

Prevention of Violence, Neglect and Exploitation of Children Reviewed from Law Number 35 of 2014 Concerning Child Protection

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ABSTRACT

Violence, neglect, and exploitation of children remain serious problems in Indonesia that require systematic prevention efforts based on law and community participation. This study aims to increase public understanding of the prevention of violence against children based on Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection through a comprehensive community service program. The method used is a participatory and educational approach with a mixed qualitative-quantitative design, involving 255 participants consisting of 100 heads of families, 50 educators, 30 community leaders, and 75 children aged 10-17 years. Activities were carried out for 6 months at the village level through participatory workshops, intensive training, legal socialization, and the establishment of a community-based child protection forum. Data collection was carried out through pre-post test surveys, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation. The results showed a significant increase in participants' knowledge by 34% exceeding the minimum target of 25%, a positive attitude change in 89% of participants to report cases of child violence, and a participation rate of 92%. The establishment of a child protection forum with 35 members from various community elements and a strategic partnership network with relevant agencies demonstrates the program's success in building a sustainable protection system. Implementation faced challenges such as cultural resistance, limited infrastructure, and the community's socioeconomic conditions. The program successfully created a community-based child protection model that can be replicated in other regions with adaptations to local contexts to achieve a child-friendly Indonesia.

Keywords: Child Protection, Violence Prevention, Community Empowerment

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INTRODUCTION

Children are a trust and gift from God Almighty, endowed with the dignity and worth of a full human being. As the nation's future generation, children have the right to protection from all forms of violence, neglect, and exploitation that could threaten their physical, mental, and social development. However, the reality in society shows that cases of violence against children continue to occur in various forms and at an alarming intensity.(Dimitrijoska, 2020).

Data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission shows an increase in cases of child abuse year after year, ranging from physical, psychological, and sexual abuse to economic and social neglect. This situation is further exacerbated by a lack of public understanding of children's rights and the protection mechanisms stipulated in laws and regulations. Factors such as poverty, low levels of education, and weak community oversight systems contribute to the high rate of violence experienced by Indonesian children.(Edwards et al., 2023).

Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection has provided a strong legal basis for protecting children from various threats, but its implementation at the community level remains suboptimal due to minimal public awareness and understanding of the law's substance. The gap between existing regulations and practice in the field demonstrates the need for systematic efforts to increase public awareness and capacity to understand and apply the child protection provisions stipulated in the legislation.(Alimpić, 2025).

The issues of violence, neglect, and exploitation against children are highly relevant to the current social conditions in Indonesia. This phenomenon not only impacts individual victims but also threatens the future of the nation, as traumatized children face difficulties in optimally developing their potential. The relevance of this issue is further strengthened by Indonesia's ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its commitment to realizing a child-friendly Indonesia. Furthermore, the issue of child protection aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly the target of ending all forms of violence against children. In the context of community service, this issue is highly relevant because it requires the active involvement of all elements of society, from families and schools to the community and the government, in creating a safe and conducive environment for children's growth and development. The urgency of addressing this issue is even greater given the long-term impact it has not only on children's psychological well-being but also on Indonesia's overall human resource development.

The main objective of this community service activity is to increase public understanding and awareness of the importance of preventing violence, neglect, and exploitation of children based on the perspective of Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection. Specifically, this activity aims to provide education to the community about the forms of violence against children, the causal factors, the resulting impacts, and the mechanisms for prevention and handling that can be implemented. This activity also aims to build community capacity in identifying signs of violence against children and providing appropriate responses in accordance with applicable legal provisions. In addition, this service also aims to strengthen child protection networks at the community level by involving various stakeholders such as community leaders, teachers, parents, and the children themselves. Through a comprehensive and sustainable approach, it is hoped that a strong culture of child protection will be formed in the community so that every child can grow and develop in a safe, comfortable environment that supports their potential.

