

THE STUPID LIBIDO: SEARCHING FOR THE ROOT CAUSES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of the present study was to explore and comprehend sexual violence against children in Indonesia using the phenomenological method. The study was conducted in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam and West Java Provinces. In-depth interviews were carried out with several informants ranging from government officials, women activists, teachers, and community leaders. Results showed that sexual violence against children was actually perpetrated by the person closest to the victims. The perpetrators used the weakness of victims who did not dare tell their parents about the abuse, which was due to cultural and structural problems.

KEYWORDS: Sexual violence against children, phenomenology, the closest person, the victim, cultural, structural.

INTRODUCTION

The case of sexual violence against the school pupils in Jakarta International School (JIS) shocked and depressed all of us and slapped the face of education. The case awakened us that the peril of sexual abuse had been stalking the pupils in their schools.

As a consequence, the Minister of National Education, Muhammad Nuh, in a furious tone, said that the JIS case was not merely a case of sexual violence, but it was a crime against humanity. Hence, there must be a legal measure, not only limited to administrative matters, such as closing the school. "This is a slap for education since it is a murder of the child's future. We do not want our country being used as the scene of crimes against humanity" Nuh said (Kompas, April 26, 2014).

Data collected and analyzed by the Center for Data and Information of the National Commission for Child Protection indicated 21,689,797 cases of violation of children's rights. Nearly half of the cases were sexual violence against children. The percentage of sexual violence against children increased year by year. In 2012, there were 2,637 cases, 41 per cent of which were sexual violence on children. In 2013, the figure declined, but the percentage of sexual violence jumped to 60 percent. The latest data from the National Commission for Child Protection indicated that in the period from January to June 2014 there were 1,039 cases with 1,896 child victims, most (60 percent) of them being the case of sexual violence (Liputan6.com).

Chairman of the National Commission for Child Protection, Arist Merdeka Sirait, in a press release as quoted by Tempo.com, said that 38 percent of perpetrators of child sexual abuse were inspired from adult sites. According to him, the more easily accessible adult sites then led to an increase in child abuse. Furthermore,

he explained that the perpetrators of crimes committed by children under the age of 14 years increased from 16 percent last year to 26 percent in 2014. During the period of January to June 2014, the National Commission for Child Protection received 1,689 reported cases of violation of children's rights. A total of 1,879 children became victims. Of that figure, 48 percent of which were sex crimes. More alarmingly, 16 percent of the total number of reported cases put children as the perpetrators. According to Arist, until December 2014 there were 2,750 cases of child abuse. Of the 2,750 cases, 58 percent were sex crimes.

Furthermore, the Chairman of the National Commission for Child Protection, Arist Merdeka Sirait, predicted that the numbers of child sex crimes increased by 12 percent in 2015. This prediction, he said, was triggered by the ease with which pornographic sites were accessed in Indonesia. He detailed that at the national level for the 2010–2014 period the rate of sexual violence reached 58 percent of the 21,736,859 reported crimes against children. In the same year, the National Commission received 3,737 reports of violation against children, 58 percent of which were sexual violence (Tempo, January 6, 2015).

Nevertheless, Aceh Province did not escape from sex crimes against children. In fact, according to the records of the Child Legal Aid Institute (LBH Anak), the practice of sexual violence against children is still ongoing. The Child Legal Aid Institute of Aceh Province recorded 149 cases of sexual violence against children in the last five years.

The Program Manager of The Child Legal Aid Institute of Aceh Province, Rudy Bastian, said that in the period the number of sexual violence against children showed an increase. "For 2014 only, there were 35 cases involving children as victims and perpetrators of sexual violence," he said in Banda Aceh (Monday, November 24, 2014).

Since 2010, The Child Legal Aid Institute of Aceh Province reported that there were 27 cases of sexual violence against children in various areas of Aceh. A year later, the number rose to 29 cases. In 2012, the same cases increased again to 32 cases and the following year decreased to 26 cases.

Meanwhile, according to Siti Maisaroh, the Chairman of Women Empowerment and Child Protection of Banda Aceh, during 2014 there were 59 cases of violence against women and children in the city of Banda Aceh, consisting of 34 and 25 cases of violence against women and children, respectively. In 2015, violence against women and children in Banda Aceh reached 52 cases.

In West Java, the Kompas Research and Development (2015) reported that there was an increase in cases of violence against children in West Java. The report indicated that sexual violence against children ranked first (621 cases), followed successively by family violence and alternative care (452 cases), violence against children before the court (432 cases), and violence in education (249 cases).

