



Children's Knowledge Regarding Prevention of Sexual Abuse as a Self-protection Effort

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Abstract. This research aims to investigate the extent to which youngsters are aware of and able to take preventative measures against being sexually abused. This study uses quantitative methods with a sample of 52 students in grades 5 and grades 6 at Karangsem II State Elementary School in Surakarta, Central Java, Indonesia. Students fill out the “What If” Situation Test (WIST-III) questionnaire, adapted to Indonesia’s cultural context. The results showed that the skills in refusing and reporting were less than half of the respondents could reject and report. The results of self-protection skills on speaking and doing skills still need to be higher because less than 35% of respondents can perform these skills. Meanwhile, in less than 40% of storytelling and reporting skills, less than 6% dared to report incidents of sexual abuse they experienced. The questionnaire results showed no significant difference between skills and gender. If seen through the table in the final score, more than half 55.6% of female respondents are close to the maximum score. There are 7 respondents (13.5%) who get a score of 28, which is the highest, while 1 (1.9%) get a score of 4, which is the lowest score among others. This research can study literature on self-protection programs to prevent child sexual abuse by focusing on how children refuse, dare to tell stories, and report incidents.

Keywords: Child Sexual Abuse · Self-Protection Skills · Knowledge Sex

1 Introduction

Sexual violence continues to occur in Indonesia, one of which is in the world of education, starting from preschool to college. In the primary school environment, the vulnerability of students to sexual violence tends to be high. Sexual violence is the act of having sexual relations with coercion or acts that force someone to do pornographic content and watch things that have a sexual nature. In line with the opinion Joni et al. (2020) that sexual violence against children is a form of violence in which children are involved in activities aimed at fulfilling the sexual arousal of the perpetrator, which is usually accompanied by psychological or physical pressure [1].

The Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection noted that based on data from the Online Information System for the Protection of Women and Children, often called SIMFONI PPA, occurrences of child abuse during the era 2019 until September 2020 cases of violence occurred in children as many as 31.768 cases. The victims

recorded were 35.103 children with 10.694 boys and 24.469 girls (about 2.3 times that of boys). The percentage of children victims of sexual violence reached 45.4% [2].

Child sexual abuse is contact between a child and an adult in which the child is used to stimulate the perpetrator's or another person's sexual stimulation. Child sexual abuse is a form of child abuse where someone older than the child uses himself to seduce and fulfill his sexual needs [3]. According to Lyness, sexual violence against children includes touching, kissing intimate organs, rape, displaying photos, videos, or pornographic objects, showing children's genitals, and so on [4].

Abuse of children in a sexual context is a significant issue in many countries, especially Indonesia. Children must get protection from family, society, and the state. Cases of child sexual violence show a weakness in child protection and law enforcement in uncovering cases of sexual violence. Children should have more rights and protection from various parties, and the role of people around them is crucial, especially in the family environment such parents [4].

Children should get the rights and protection that they should get. Children should get protection for their dignity from their immediate environment so they can grow into adults physically and psychologically [4].

However, the fact is that currently, every year there are more and more reports of sexual assaults on children that take place in Indonesia. Those who have been the target of sexual violence often lose all sense of age and gender. Sexual violence can happen to both men and women. Sexual violence can occur in various age groups ranging from toddlers, children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly. In line with the opinion Umar et al. (2018) that victims of sexual violence do not only occur in adults and adolescents, but children to toddlers can become victims of sexual violence [4]. Victims of child sexual violence cases can come from various ages, social, and gender [5].

Sexual violence is illegal to engage in acts of sexual violence. Sexual abuse against minors is immoral and unfair since it causes physical and psychological harm to the victim [4]. Anyone can be suspected of having the potential to commit sexual violence, but anyone can be a perpetrator of child sexual abuse. According to Dania the person who becomes the perpetrator of sexual abuse can be known and unknown, both those with intentions and those with the opportunity [5]. Often the perpetrators are people closest to the victim. Generally, the perpetrator is someone known to the victim, and the perpetrator can come from various social levels [6]. This condition becomes very worrying when the perpetrators can carry out their actions anywhere and anytime [5].