This community service activity provides significant benefits to various parties in efforts to prevent violence against children. For the community, this activity provides knowledge and practical skills in identifying, preventing, and handling cases of child violence in accordance with applicable legal corridors. Parents and families will gain a better understanding of appropriate parenting patterns, effective communication with children, and how to create a protective family environment. For educators and social workers, this activity provides knowledge to carry out their roles as the frontline in the child protection system in schools and communities. Children, as the primary subjects, will benefit from increased awareness of their rights, the ability to protect themselves, and the courage to report acts of violence they experience or witness. The long-term benefits of this activity are the creation of a society that has a high concern for child protection, a decrease in the number of cases of violence against children, and the realization of an environment conducive to optimal child growth and development in accordance with the mandate of the constitution and laws and regulations.

The novelty of this community service activity lies in its integrative approach, combining legal, psychological, and social perspectives to understand the phenomenon of violence against children. Unlike similar programs that generally focus on only one aspect, this activity uses Law Number 35 of 2014 as the main framework of analysis while integrating a multidisciplinary approach to provide a holistic understanding. Another unique feature of this activity is the use of participatory methods that involve children as active agents in the learning process, not just as objects of protection. This approach allows children to participate in identifying problems and finding solutions according to their capacity and developmental stage. This activity also uses innovative and contextual learning media, adapted to the demographic and socio-cultural characteristics of the local community. Another novel aspect is the development of a sustainable community-based child protection network model, where the community is not only a recipient of information but also an agent of change capable of developing a child protection system independently. This model is expected to serve as a reference for the implementation of similar programs in other regions with adaptations to their respective local conditions.

METHOD

Methodological Approach

This community service activity uses a participatory and educational approach, incorporating a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods. This participatory approach was chosen to ensure the active involvement of all stakeholders in the learning process and implementation of child protection programs. Educational methods are used to improve the community's knowledge, attitudes, and skills in understanding and applying the provisions of Law Number 35 of 2014. This approach also integrates adult learning principles, taking into account the experiences and sociocultural context of the target community.

Location and Time of Implementation

Community service activities are carried out in sub-districts/villages selected based on the criteria of high levels of child vulnerability to violence, neglect, and exploitation. Location selection also takes into account accessibility, local government support, and community readiness to participate in the program. Activities are implemented over a six-month period, divided into preparation phases (1 month), implementation (4 months), and evaluation and follow-up (1 month). Implementation times are adjusted to the local community activity calendar to ensure optimal participation of all target groups.

Target Target

The main target of this activity is the community at the grassroots level, consisting of several strategic groups. The first group is parents and families of children aged 0-18 years with a target of at least 100 heads of families selected by purposive sampling based on diverse socio-economic backgrounds. The second group is educators, including 50 elementary, middle, and early childhood education teachers who play a frontline role in detecting and preventing child violence in educational environments. The third group is community leaders and informal leaders, including religious leaders, RT/RW heads, and community organization administrators, totaling 30 people who have influence in forming opinions and policies at the community level. The fourth group is children aged 10-17 years, totaling 75 children selected with consideration of gender balance and education level to be involved in peer education programs and child rights advocacy.

Method of collecting data

Data collection was conducted through triangulation to ensure the validity and reliability of the information. The quantitative method was implemented through pre- and post-test surveys using a validated structured questionnaire to measure the level of community knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to child protection before and after the activity. The qualitative method was conducted through in-depth interviews with key informants, focus group discussions with various target groups, and participant observation to understand the social and cultural dynamics that influence child protection practices in the community. Secondary data was collected through document studies that included statistical data on child violence from relevant agencies, demographic profiles of the target areas, and existing child protection policies at the local level.

Activity Implementation Techniques

The activities were implemented using multiple methods tailored to the characteristics of each target group. For the parent and family group, a participatory workshop method was used, incorporating focus group discussions, case simulations, and effective communication practices with children. Interactive lectures were combined with case studies to provide an in-depth understanding of the substance of

Law No. 35 of 2014. For the educator group, an intensive training method was applied with an andragogical approach, including theory sessions, practical sessions on identifying signs of violence, and developing case handling protocols in the school environment. For community leaders, advocacy and capacity building methods were used through seminars, community action plan development workshops, and the establishment of a village-level child protection forum. Specifically for the children's group, a peer education method was applied, employing role-playing techniques, storytelling, and creative media creation to raise awareness of children's rights and how to protect themselves from various threats.

