-physical sexual harassment; physical sexual harassment; forced contraception; forced sterilization; forced marriage; sexual abuse; sexual exploitation; sexual slavery; and virtual-based sexual harassment.” Article 4 in Paragraph (2) also mentions that acts of children’s sexual harassment include: children raped, lewd behavior with children, children exploitation, child pornography, or pornography that clearly contains sexual harassment and exploitation, as well as described in Law Number 12 of 2022, Article 10 Paragraph (2) about the regulation of sexual harassment crimes is strictly regulated in order to: prevent all forms of sexual harassment, care for, protect, and rehabilitate the victims, enforce the law and rehabilitate the perpetrators, create an environment that is free from sexual harassment, and ensure no recurrence of sexual violence ^[9].

The various forms of government accountability in this study are reflected in the presence of child protection laws and regulations. These regulations by the governance pertain to the legal aspects of existence. The violence victim care forum serves as a platform for various local governments and has the responsibility to organize the implementation of children protection activities, such as providing fundraising to maintain these activities from the district to village level. Government regulations also regulate the engagement of the business community and non-governmental organizations concerned with children to support the prevention of children’s sexual harassment ^[12].

Regarding the prevention of children’s sexual harassment in general, the Department of Empowerment, Protection, Women and Children, and Family Planning (P3AP2KB) is fully coordinated. The education office of the schools, starting with Preschool (PAUD), plays a crucial role. One of the accountability measures for kindergarten, elementary, and middle schools is the friendly school program.

The purpose of this program is to make children feel safe and protected when they are not around their family. The aim of this program is to strengthen and deepen understanding of children’s sexual harassment prevention and education actions, which will be helpful in addressing sexual harassment in the future ^[13].

The police are related to the law, medical offices are linked to health services such as Puskesmas, which play an important role in prevention with the existence of child-friendly Puskesmas and the PKPR program. Social services also have a role in prevention but focus on implementing social aspects. The Institute of Child Protection (YLPA) is heavily involved in prevention, especially in the formation of cadres for Prevention of Domestic Violence (PKDRT), and the Women and Children Protection Task Force (PPA) is actively involved.

Then the community’s role that is urgent in this study is the role of the Women and Children Protection Task Force (PPA) and cadres for Prevention of Domestic Violence (PKDRT), which are ineffective when integrated into the community. In addition, some organizations have their own programs, such as friendly schools and Puskesmas, which have a status as child-friendly Puskesmas.

2. Models of Responsibility in the Prevention of Children's Sexual Harassment in Families and Communities

Based on the results of the research, it can be seen in Figure 2 that the pattern of scope for preventing sexual violence in the family and community indicates that society is an environment where children grow and develop.

Indeed, no matter how good the education is, it will be useless without a supportive environment. In this case, there are at least three environments that could support the prevention of sexual harassment processes and are considered as educational institutions. The first is the family, the second is the school, and the third is the community [14].

In community involvement (planning, implementing, and evaluating) in activities to prevent violence against children, including child sexual violence, the research results show that some communities are involved in planning, and this depends on development priorities in the community. Implementation mostly involves active participation through presence and a willingness to become cadres for Prevention of Domestic Violence (PKDRT) and the Women and Children Protection Task Force (PPA), even though they have to juggle their roles with other community activities. They prepare a place for activities, but these activities are not well documented, especially for the activities of the Women and Children Protection Task Force (PPA) and cadres for Prevention of Domestic Violence (PKDRT). Evaluation is carried out as a whole, related to child-friendly districts.

The role of each individual in the forum has been carried out according to their duties, both local government organizations and cadres for Prevention of Domestic Violence (PKDRT) and the Women and Children Protection Task Force (PPA), which deal directly with the community in the village and even visit residents' homes. However, it varies for each region. The highest policy makers in Sleman Regency are the District Head, and the Office of Empowerment, Protection, Women and Children, Family Planning (P3AP2KB) is the leading sector, supported by all relevant local government organizations and the community.

A strong commitment with a willingness to work together becomes the capital to achieve independence with self-sufficiency, so that people are no longer dependent on assistance to provide protection for children. The community voluntarily and joyfully, individually and collectively, takes protective measures against children [11].

Alignment in this empowerment will move the family towards fulfilling the needs of children's rights optimally. It teaches children to protect themselves from acts of sexual violence and ensures that families do not condone violence or treat children differently based on their gender. Two-way communication between children and families, based on religion, love, and mutual trust, is built properly so that families can prevent violence against children, including biological children, stepchildren, and other children who interact within the family [10].