Girls are more likely to be victims of sexual abuse. According to Novrianza et al. (2022), the risk factors for victims of sexual abuse are female children younger than the perpetrators, inharmonious families, and shared knowledge of children [7]. The risk is more significant for girls, children with mental retardation, and children who live without parents or only have one biological parent [5]. Not only that, that sexual violence against children is also caused by an orientation of sexual interest in children, pornographic media, and children's lack of understanding about sexual violence [7].

Children are the nation's next generation, building the country to achieve its values. Children are the most beautiful gift given by God Almighty and the hope of the nation as the successor of the younger generation [8]. Children are the easy generation as the successor to the ideals of the nation's struggle, which has a strategic role and unique

characteristics. Children require direction and protection to ensure harmonious physical, mental, and social growth and development [9].

The number of cases of sexual abuse can occur due to various factors. One of the factors is the knowledge of children about sex. The problem of sex is still considered taboo by parents, so it is not taught to children because parents feel awkward in conveying things related to sexuality [1]. Parents are the first teachers of children in education. But not all parents are willing to talk to their kids about sexual problems [10].

Regarding children's knowledge about sexual abuse, teachers can introduce sex education from an early age so that children can avoid sexual abuse. The role of teachers in schools is crucial to provide sex education in schools to their students. Teachers provide sex education to provide knowledge to elementary school students to protect themselves from the risk of sexual violence [11]. Knowing the body parts that can touch and cannot touch by strangers is an effort to protect the child's self in the face of sexual violence. The four regions of a child's body considered private should not be seen or handled by anyone namely the lips, chest, buttocks, and vital organs [12].

Children's education regarding sexuality is one way to reduce their risk of sexually risky behaviors abuse because children know about the role of sex, children's private body parts and provide information about which behaviors are classified as sexual abuse [13]. Currently, children's knowledge about sexual violence is still lacking. Sex education is crucial to be introduced from an early age. Schools must devote 10 h per year to sex education and have material appropriate to development [14].

2 Method

The participants of this study were 52 students of SD Negeri 2 Karangasem, Central Java Province, Indonesia. There are 25 respondents from men and 27 respondents from women. Top-grade students are considered appropriate because they are getting close to the end of primary school and students can answer questionnaires.

WIST is a measurement instrument used to identify children's self-protection knowledge and skills adapted through the "What If" Situation Test (WIST-III) [15]. In WIST-III, there are questions about how to respond to a hypothetical situation regarding private body parts. WIST uses individual interviews with six vignettes. Questions describe a request for someone to touch a very private part of a child and an inappropriate request to touch a private part of an individual. To assess recognition of abuse, after each vignette, children were asked, "Would it be okay for [person's name] to [see/touch/photograph] private parts such as [mouth, chest, buttocks, genitals]?" The correct response receives one point. Responses to this question resulted in two recognition scores of appropriate requests (scores 0–3) and non-conforming requests (scores 0–3).

If the children answered "may" on the item for appropriate or inappropriate request questions, then there is no need to answer questions in points b, c, d, and e. If the children answered "no" to question point for appropriate or inappropriate request questions, it is necessary to answer questions in points b, c, d, and e. At point b, each number contains a question.

It states the child's ability in self-protection skills by classifying appropriate and inappropriate behavior and skills in refusing and reporting requests on inappropriate

questions. At point b, there is a question about the skill of saying, "What did you say to that person?". Furthermore, at point c, there is a question about the skill to do "What did you do to that person?". At point d, there is a question about the skill of telling, "Are you going to tell this person?". Furthermore, at point e, there is a question about reporting skills "What did you tell that person?".