Instruments and Materials

The instruments used in this activity included validated pre- and post-test questionnaires to measure changes in participants' knowledge, attitudes, and practices. Guidelines for in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) were developed based on the dimensions of child protection in Law No. 35 of 2014. Educational materials were developed in the form of learning modules tailored to the education level and age of each target group. The module for parents explained the forms of child violence, risk factors, prevention strategies, and reporting mechanisms. The module for educators focused on protocols for identifying and handling cases of child violence in schools as well as basic counseling techniques. Materials for community leaders covered the substance of Law No. 35 of 2014, coordination mechanisms with relevant agencies, and strategies for developing community-based child protection programs. Learning media for children were packaged in engaging formats such as educational comics, animated videos, and educational games that taught about children's rights, how to protect themselves, and the importance of reporting acts of violence.

Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative data analysis was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistics to determine differences in participants' knowledge, attitudes, and practices before and after the program. The paired t-test was used to analyze the significance of changes in normally distributed data, while the Wilcoxon test was used for non-normally distributed data. Qualitative data analysis used content analysis techniques with a thematic approach to identify patterns in findings from interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). The coding process was carried out systematically to identify key themes related to community understanding of child protection, implementation barriers, and potential program development. Data triangulation was conducted by comparing the results of surveys, interviews, observations, and document studies to ensure the validity of the findings. The analysis also involved member checking by verifying the findings with key informants to ensure the accuracy of data interpretation.

Success Indicators

The success of the activity is measured through specific and measurable quantitative and qualitative indicators. Quantitative indicators include a minimum 25%

increase in participants' knowledge scores from baseline, a positive attitude change of at least 80% of participants, and adoption of child protection practices by at least 70% of participants based on post-test results. The level of participant participation in all series of activities is at least 85% of the total registered participants. Qualitative indicators include the establishment of a child protection forum at the village level, a written commitment from community leaders to support the child protection program, and the implementation of at least 3 follow-up activities initiated by the community itself. Medium-term indicators include a decrease in reports of child violence cases in the target area within 6 months after the activity and increased community awareness to report cases they encounter to the authorities.

Program Sustainability

To ensure the program's sustainability, a community empowerment strategy was developed through the formation of child protection cadres drawn from the local community. These cadres were intensively trained to become agents of change capable of continuing outreach and education to the wider community. Establishing partnership networks with village governments, schools, community health centers, and civil society organizations was a key strategy to ensure sustainable institutional support. The development of a participatory monitoring and evaluation system enabled communities to independently monitor the progress of child protection measures in their areas. Furthermore, an operational community action plan was developed that could be implemented in stages with the support of available local resources.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Socialization and Education Activities

Community service activities to prevent violence, neglect, and exploitation of children have been implemented according to the established plan. Dissemination of Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection was conducted through a participatory approach involving all elements of society. Methods used included interactive lectures, group discussions, and case simulations to provide a comprehensive understanding of the law's substance.



Figure 1. Child Protection Socialization Activities to the Community

Public enthusiasm for this activity was very high, as evidenced by the participation rate, which reached 92% of the total registered participants. Participants demonstrated great interest in the material presented, particularly regarding the legal definition of child abuse and practical ways to prevent it. The conducive and interactive learning environment enabled the exchange of experiences and knowledge among participants.(Savitri, 2020).

The documentation of the activity in Figure 1 demonstrates an active learning situation where participants were not merely passive recipients of information but also engaged in discussions and Q&A sessions. The presentation method, combined with group discussions, proved effective in enhancing participants' understanding of the complexities of child protection issues. The positive response from participants was evident in the numerous questions asked and the sharing of experiences relevant to the topic.(Filipenko et al., 2023).

Increasing Public Understanding and Awareness

Evaluation of the community's level of understanding showed a significant improvement after participating in outreach activities. Pre- and post-test results indicated an average increase in knowledge scores of 34%, exceeding the established minimum target of 25%. The most significant change was seen in participants' understanding of forms of child abuse previously considered normal within the local cultural context.



