
The role of christian education values as a moral defense to resolve a child sexual abuse phenomenon in Indonesia

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Abstract

This research seeks to identify the effects of child sexual abuse and ways to address it. The following outline provides the answers: (1) **Impact of Child Sexual Abuse:** Children may suffer both physically and psychologically. Physical impacts include trauma to the genital area, sexually transmitted infections, and eating disorders. Psychological effects include depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), disturbances in eating and sexual behavior, loss of trust in adults, a sense of powerlessness, and stigmatization. (2) **Efforts to Address Abuse:** Multiple stakeholders are involved in addressing child sexual abuse, such as counselors, parents, schools and legal institutions. (3) **Legal Action as Social Engineering:** Legal measures can serve as tools for social transformation by producing and enforcing laws that promote social justice. These legal instruments must be understood, respected, and supported by society. Legislators must uphold the integrity of the law, free from external influence, and involve interdisciplinary perspectives in the development of legal frameworks.

Keywords

Child sexual abuse, Christian education, Indonesia, physical and psychological impact

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Introduction

The law in this country seems to be sleeping and cannot deter criminals, so there is no safe place for children from sexual abuse. Sexual violence occurs all over the world. Based on data recorded at *Komnas Perempuan*, there has been a drastic increase of 60 complaints to the agency, from 1,413 cases in 2019 to 2,389 cases in 2020. Around 45,069 cases of sexual violence have been reported in the last 9 years in Indonesia (Rumble et al., 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic cases of violence against women increased in just six months in 2021, and the number of cases has exceeded the previous year's total, while the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection recorded tens of thousands of cases of violence against children and women in 2021 (Huda, 2021). During 2021, there were 10,247 cases of violence against women, of which 15.2% were sexual violence. In cases of violence against minors, the trend is more worrying because cases of sexual violence occupy a significant proportion. In cases of violence against children, 45.1% of the 14,517 cases of violence against children were cases of sexual violence (Mayasari, 2022).

Tragic phenomena also occur throughout the world. For example, South Africa has the highest number of child and infant rapes in the world. A survey by the Central Institute of Technology in Education found that 60% of boys and girls believed forced sexual treatment by someone they knew was not sexual violence, while about 11% of boys and 4% of girls admitted they had been forced to do it. Have sex with other people. In a poll of 1,500 schoolchildren in the Johannesburg city of Soweto, a quarter of the children questioned by the man said jackrolling, the term for gang rape, was enjoyable.

The latest WHO data published in 2021 shows that one in three women worldwide is a victim of sexual or physical violence. Global figures are no joke, reaching 852 million women aged 15-49 who are victims of sexual or physical violence. These results come from the most extensive study. The data generated includes national data and surveys from 2000 to 2018. Seeing the high data, WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said violence against women has become an epidemic in all countries and cultures. Violence against women increased because the victims were forced to stay at home with the perpetrators. WHO data shows that husbands or partners are the most common perpetrators of violence against women.

One in four women is a victim of domestic violence, i.e., the average child is 15 years old. Violence against women is more serious in the poorest countries. These countries include Kiribati, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Afghanistan. Meanwhile, the lowest rate of violence against women was in Europe, at 23%. The data is just as negative: nearly all young women in Britain have experienced sexual harassment. In the survey, 97% of women aged 18-24 said they had been sexually harassed. 80% of women of all age's groups reported experiencing sexual harassment in their workplaces (Hutagalung & Ishak, 2012). In addition, there are various antecedents pointing to sexual harassment: (1) they are embarrassed to tell others that their child has been victimized, which could be because the victim's family thinks it is not true. (2) It is taboo to tell others. (3) Indonesia is very religious, so there is a lack of openness in cases of sexual violence, which means that many people can become victims (Rumble et al., 2022).

Literature Review

Impact of child sexual abuse

Sexual violence against children results in severe and long-term consequences, affecting not only their physical health but also their psychological well-being into adulthood. Numerous studies highlight the multifaceted impacts of such abuse, ranging from immediate physical injuries to deep psychological trauma that may persist for a lifetime.