Against the background data, the present study sought to comprehend why sexual violence occurs against children and continues to recur in Indonesia, what are factors behind it and what efforts that can be done to minimize sexual violence against children.

METHODS

The present study was a qualitative research using the phenomenological approach through understanding, exploring and interpreting the meaning of events and phenomena that have influences in a given situation. Phenomenology studies and describes the intrinsic characteristics of the symptoms as symptoms themselves reveal itself in consciousness (Lorens Bagus, 2003). In this context, the researcher was seeking to understand how phenomena or symptoms of sexual violence against children occur in Indonesia.

The present study was conducted in Aceh and West Java Provinces. Secondary and primary data were used. Secondary data were obtained from both the print and electronic media. Primary data were obtained through

in-depth interviews. Informants were selected by using the snowball and purposive sampling methods in consideration of the sensitive nature of the issues being examined.

The selected informants consisted of teachers who accompanied the victims of sexual violence, women and children NGO activists, the heads of education office, service agencies such as P2TP2A (*Pusat Pelayanan Terhadap Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Anak*, or Service Center for Women Empowerment and Children), and community leaders. The researcher failed to interview the child victims of sexual violence since almost all the victims, particularly in Aceh and West Java Provinces, refused to be interviewed for reasons of fear, shame and trauma. Likewise, perpetrators of sexual violence against children were not willing to be interviewed for reasons of embarrassment. However, information required for the purpose of this study were obtained through interviews with teachers and service aid officers for women and child victims of sexual violence.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A study in North America showed that there were approximately 15% to 25% of women and 5% to 15% of men were sexually abused when they were children. Most perpetrators of sexual abuse were persons known by their victims; around 30% were relatives of the child, most often being their brother, father, uncle, or cousin; around 60% were other acquaintances, such as a 'friend' of the family, a caregiver, or a neighbor; strangers accounted for around 10% of perpetrators in cases of sexual abuse of children (Richard and William T. O'Donohue, 2010).

The report by Richard and William T. O'Donohue was in line with the results of interviews in Aceh and West Java. The present study found that sex crimes against children were precisely perpetrated by persons around the place where the victims lived. Those perpetrators included police officers, school vendors, teachers and even their own siblings. The following are important field findings associated with child sex abusers, as expressed by Anwar, a teacher who was also the vice principal at Elementary School 38 Lampahseh Aceh”

“... Circa 2014, two of my students became victims of sexual violence. And the perpetrator was a policeman. Initially, no one knew about the incident. The story began with the parents of the student who asked the school to encourage the student to speak since the mother of the student was baffled since the student was depressed for a week and did not want to tell the truth. Finally, being approached by a teacher, I encouraged the student to speak up. Initially, the student was not willing to speak. But, I lied a little and said 'if you do not want to tell the truth you're not allowed to join my sport class'. My 'threat' made her afraid and eventually she wanted to speak up. Imah, the pseudonym of the student, told me that she had been abused by a policeman. And the policeman lived next to the school,” said Anwar with a dreamy gaze.

Certainly, no one suspected that the policeman, known by the local people as the Tsunami victim and well-behaving, perpetrated the abuse. Already knowing the policeman, Imah was unsuspecting him when he asked for help to her. As Anwar told the beginning of the incident:

“It was after school, the policeman called Imah to ask her to buy cigarettes for him. Being 11 years of age, Imah could only comply. But, after buying the cigarettes, it turned out that the policeman forced her to enter into his house, which was empty. That afternoon, Imah was sexually abused.”

Apparently, Imah was not the only victim. According to Anwar, there was another student experiencing the same fate as that of Imah. But, the student did not experience such a tragic incident as that of Imah since she managed to escape.

Results of interviews with other respondents also indicated that sexual violence against children was also perpetrated by the closest person to the victim, the sibling. Still from the findings in Aceh, Badru Nisa', the Chief of P2TP2A of the City of Aceh, recounted the story:

"... This story makes us all feel concerned. Just imagine an older brother had an intercourse with his younger sister who was in the 6th grade. The incident also occurred in 2014. But this story happened in a broken family. The older brother was involved with drugs and lived on the streets as a 'child of punk'. Possibly due to the influence of drugs, the older brother had the heart to do that to his 6th-grade sister," said Badrun Nisa'.