Figure 2. Discussion and Q&A Session with Participants

The discussion and question-and-answer session, as seen in Figure 2, was a crucial moment in the learning process. Participants actively asked questions about the practical application of Law No. 35 of 2014 in everyday life, particularly regarding the boundaries between education and violence against children. The dynamics of the discussion demonstrated a process of in-depth reflection by participants on their parenting practices.(Tan et al., 2023).

The most significant change in attitudes was seen in the community's willingness to report cases of child abuse they encountered. Prior to the activity, the majority of participants considered child abuse an internal family matter that should not be interfered with by outsiders. After understanding the legal provisions and the impact of violence on child development, 89% of participants expressed a willingness to take preventive measures and report cases in accordance with established procedures.(Wona et al., 2024).

Establishment of a Community-Based Child Protection Network

The formation of a child protection network was one of the strategic outputs of this community service activity. A community-level child protection forum was successfully established, involving 35 representatives from various community elements, including religious leaders, neighborhood association (RT/RW) heads, teachers, parents, and child representatives. The forum's organizational structure was structured on democratic and participatory principles, with each member having clear roles and responsibilities within the child protection system.



Figure 3. Formation of a Community-Level Child Protection Forum

Figure 3 shows the atmosphere during the formation of the child protection forum, attended by all key stakeholders at the community level. The forum formation process was conducted through a consensus-building mechanism, taking into account representation from each community group. The agreement reached included a vision, mission, work program, and coordination mechanisms with relevant agencies at the sub-district and district levels.(Warria, 2022).

The established forum has developed an operational community action plan that can be implemented with the support of available local resources. This action plan includes ongoing outreach activities, a monitoring system for children's conditions in their respective communities, and a rapid response mechanism for handling cases of child abuse. The forum members' commitment to the program's sustainability is evident in their willingness to voluntarily allocate time and energy to carry out the planned activities.(Kiss et al., 2025)

Impact Analysis and Behavior Change

The impact analysis of the activity showed comprehensive changes in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of the participants. From a cognitive perspective, there was a significant increase in understanding of the definition of child abuse, children's rights under Law No. 35 of 2014, and available protection mechanisms. Participants also demonstrated improved ability to identify risk factors for child abuse in their environment and understand the long-term impact of violence on child development.(Asia, 2025).

Changes in the affective aspect were evident in the participants' increased empathy and concern for child protection issues. Before the activity, most participants considered child abuse a rare phenomenon in their community. After participating, 91% stated that child protection is a priority that deserves serious attention from the entire community.

This shift in attitude was also reflected in the participants' willingness to actively participate in efforts to prevent and address cases of child abuse.(Dona et al., 2024).

From a psychomotor perspective, participants demonstrated improved skills in communicating with children, recognizing signs of violence, and taking appropriate action when encountering cases of child abuse. Post-activity observations indicated that 78% of participants had implemented more positive communication patterns with children in their neighborhoods. Several participants had also independently conducted outreach to neighbors and relatives about the importance of child protection, demonstrating the multiplier effect of the activities implemented.(Sinambela & Npm, 2017).

Challenges and Obstacles in Implementation

The implementation of community-based child protection programs faces several structural challenges that require special attention. The main challenge is cultural resistance to changes in traditional parenting patterns that remain deeply rooted in the community. Some participants, particularly those over 50, still maintain the view that corporal punishment is an effective educational method and does not fall under the category of child abuse under Law No. 35 of 2014.(Sarawad, 2022).

Technical barriers encountered included limited communication and information infrastructure, which hampered ongoing outreach. The geographic location of the target areas, largely in rural areas with limited internet access, hampered information dissemination and activity coordination. Limited human resources competent in child protection also hampered optimal community capacity development.(Garcia et al., 2024).

The socioeconomic aspects of the community also present unique challenges in program implementation. The poverty experienced by some communities causes their primary priority to be on meeting basic economic needs, so child protection issues are sometimes considered a secondary priority. Different levels of education require different communication strategies, with participants with lower educational backgrounds requiring a simpler and more practical approach than those with higher educational backgrounds.(Sholikhah, 2020).