Physical impact

Child sexual abuse often leads to significant physical harm, including trauma to the genital area. In some cases, involving female victims, it may result in unintended pregnancies, especially if the child has reached puberty. Victims are also at heightened risk for contracting sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV. Moreover, survivors may develop eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder (BED), which reflect the body's psychosomatic response to trauma. Another common physical complication in female survivors is vaginismus, a condition in which the vaginal muscles involuntarily contract, making penetration painful or impossible—this often manifests not only during intercourse but also during medical examinations.

According to [Shrivastave et al. \(2017\)](#), the trauma resulting from sexual abuse affects not only the body but also neurological functioning. In addition, the prefrontal cortex, responsible for critical and creative thinking, is often impaired, while heightened activity in the brain's limbic system may cause increased emotional instability and anxiety. If such trauma is not adequately addressed, affected children may experience developmental delays, social withdrawal, fear of interpersonal contact, and a deep mistrust of others. Setiawati emphasizes the importance of treating victims with compassion and dignity, affirming their value as individuals created by God. Psychological therapy and trauma healing interventions provided by mental health professionals, such as psychiatrists or psychologists, are essential in this regard ([Ghiloni, 2009](#)).

Psychological impact

Beyond physical harm, the psychological impact of child sexual abuse is profound and enduring. Victims often suffer from depression, anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), sexual dysfunction, and suicidal ideation. The psychological scars may manifest through behaviors such as self-harm and emotional numbness. 1) [Noviana \(2015\)](#) categorized the psychological effects into several core responses: 2) Betrayal trauma, where children lose trust in adults, especially when the perpetrator is someone close or in a position of authority. 3) Traumatic sexualization, in which a child's understanding of sexuality is distorted. 4) Stigmatization and helplessness, where victims feel shame, guilt, or powerlessness due to societal reactions or their inability to prevent the abuse.

Further research by Ventura et al. (2021) outlines specific lifelong psychological consequences of sexual harassment and abuse: 1) Depression, often the most persistent and debilitating consequence. 2) Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder (HSDD), characterized by a significantly reduced or absent sexual interest. 3) Dissociation, a psychological defense mechanism in which individuals mentally detach from the traumatic experience. 4) Dyspareunia and vaginismus, where victims experience physical pain or involuntary muscle tightening during intercourse. 5) Rape Trauma Syndrome, which encompasses a cluster of physical and emotional reactions, including fear, anger, and social withdrawal, is widespread among female survivors. These findings affirm that child sexual abuse is not a transient event but a life-altering trauma that demands a comprehensive and compassionate multidisciplinary response.

Methodology

This research sought to identify the effects of child sexual abuse and ways to address it. This research employed a literature review approach based on previous research conducted in the library. The literature review of previous research served to form a research framework. Library research is a series of activities related to library research data collection methods, reading, recording, and processing research documents. Library research limits its activities to library collection documents without the need for field research (Zed, 2008).

To acquire more wide-ranging analysis results, it began with creating inquiry questions. Then, the search was done by arranging the criteria clearly to restrict methodical errors. Next, the article search was held by finding, choosing, and judging then collecting, analysing, and synthesising published research articles related to the role of Christian education values as a moral defense to resolve a child sexual abuse phenomenon. Keyword searches on Scopus, google search, google scholar, and ScienceDirect were conducted to identifying published research articles related to the role of Christian education values as a moral defense to resolve a child sexual abuse phenomenon. The search terms for the database were including Christian education values, moral defense, and resolving a child sexual abuse phenomenon.

Results and Discussion

Handling sexual harassment

Physically, this may not be a problem for child victims of sexual abuse, but psychologically, it can lead to addiction, trauma, and even revenge. Therefore, to guarantee the protection of children, it is necessary to take a systemic approach, which includes a child and family welfare system. This justice system complies with international standards and mechanisms to encourage proper behavior (Noviana, 2015).