This case is being processed at the police. The P2TP2A of the City of Aceh provided counseling to the victim. And, of course, there are many smarting stories unfolded in Aceh which take time and require an open heart to detail.

The melancholy stories in Aceh Province also similarly occurred in West Java Province. Despite the different forms, the stories of sexual violence against children also occurred in the province. The perpetrators were the persons who were and known to be close to the victims. In West Java, the present study found a victim who was a student with special needs who was studying at an elementary school for exceptional children (locally known as 'SLB') in Majalengka. This story was told by Supriyadi, 36, an education activist in Bandung Regency:

"... There is an elementary school for exceptional children in Majalengka, in which one of the students was raped by a hawker at the school. I don't know how to explain this case. This is a child with special needs, but the perpetrator still has the heart to rape her. In fact, he has already been familiar with the victim. He sold foods near the school every day. But, perhaps because the perpetrator already knew the victim and the victim also felt familiar with him, then it happened."

In addition to the case in Majalengka, the Bandung Institute of Women recorded that in the period of January to March 2015 there were several acts of violence against children perpetrated by the people closest to the victims. Among the records of the Bandung Institute of Women are:

"Case 1: A biological father committed a rape for 6 years since the victim was 11 years old to 17 years until the victim had a child. The rape took place in the house when the victim's mother and brothers were not at home. The victim was threatened to be killed if her mother and younger brothers came to know what he did. This resulted in the victim suffering from mental trauma due to the threat and presence of the baby as the result of the rape. Case 2: Violence in a community in which a male teacher molested 9 pupils who were still under the age of 18 years. The perpetrator performed his acts sequentially in the school infirmary on the pretext that the perpetrator could tell fortunes and the victims got cheated. The perpetrator is on trial in Bandung State Court and is threatened with a punishment of over 12 years" (Bandung Institute of Women, 2015).

In some cases, sexual violence against children was not the first and the last, but it continues to occur. Some of the findings in Aceh and West Java Provinces that the perpetrators of sexual violence against children involved adults suggested that it was due to the pedophilic desire. Dinastuti (2014) asserted that sexual violence against children occurs also due to the increasingly widespread sexual disorders, such as pedophilia among adults today. She noted that the prevalence of people with pedophilic disorders in Europe and the United States reached 1 to 3 percent of the population. This fact confirms that sexual violence against children is threatening and present around us. Perpetrators of sexual violence against children are likely to have experienced sexual abuse during their childhood. However, this does not apply to all of them. This is not a cause and effect.

Additionally, the perpetrators of sexual violence against children found in West Java and Aceh were male pedophiles. This fact is emphasized by a study conducted by Richard and William T. O'Donohue (2010) which showed that the majority of child sexual abuse was committed by men. Studies showed that women perpetrated 14% to 40% of sexual assaults reported against boys and 6% of the reported assaults against women. Most perpetrators of sexual abuse against children before puberty were a pedophile, even though some of them did not meet the standard clinical diagnosis for pedophilia.

The fact that child sex abusers are male pedophiles represents a form of male hegemony in society. Literature reviews reveal that the patriarchal culture where men are considered to power in a society motivates someone to exploit children sexually.

Male regime hegemony in a society culture seems to be a justification that sexual violence against children is something common. Transformation of male power against the powerlessness of children and women lead sexual violence against children to have a variety of reasons. As found in the study, what occurred in Aceh and West Java Provinces showed that there were some backgrounds that led someone to commit sexual violence against children. The following are excerpts of interviews with respondents in both regions:

“... To search for the root causes of sexual violence against children in West Java is so complex and difficult. There are a lot of things, situations and conditions that constitute the root causes of sexual violence against children. One is due to disharmony of the perpetrator's family. The family disharmony leads the perpetrators to seek compensation. Based on our experiences during the counseling, the perpetrator was known to have problems with his wife,” said Rina, counselor at the P2TP2A of Bandung Regency.

Andra, the staff of curriculum section of Bandung City Education Office, believed that sexual violence against children in Bandung was due to environmental factors. Andra said:

“A good family environment enables children to gain comfort and security. Environmental factors explain why sexual violence occurs against children. In addition to environmental factors, religious values within the society also explain why someone perpetrates sexual violence against children. With the decline in religious values in public life it is so easy for someone to do things that violate the norms of religious values” Andra said.