The original background related to sex education involved the following [15]:

a. Talk

Communication is key to the development of healthy sexuality. Research suggests that children learn best through conversation.

b. A Role Model of Honesty and Integrity

Integrity plays an important role in creating a sense of security in children.

c. Positive Relations

Parents help their children identify good relationships.

d. Grace and Forgiveness

Parents must teach that the values of sex education are positive and not taboo subjects.

e. Cultural Reality

Supervising children, accompanying them, and helping them choose appropriate cultural values.

Sex education at an early age is considered crucial in preventing the emergence of highly probable children sexual harassment in the present era. Actions that can be taken include:

- a. Providing sex education that is easy to understand, such as using games or songs.
- b. Introducing children to the idea that their body parts are precious.
- c. Teaching children about the body parts that others should not touch or see.
- d. Educating children about the existence of gender differences.
- e. Teaching children to behave according to the applicable norms.
- f. Imposing restrictions on gadget usage and content viewing^[16].

3. Models of Responsibility in the Prevention of Children Sexual Harassment in Educational Institutions

In educational institutions, whether formal, informal, or non-formal, organized by the government, private sector, religious institutions, houses of worship, or individuals/private entities, both academic subjects, arts, and religious teachings are supervised not only for the availability of facilities and accreditation but also for child protection and the prevention of sexual violence against children. This includes providing child-friendly services such as reproductive health information services, especially in public and private formal educational institutions with religious affiliations. It involves the segregation of separate toilet facilities for men and women, conducting periodic education related to sexual violence for students, teachers, and other staff at educational institutions, including security guards and cleaning staff. Moreover, various extracurricular activities are monitored^[17].

In Regulation Minister of Education and Culture number 82 of 2015, Chapter IV Article 8, education units are mandated to take action to prevent harassment by:

- Creating and maintaining an environment free from acts of harassment.
- Obligating the reporting of allegations of acts of harassment to parents.
- Compiling, implementing, and disseminating operational procedures related to acts of harassment.
- Establishing cooperation with psychological institutions, religious organizations, and educational experts for prevention.
- Forming a violence prevention team, including the principal, representatives of teachers, students, and parents.
- Installing a service board for complaints of acts of harassment within the educational institution's environment^[6].

The aim of implementing the sex education program at educational institutions is to:

- Introduce children to the concept of violence or sexual harassment that may occur in their surroundings.
- Provide information to children about how to take care of themselves and others.
- Outline the actions to be taken in case of sexual harassment^[16].

Different learning models that could be implemented for sexual education for children include^[18]:

a. Learning Approach

Learning methods should be child-centered.

b. Learning Strategy

Integrative learning core competencies, including mental, social attitudes, knowledge, and skills, to achieve learning goals.

c. Learning Methods

Using methods that are fun and easy to understand for toddlers, such as drawing, singing, watching videos, and using games. For teenagers, stories, discussions, or quizzes can be employed.

While Regulation Minister of Education and Culture number 82 of 2015 aims to ensure the maximum implementation of this regulation in educational institutions, research conducted by Sabarudin (2019) reveals that the level of understanding among teachers about this regulation falls within the minimum category. Constraints in addressing acts of harassment in schools persist due to internal and external factors. Internally, teachers lack knowledge about both physical and psychological harassment, leading to ineffective motivation and behavior change. Additionally, some teachers experience psychological issues that hinder their ability to manage emotions, making them more sensitive and reactive. Students also contribute to internal factors, as they may lack tolerance, responsibility, and emotional control, compounded by the challenges of adolescence. External factors such as work pressure and students' living environments further complicate the issue^[19].

Further research conducted by Noer (2019) regarding the prevention of acts of harassment against children in educational institutions highlights collaboration between the Protection of Women and Children (P2TP2A) and the Education Office. This collaboration focuses on preventing harassment against children through activities like socializing "stop harassment against children" and establishing children's forums. Involving the Protection of Women and Children (P2TP2A) in the recruitment of teachers and school principals is also recommended to enhance the preparation of "hidden curriculum" programs for addressing harassment. Additionally, strengthening activities to prevent harassment in the school environment and emphasizing the authority for prevention and handling of harassment against children are seen as ways to optimize educational rights and reduce violence against children^[20].

Conclusion

The responsibility for preventing children's sexual harassment starts from the state, province, district, sub-district, and village levels, with support from the community and educational institutions. This support is provided through community service as cadres for Prevention of Domestic Violence (PKDRT) and the Women and Children Protection Task Force

(PPA). Additionally, responsibility extends to the extended or nuclear family and even to the children themselves, according to their abilities.

Recommendation

1. It is essential to strengthen supervision and provide education tailored to children's age levels. Both nuclear and extended families must share the same awareness about preventing children's sexual harassment.
2. Optimize early education related to the prevention of children's sexual harassment, taking into account children's growth and development.
3. Enhance the role of the educational institution health unit (UKS) in collaboration with local Puskesmas (Community Health Centers) and establish a Child Protection Task Force within the educational institution if necessary.

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