Counselor

Victims of sexual harassment can experience post-harassment stress, which can be divided into two types, namely immediate stress and long-term stress. Immediate stress is a

post-bullying reaction, such as physical pain, guilt, fear, anxiety, shame, anger and helplessness. Long-term stress is a specific psychological symptom that is felt by the victim as trauma, which causes the victim to lack self-confidence and have a negative self-image, which isolates oneself from socialization as well as somatic reactions such as palpitations and excessive sweating (Soedarmadji, 2013). The condition of a victim of sexual harassment is very concerning and requires a counselor.

A counselor should guide and advise others facing problems or who can give sound advice (Remley & Herlihy, 2014). The counselor is the key to initiating and developing interactions in counseling (Gunarsa, 2009). In addition, a counselor is a staff member who has been formally trained in counseling at the university level and can help the counselor or client solve problems. The problem lies with the counseling process. Consultants are specially trained education personnel who participate in education (Gunter & Mills, 2017).

The consultant's general goals consist of developmental, preventive, physiological and psychological: (1) Developmental goals: clients are assisted to increase their potential by anticipating their growth and development, social, personal, emotional, cognitive, and physical well-being. (2) Prevention goals: Counselors help clients avoid unwanted outcomes. (3) Physiological goals: Achieve a foundation of understanding and habits for better health. (4) Psychological goals: Psychologically help the development of good social interaction skills, emotional control in learning, a positive self-concept, and others (Casino-Garcia et al., 2021).

Parents

Parents should be active in reassuring the victims as soon as possible. Parents will also help heal their children's trauma. When parents find out their child has been sexually assaulted, do not scold them; they should calm down. It is not just about increasing trauma. Therefore, victims of sexual violence need to receive care and treatment for the trauma they experience. For example, boys often rub their genitals against their mothers. Instead of reprimanding them, guide them and explain the differences in sexual organs between men and women (Thantawi, 2005).

Additionally, there are several ways to protect children from sexual abuse: (1) Physical recovery. Physical pain is what children feel the most because kids are in a state of discomfort, especially physically. For his heart (mentally), specific therapies can be done overtime. (2) Strive to make your child's life as natural as possible. Please help your child overcome these obstacles so that he can move on. This will help him grow and develop according to his age. (3) Dialogue with children. The paradigm of authoritarian parenting is being replaced with a dialogical approach. (4) Parents reflect on their actions instead of blaming their children. This is because children are protected by their parents. What happens to children is the parents' fault, so we do not blame the children. (5) Seek assistance from a psychologist (Rumble et al., 2022).

In addition, children need the role of their parents and family that can provide children with knowledge about boundaries and sexual behavior that is permissible and not permissible. They also need parents who are consistently open with them. Parents must have started to apply knowledge about sexuality to their children. However, according to age and the right

way, the role of parents in a family is vital-openness to children will be very beneficial in family psychology (Contino, 2020).

Schools

The environment of school educational institutions is very much needed to encourage the prevention and control of violence against children: (1) professional schools actively assist victims of sexual harassment. (2) Implementing child-friendly schools is still not fulfilled because educational institutions do not understand and do not have a program plan to create a child-friendly school (Apriadi & Khadafie, 2020).

The immersive parenting model is one solution for children's education in the digital era. The immune self-parenting model is an effective child mentoring model, especially in parenting using technological devices such as gadgets. Providing an immune system to children is essential because parents cannot always be with them. Through the immune parenting model and the approach of compassion and self-awareness, children have filters and immunity when they are not around their parents. Parents should instill self-selective values in children, for example, regarding which information and access to what news are reasonable and appropriate for the child (Sun et al., 2017).

School counselors have a very significant role in dealing with sexual harassment: (1) schools provide materials to students that can be presented in book form (can also be comics for younger students), videotapes, role-playing, or puppet shows for children. (2) School counselors also need to inform parents of students about this sexual violence prevention program so that parents can simultaneously teach these materials at home. (3) Through all programs, both preventive and curative or rehabilitative, it is hoped that this inhumane sexual violence against children will not be repeated (Crandall, 2015).

Religious institutions

Religious institutions that uphold moral values must play a role in addressing the issue of sexual violence against children. Religious institutions provide education in their communities so that bodies and sexuality cannot be objectified. This education can be done through workshops, coaching materials, and other training. In recovery and assistance programs, religious leaders can play a role on the side of victims, for example, by facilitating counseling to restore the victim's psychological condition (Inasshabihah, 2020).