Meanwhile, Puji, 42, a teacher at Soka State Elementary School 34 Bandung, had the opinion that sexual violence against children occurs due the influence of technology, such as the Internet, which is easily accessible to public. In an interview, Puji believed that:

“An easy access to the internet has a bad influence on people's behavior. Indeed, the Internet can be of help to a person but it's also dangerous if you cannot control it. In addition to technological factors, environmental factors also constitute the cause of sexual violence against children. Good environment in society ultimately form a good society. Therefore, family environment is very important for our children.”

Meanwhile, Siti Atika, 56, a staff of junior high school development section, had the opinion that sexual violence against children occurs due to a lack of education. Sometimes, it makes the perpetrator not to think sensibly. The following is an interview with Siti Atika:

“Hence, it is not uncommon that sexual violence against children is perpetrated by a person with a low level of education. However, I do not deny that, sometimes, a highly educated person also commits sexual violence against children.”

Meanwhile, according to Anwar, a teacher in Aceh, sexual violence against children occurs due to the perpetrator's disharmonious family. Anwar said:

"Sexual violence that afflicted my student was due to factors external to the perpetrator. The perpetrator, who was a police officer, did it because he was away from the family. He lived alone. His wife rarely came. He lived here (Lampaseh) not long ago at a house he rented. Due to the problem, he wanted to try to find compensation outside. Since he rented a house next to the school, then he met the Lampaseh elementary school pupils. Perhaps, the pupil was afraid of the threat. So, he definitely thought that the pupil did not dare tell the story to others that she had been sexually abused."

In addition to external factors, another factor leading to sexual violence against children was the situation within the family of the perpetrator. Badrun Nisa' and Siti Maisaroh said:

"...What occurred in the City of Banda Aceh where a little girl was fucked by her own brother was due to the breakdown of the so-called family building. The Aceh case happened due to a broken home. A broken family left children unsupported and unprotected. Thus, the children do not have the room for dialogue and telling stories. Instead, the father or mother who should be the place to tell stories divorced. That's when the children find a place outside their home that is able to hear their problems. The perpetrator, who was the older brother, was a punk. And street life led the older brother to be subjected to influences from the outside world. Even worse, the older brother had been in contact with the HIV virus. Due to drugs, the perpetrator could not control his behavior. As a result, his own sister became the victim of his sexual behavior."

In addition to a broken family, the low faith held by the perpetrators explained why they perpetrated acts clearly forbidden by the religion. This was also said by Badrun Nisa', Siti Maisrah and stressed by T. Angkasa, the Secretary of Education Office of Banda Aceh. In an interview, T. Angkasa said:

"... Certainly, faith is all-everything. Without faith someone will easily do something which is expressly forbidden by the religion. With faith, someone would be afraid to do something that forbidden by the religion. Obviously, those who have intercourse with someone other than their wives, let alone children, are forbidden, anyway. It is faith that controls our behavior. Faithless people do things outside of religion."

Indeed, faith may provide someone with guidance for their life. However, how can one's faith work if the poverty ensnares their life? Two cases in Aceh happened to befall children from poor families. Sri Hardani, Head of Child Protection Section of Aceh Province, believed that economic factors were also the reason why a person might commit sexual violence against children. She said:

"... The economic factor of the family is also one factor why sexual violence occurs against children. Due to economic problems, parents work outside the home without regard to their children's development and environment around the children."

The four issues, family problems, broken home, faith, and economy were highlighted by respondents in the City of Banda Aceh. Of course, these reasons may possibly apply only to Aceh. But, they can also apply to regions outside Aceh. Obviously, what was revealed by Sri Hardani seemed to be current findings confirming what Karl Marx and his followers believed that the economic factors make provide a family with a variety of problems, ranging from conflicts, divorce to disharmony.

As for the case of West Java, family disharmony, uncomfortable environment, the fading religious values, technology and the Internet and lack of education were among the reasons behind the phenomenon of sexual violence against children in West Java.

When portrayed in a matrix, the phenomenon of sexual violence against children in Aceh and West Java provinces had something in common, but there was also a bit of difference with regard the reasons why the perpetrators committed sexual violence against children. Here are the differences and similarities of the phenomenon of sexual violence against children in both provinces.