In this instrument using WIST-III, each question receives a minimum score of 0 and a maximum of 2. The score for performing the four skills has a maximum score of 8. If added to the skill score identifying appropriate and inappropriate, the total score becomes 9 the total skill score. When multiplied by three, the total score number 24. WIST-III internal consistency was established [15].

The research was conducted in August 2022. A letter was sent to the Principal of the Primary School in Surakarta, Central Java. The letter to the principal was seeking permission to conduct this research. The participating students were informed about the objective of the research. They were given some guidance to complete the questionnaire WIST-III, completed in the classroom and individually by the students. Approximately 30 min were spent completing the questionnaire. The researcher gave the students a small token of appreciation for their participation.

The statistical software SPSS frequency distribution and a univariate test were used to evaluate the data. The results of the WIST-III questionnaire for children were reported using descriptive statistical tests.

3 Result

The subject's response to the WIST-III measurement is described in Table 1. The results of WIST-III respondents who got a score of 1, there were only 3 respondents (5.8%) who needed to improve in identifying the right touch. The results of WIST-III respondents who scored 2 showed that only 4 respondents (7.7%) were sufficient in identifying the right touch. Moreover, the results of WIST-III show that there are 45 respondents, and almost all respondents (86.5%) can identify the right touch.

In the results of WIST-III respondents who got a score of 0, only 1 respondent (1.9%) failed to identify inappropriate touch. Of respondents who got a score of 1 there were only 2 respondents (3.8%) who needed to be more in identifying the right touch. The results of WIST-III respondents who scored 2 showed that only 4 respondents (7.7%) were sufficient to identify the right touch. Moreover, the results of WIST-III show that there are 45 respondents, and almost all of them (86.5%) can identify inappropriate touch.

As seen from the table, 18 respondents (34.66%) are thriving, and there are 5 respondents (9.63%) who fail to show their speaking skills in preventing sexual abuse. Judging from the table of respondents' skills in doing, 12 respondents (23.1%) succeeded in showing the skills to perform, while 4 respondents (7.7%) failed to show the skills to perform self-protection. As seen from the table, 20 respondents (38.5%) are thriving, and there are 24 respondents (46.2%) fail to show telling skills in preventing sexual abuse. In addition, there were 3 respondents (5.8%) who succeeded in showing reporting skills, while 25 respondents (48.1%) failed to show self-protection reporting skills. Judging from the score of telling skills, 20 respondents succeeded, and 24 failed to show telling

Table 1. Subject Responses to WIST-III

ITEMS	TOTAL		MAN		WOMAN	
	N = 52	%	N = 25	%	N = 27	%
Appropriate (0–3)						
0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
1	3	5.8%	1	4%	2	7.4%
2	4	7.7%	4	16%	0	0%
3	45	86.5%	20	80%	25	92.6%
Mean	2.81		2.76		2.85	
Inappropriate (0–3)						
0	1	1.9%	1	4%	0	0%
1	2	3.8%	2	8%	0	0%
2	4	7.7%	3	12%	1	3.7%
3	45	86.5%	19	76%	26	96.3%
Mean	2.79		2.60		2.96	
WIST Say						
0 (0)	5	9.63%	3	12%	2	7.4%
1 (1–3)	7	13.48%	5	20%	2	7.4%
2 (4–5)	22	42.37%	10	40%	12	44.4%
3 (6)	18	34.66%	7	28%	11	40.7%
Mean	4.10		3.72		4.44	
WIST Do						
0 (0)	4	7.7%	3	12%	1	3.7%
1 (1–3)	23	44.3%	13	52%	8	37%
2 (4–5)	13	25%	4	16%	9	33.3%
3 (6)	12	23.1%	5	20%	7	25.9%
Mean	3.52		3.08		3.93	
WIST Tell me						
0 (0)	24	46.2%	13	52%	11	40.7%
1 (1–3)	5	9.5%	3	12%	2	7.4%
2 (4–5)	3	5.8%	1	4%	2	7.4%
3 (6)	20	38.5%	8	32%	12	44.4%
Mean	2.75		2.32		3.15	
WIST Report						