The Indonesian Women's Association Legal Aid Institute for Justice, in an online discussion in Jakarta on 29 June 2020, with several interfaith leaders, stated that there had been nine reports of sexual violence against religious leaders during the 2019-2020 period. On average, victims of sexual violence are children. Meanwhile, the perpetrators were *ustadz*, madrasah owners, and priests. Religious institutions play a central role in efforts to eliminate sexual violence that occurs not only within them but also in the broader public sphere (Meyer & Moors, 2005).

Secretary General of the Central Executive of the Muhammadiyah Student Association, Abdul Rahman, believes that religious institutions must play an active role, and not only talk about industry, but also in a society that no longer adheres to religious norms in all matters,

including in the family. Additionally, success in a family is seen more from a materialistic perspective, while people's lives are becoming more hedonic and individualistic (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2022).

Law

From a legal perspective, the definition of sexual harassment is an act done intentionally to arouse lust or sexual desire outside of marriage, including sexual intercourse (Akpambang, 2021). Cases of violence and sexual harassment in Indonesia are still problematic and lack legal certainty, especially in terms of evidence. Protection for victims of sexual violence in Indonesia is still very weak. This case has often been thwarted and never followed up on for a long time. Unfortunately, when the victim's file received a warrant of termination of investigation or was found not to have been followed up on, the victim was also sued for sexual violence with a complaint for defamation, and so on. This evidence indicates that a limited number of human resources are still available to serve as legal actors within government agencies or institutions. Law enforcers have been trained to understand victims. However, many institutions continue to neglect victims of sexual violence, and some even blame the victims themselves. The legal culture still upholds the patriarchal culture.

Even though there are child protection laws, these crimes still occur without any significant preventive measures or countermeasures by society or the government. The condition of society is that the sexual violence experienced by children leaves trauma, self-pity, and physical illness, which, in turn, creates a tendency for children to imitate the perpetrator's actions. Even though the public does not understand sexual harassment, the government also ignores and is committed to child issues. To provide real protection to children from criminal acts of sexual harassment, the behavior and perspective of the community and all relevant government agencies must be changed, both in the way of educating children and in their supervision (Widjiastuti & Kartiko, 2023).

Legal actions to resolve child sexual abuse in Indonesia

Law is the most important system in implementing a series of institutional powers in the form of abuse of power in various capacities in the political, economic, and social fields. It is also the primary intermediary in social relations among communities against criminalization. Criminal law that investigates how the state requires actors in the legal constitution to provide a framework for the creation of law, protection of human rights, and the expansion of political power and how their representatives are to be elected (Pinto, 2020).

The Government of the Republic of Indonesia will take action as soon as the Prevention and Resolution of Violent Crimes, particularly the Child Sexual Harassment Law, is fully implemented. The Government of the Republic of Indonesia is very concerned about the phenomenon of acts of violence against children, which are recorded not only in the form of physical violence, such as murder, abuse or sexual violence, but also non-violent violence. These include economic, psychological, and religious forms of violence. The government guarantees the protection of child safety in Indonesia, first through statutory regulations (positive law), such as the Criminal Code (KUHP), promulgated in Law no. 23 of 2002;

strengthened by Law no. 23 of 2004 concerning the elimination of the scale of domestic violence; and continuous improvement with Law no. 11 of 2012 concerning the juvenile criminal justice system, which provides an entirely different form of legal protection related to the issue of protecting children against acts of sexual violence.

The legal revolution does not stop because it has been refined further in Law Number 35 of 2014, which functions to guarantee special protection for children's rights against various types of violence, acts of sexual violence, with 15 (fifteen) years in prison and a maximum fine of Rp. 5,000,000.00 (five billion rupiah). Subsequently, the perpetrators will be subject to additional laws, including the castration law, mandatory chip installation, and public notification of their offences.