Strategy for Strengthening Child Protection Systems

Strengthening the community-based child protection system is carried out through sustainable local human resource capacity development. Established child protection cadres receive advanced training in basic counseling techniques, case referral mechanisms, and local policy advocacy strategies. Regular refresher and capacity-upgrading programs are conducted to ensure cadres maintain up-to-date knowledge and skills in line with regulatory developments and best practices in child protection.(Baidawi et al., 2020).

Developing a strategic partnership network is a top priority in strengthening the child protection system. Formal partnerships with village governments, schools, community health centers, police, and social services are being developed through the signing of memorandums of understanding that define the roles and responsibilities of each party. This network is equipped with an information and communication system that enables effective coordination in case management and prevention of child abuse. A tiered referral mechanism is also being developed to ensure that child abuse cases receive appropriate treatment according to their level of complexity.(Dratva et al., 2024).

A sustainable communication and outreach strategy is developed by utilizing various media and platforms accessible to the community. Traditional media such as religious study groups, social gatherings, and neighborhood association (RT/RW) meetings are combined with modern media such as social media and messaging apps to reach all levels of society. Communication materials are tailored to the characteristics of each target group and presented in language that is easy to understand and relevant to the context of people's daily lives.(Moss et al., 2023).

Theoretical and Practical Implications

This community service activity provides a significant theoretical contribution to the development of a community-based child protection model in Indonesia. Research findings indicate that integrating a legal approach with local sociocultural perspectives produces a more effective and sustainable model than approaches relying solely on legal instruments. The developed participatory model has proven capable of accommodating diverse community backgrounds and fostering a strong sense of ownership in the child protection program.

In practice, this activity has produced a replicable model that can be adapted to various regions with diverse socio-cultural conditions. The developed community-based child protection network model provides a practical solution to address the government's limited resources in reaching all areas. The use of local cadres as agents of change has proven more effective in changing community behavior than approaches relying on external resources.

Another practical implication is the availability of contextually and culturally appropriate learning models for child protection education at the grassroots level. The materials and methods developed can serve as references for implementing similar programs in other regions. The participatory evaluation model used also provides an alternative monitoring and evaluation approach that involves the community as active participants in assessing the program's effectiveness.(Robinson, 2024).

Recommendations for Program Development

Based on the evaluation and analysis, it is recommended to extend the program duration to a minimum of 12 months to allow sufficient time for the community to internalize child protection values. A longer period will allow for ongoing monitoring

of changes in community behavior and provide an opportunity to adjust the program according to developments on the ground. Furthermore, more specific learning modules should be developed for each target group, taking into account their demographic and sociocultural characteristics.

Partnerships with local media outlets need to be strengthened to increase outreach and create a supportive public climate for child protection. A systematic and sustainable mass communication strategy will help shift broader public perceptions about the importance of child protection. Partnerships with the private sector also need to be developed to support program sustainability, both in terms of funding and corporate social responsibility.

The final recommendation is the need for policy support from local governments in the form of more operational derivative regulations and dedicated budget allocations for community-based child protection programs. Integrating these programs into regional development plans will provide legitimacy and strong institutional support. Furthermore, a more comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system with measurable indicators is needed to track the program's long-term impact on child protection conditions in the community. (Gerbaka et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

Community service activities on the prevention of violence, neglect, and exploitation of children based on Law Number 35 of 2014 have successfully achieved their main objective of increasing community awareness and capacity to protect children from various forms of threats. Evaluation results show a 34% increase in participant knowledge, exceeding the minimum target, a positive attitude change in 89% of participants who are willing to report cases of child violence, and a very high participation rate of 92%. The success of this program lies not only in the transfer of knowledge about the substance of Law No. 35 of 2014, but also in the transformation of the community mindset that previously considered child violence as a private family matter to a shared community responsibility. The establishment of a community-based child protection forum with 35 members from various elements of society and the development of a strategic partnership network with relevant agencies has created a sustainable and independent protection system. The participatory and integrative approach model that combines legal, psychological, and socio-cultural perspectives has proven effective in overcoming cultural resistance and creating significant behavioral changes, so that this model can be replicated in other regions with adaptations to each local condition to realize a child-friendly Indonesia in accordance with the mandate of the constitution and international commitments.

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