Phenomena behind Sexual Violence against Children in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD) and West Java Provinces

No.	Province	Reasons behind Sexual Violence against Children
1	NAD	Troubled family Broken home Low faith Poverty
2	West Java	Family disharmony Uncomfortable and unsafe environment Faded religious values in society Influences of technology and the Internet Lack of education

Results indicated that sexual violence against children occurred continuously, even tended to increase every year due to the root causes of the problem which precisely the hindered the handling of sexual violence against children. The study found that cultural factors were among of the root causes of the recurrent nature of sexual violence against children. The people's perception of sexuality as a private affair and taboo to discuss in public spaces led sexual violence against children to recur. Especially when the victim was a member of the family, sexuality was considered as not only a taboo but also a disgrace.

According to Dinastuti (2014), the issue of sexual violence against children actually starts from a culture that considers sexuality as a taboo. The victims of sexual violence against children are faced with the difficult choice. On one hand, the perpetrators are persons closest to the victims but, on the other hand, the culture that considers sex as a taboo sex leads the victims (children) to fear telling their parents or persons they believe. This is compounded by the fear of victims to tell the truth since they are threatened by the perpetrators.

The findings of the study in Aceh Province indicated that the victims suffered tremendous fear as they were threatened. As Anwar put it:

“The victim was very frightened since she was threatened by the perpetrator not to tell anyone. She would be threatened with death if she told anyone. That was why the victim did not want to tell her parents. Additionally, her parents also felt embarrassed since this was considered as a family disgrace. So, the victim preferred to change school.”

A similar finding was also found in West Java Province. Rina, a counselor at the P2TP2A of Bandung Regency, West Java, said that during her providing counseling to the victims of sexual violence against children the issue was that the children and her families did not want to tell openly. Rina said:

“Most victims of sexual violence against children and their parents were reluctant and even tended to refuse to tell the case. That's because they considered this as a family disgrace and would be embarrassed if others knew.”

As a result, when there were issues of sexual violence against children, parents preferred silence and did not want to tell since they did not want what happened to their children to be known by the public. Frequently, it was the parents who blamed their children who had been the victims of sexual violence. The findings of the

study in Aceh and West Java Provinces showed how the phenomenon of sexual violence against children was a complicated and complex issue. Culture in both places still regards sex as a taboo and even a disgrace. This is what puts the victims of sexual violence against children in difficult and bleak situations, culturally being stigmatized and being threatened by the perpetrator. The victim is then in the prison of their body (Anthony Synnott, 2003).

The findings of the study in Aceh and West Java Provinces confirmed that children who were victims of sexual violence perpetrated by their own parents were precisely the victims of cultural hegemony which has been highly masculine. The masculine culture in society leads sexual violence against children to recur continuously. In phenomenology (Lorens Bagus, 2000), in order to get out of the dark alley of the regime sexual violence against children we must return to the "pure consciousness", one that liberates us from the pseudo-truth within the society, one that sexuality is not a matter of taboo which must be hidden, not to mention sexuality in conjunction with violence (Paul B. Horton, 2009).

In addition to cultural issues, structural issues also constitute the root causes of sexual violence against children. This can be seen in the lack of state's presence. The extent of the state's political will in dealing with sexual violence against children can be seen from the current budget politics. The findings in West Java and Aceh Provinces showed that the budget given to such an institution as P2TP2A was far more than sufficient, only not to say insufficient. This fact produced its own structural problems in dealing with sexual violence against children in Indonesia.

In the Marxian perspective, the birth of budget politics impartial to the public interest could be considered as the impartiality of the state to marginalized communities. This is what the Marxian called structural injustice. Injustice occurs due to state or regime policy impartial to the people (Lukman Sutrisno, 2003). It is this injustice that is suffered by the victims of sexual violence against children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To understand and analyze the issue of sexual violence against children requires not only a quantitative approach. It takes courage to explore the symptoms and phenomena within the society using a more qualitative and phenomenological approach, an approach Heidegger regarded as a more authentic approach to humans, rather than merely exchanging with objects and problems of everyday life. He must concentrate his attention on truth, if he is to reveal it. Thus, he views his life with a new perspective (Lorens Bagus, 2003).

Due to this belief, this study sought to dare speak the truth in a phenomenological space to see sexual violence against children. It is because in phenomenology we are taught to dare take side with the truth behind the visible (phenomenon) to come to new consciousness behind the phenomena, in this case the phenomenon of sexual violence against children. It is this courage that is required as a form of partiality of this study to the victims of sexual violence against children. It is because behind the stupid libido of the perpetrators of sexual violence against children there is our ignorance, not daring to look at the "authentic reality" and "pure consciousness" in seeing the symptoms or phenomena.

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