The law is merely a set of rules that humans have consistently violated. The phenomenon is that the more the law increases the punishment for the perpetrators of violence, the more the number of acts of violence continues to increase rapidly, as if the law did not exist. The social violations faced by humans continue to manifest and multiply. Humans in the environment revolve around socio-legal issues. Social law has been used to anchor law and justice as a fundamental institution in the basic structure of society that regulates "political interests" and the economic, cultural, and normative aspects of society, and to build and maintain interdependence. However, it imposes itself as a source of approval.

The use of law as a means of social engineering was, of course, pioneered by Roscoe Pound, who in 1912 pioneered a set of ideas known as the Sociological Law School Program, which were formulated in his writing entitled *Scope and Purposive of Sociological Jurisprudence*, the nature of which (1) is more operationally oriented law rather than its abstract content. (2) considers law as a social institution that can be developed through human effort and regards it as a duty to find the best way to promote and direct these efforts. (3) More emphasis on social goals pursued by law than sanctions. (4) Emphasizes that the rule of law should be regarded more as a guide to obtain outcomes that society considers fair than as a rigid framework (Shalihah, 2017), because the problem of sexual harassment is included in the framework of social law and the increasing number of abuses, the order must be taken more than seriously. A government that bases everything on laws would certainly be able to solve or at least reduce the problems, but this is not the case: legislators cannot deal with them while social events pile up.

Law enforcers

Law enforcement can ensure that the rule of law runs, as the rule should have regulated it. Law enforcement includes the values of justice contained in the sound of formal rules or the values of justice that live in society in the form of formal and written regulations and issued by an authorized institution (Wahyuni, 2020). Law enforcers maintain the purity of the law itself to maintain justice in people's lives. However, in the field, most laws are subject to bartering, which hinders their fair application. The law does not serve as a balancing mechanism for a just life, but it has the power to undermine those in vulnerable positions.

In this regard, law enforcement has factors that can influence and have meaning, so that law enforcement can positively and negatively impact the content of these factors. Disruption in law enforcement occurs when there is a discrepancy between values, rules and behavior

patterns. Law enforcement will not work as it should or will be disrupted in its journey due to factors such as law, law enforcement, facilities, community, and cultural factors (Soekanto, 1983). Therefore, there is no guarantee that the law can function with true justice, despite its intended purpose.

Even though the law is difficult to ascertain, a strategy is needed to build an accountable law enforcement system: (1) The need for improvement or updating, complementing existing legal instruments and legislation. (2) Improving the quality of law enforcement human resources regarding morality and intellect. (3) The establishment of an independent institution by the government whose members consist of intelligent elements of the wider community (judges, prosecutors and police) which aims to oversee the law enforcement process, where the agency will later have the authority to recommend that sanctions be imposed on law enforcers who violate legal morality and/or violate law enforcement processes. (4) Standardizing and providing adequate welfare is necessary, especially for salaried law enforcers: judges, prosecutors and police (non-advocates). (5) Intensive dissemination of law and legislation to the general public is carried out due to the legal principle. (6) Building a joint commitment from law enforcers that is consistent with the 4 law enforcement elements, namely judges, advocates, prosecutors and police (Muliansyah & Rachman, 2025).

Community readiness to law

The development progress of the Indonesian nation has a dynamic of rapid change, which impacts the improvement of the laws and regulations in this country. Environmental law, with all its pitfalls, continues to be updated following developments that develop in the form of more complex regulations based on the developments and needs of society. Law enforcement officials should involve various interdisciplinary mining entities in formulating regulations so that promulgated regulations can benefit the community (Dupuy, 2014).

Laws are formed and addressed to the community. With its binding power, laws and regulations can impose obligations on the community to do something legal or have strong social roots to minimize rejection of laws and regulations promulgated in forming statutory regulations already owned by the community. The community has the right to contribute and gain access to these activities (Seta, 2020).

Article 28D of the 1945 Constitution stipulates that everyone has the right to recognition, guaranteed protection, and fair legal certainty. This document is normative legal research, with a conceptual and legislative approach to finding answers to existing problems. Therefore, all legal products must find a response that the public understands and implements. If the public does not know the legal product, there will be "noise" in social life. The person who makes the law must introduce the contents of the legal product issued by the government when the law is promulgated. Even though the reality is imperfect, preparing people to understand the law is an important consideration when adopting the legal product.

Developing a community that understands the law

The government must educate the public about legal products it has promulgated and will continue to do so. This fact occurs a little, so that most Indonesians are legally illiterate,

so it is not surprising that social problems in the field are increasing and cannot be handled adequately. The issue of sexual violence against children seems to have been stopped by societal turmoil without a complete solution from all aspects. Therefore, the government must develop an understanding of the laws that apply in society.

Humans are born with different traits, characters, talents, desires, and interests. As social beings, humans need each other in social life. In the community, humans develop by working together, socializing, and earning a living to support themselves. Humans often manifest as shocks that cause conflict in society, which can lead to a social environment that is not harmonious, disorderly, and precarious, developing an attitude of legal conscience to live life in society. Legal awareness can be interpreted as awareness of the rules or applicable law of a person or group of people. Therefore, legal awareness is required on the part of the company. Therefore, it is crucial to instill legal awareness early in the family environment.

Before taking legal action, it plays an important role in the evolution of law because the higher the level of public legal awareness, the weaker the legal system; conversely, the stronger the legal awareness, the stronger the law. Humans must obey the law, which will create an atmosphere of positive law enforcement, instill a sense of justice, create legal certainty in society, and benefit community members (Hasibuan, 2016).

Christian education values as a moral defense

Christian education is the basis for solving sexual harassment problems (Jankko, 2009). Christian education is a source of values for moral transformation that originates from accepting Jesus Christ as the human savior and transforming human life into living like Jesus. Christian education and a biblical model of constructivism as teaching material instilled from childhood, youth, adulthood, and until the end of life must be applied to education in the family community (Wilkerson, 2021).

Christian education, defined as discipleship, is the only means of preparation for life's eternal transcending dilemma and is synonymous with discipleship formation (Cox Jr & Peck, 2018). Man must learn to respect God by making himself a learner of Christian values (Harianto et al., 2023). Thus, facing an increasingly secularized world, calls for a spiritual awakening and rebirth are caused by the rapid process of cultural secularization, the loss of traditional lifestyle forms and values, the decline of interest in faith and religious lifestyles, and the breakdown of moral values (Orekhovskaya et al., 2019). Calvin said that good morals are living according to what Christian education teaches because Christian education is the source of moral education (García-Alonso, 2011).

John Calvin says that Adam and Eve's transgression did not consist in sexual desire but in their disobedience to God's commandments. All of humanity suffered as a result of this disobedience. It is a sin. Original sin destroyed this ideal, and since then, sexual desire has been inexorably coexistent with procreation. This evil can be put to good use in legal marriages, where sexual intercourse aims to produce children rather than bodily pleasure (Sosler, 2023).

Therefore, Christian education is the basic design for maintaining moral values (Harianto et al., 2022). Christian education philosophy is a necessity because of the power of Christian education narratives to shape identity and moral character. Christian education

serves as a moral resource for Christian decision-making and the church's moral response to the future of Christian education (Maddix, 2018).

Conclusion

Impact of sexual abuse children can experience (1) physical trauma: damage to the child's genital area, can be attacked by sexually transmitted diseases (syphilis, gonorrhea, HIV), increased or decreased eating (anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge eating disorder) and vaginismus causes vaginal muscles to contract automatically when anything between (2) psychological trauma (emotions): depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, eating disorders and sexual problems, loss of the child's trust in adults, sexual trauma, feelings of helplessness and stigma.

Handling child sexual abuse involves counselors, parents, schools, religious institutions, and the law. Counselors assist in generating self-confidence. Parents provide cognitive, effective and psychomotor education at an early age. Schools conduct education about sexuality. Religious institutions develop strong religious values every day. The law produces products that meet the needs of society to maintain a just and equitable life.

Legal action, as social engineering, can resolve child sexual abuse and create legal products that can uphold social justice. Legal products must be understood and developed by the community, while legislators can maintain the purity of the law without being influenced by certain parties. Legal products are developed by involving all levels from various disciplines and workplaces.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest.

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