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

ITEMS	TOTAL		MAN		WOMAN	
	N = 52	%	N = 25	%	N = 27	%
0 (0)	25	48.1%	14	56%	11	40.7%
1 (1-3)	8	15.4%	5	20%	3	11.1%
2 (4-5)	16	30.8%	6	24%	10	37%
3 (6)	3	5.8%	0	0%	3	11.1%
Mean	2.02		1.44		2.56	
Final Score						
0 (0)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
1 (1-10)	8	15.3%	7	28%	1	3.7%
2 (11-20)	21	40.2%	10	40%	11	40.7%
3 (21-29)	23	44.5%	8	32%	15	55.6%
4 (30)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
TOTAL	52	100%	25	100%	27	100%

skills. In addition, judging from the score of storytelling skills, 3 respondents succeeded, and 25 respondents failed to show telling skills.

The results of the WIST-III questionnaire according to gender can be seen in the table. There are significant differences between men and women regarding the ability to identify the right touch. Regarding identifying the right touch, women scored higher than men (male $M = 2.76$; female $M = 2.85$). In addition, regarding identifying inappropriate touch, women scored higher than men (male $M = 2.60$; female $M = 2.96$). In addition, 80% of male and 92.6% of female respondents can identify the right touch. Meanwhile, in inappropriate touch, 76% of male respondents and 96.3% of female respondents could identify inappropriate touch. Here it can be seen that most male and female respondents can identify appropriate and inappropriate touch.

There are 7 respondents, 28% of men got the maximum score, and 11 respondents, 40.7% of women, got the maximum score in refusing sexual requests. In addition to the skills to perform, 5 respondents, 20% of men, got the maximum score, and 7 respondents, 25.9% of women, got the maximum score in performing sexual requests and the skills of telling stories about incidents of sexual abuse. There were 8 respondents, 32% of men got the maximum score, and 12 respondents, 44.4% of women, got the maximum score in refusing sexual requests. In addition, no 0% of male respondents got the maximum score in reporting skills, while there were 3 respondents, 11.1% of women got the maximum score in the skills to report sexual demands.

There is no significant difference between skills and gender. If seen through the table in the final score, more than half of the 55.6% of female respondents are close to the maximum score. There are 7 respondents (13.5%) who get a score of 28, which is the highest, while 1 (1.9%) get a score of 4, which is the lowest score among other.

4 Discussion

This study shows that high-grade children in elementary school can identify appropriate and inappropriate touch. There is a considerable disparity between men and women in that respondents who score higher are always women. This indicates that girls may be more protective and sensitive when someone looks at, touches, or takes photos of private body parts.

Parents do not discuss or talk about sexuality with their children because it is still considered a taboo subject [15, 16]. Children are taught who can and cannot see or touch a child's private parts. Teachers or parents providing sex education to their children can be considered compulsory to learn and in still from an early age. The arguments in the Qur'an make it clear that discussing sexuality is not a taboo subject because it aims to provide an understanding that follows the teachings of Islam [17].

Judging from the value of religion in gender differences, a person should not touch the private parts. For example, a girl is injured in a private part that can touch her mother, doctor, or female nurse [15, 18]. Only a person allowed to touch private parts is a select person and has the child's trust. For example, parents and caregivers can see and touch the child's private parts if they aim to help urinate or defecate. In addition to known people, doctors or nurses can see and touch the child's private parts if they are examining or treating them, accompanied by parents during the examination [17].

In self-protection skills, most children will tell someone about an incident of sexual abuse they have experienced is 38.5%. While the child's self-protection skills regarding reporting or telling all the events he has experienced is only 5.8%. The following research from [19, 20]. Respondents said that they had difficulty telling and reporting incidents of sexual abuse. This states that children tend to be secretive in telling about incidents of sexual abuse [15].

They regarded people's views that talking about sex is taboo, especially if it is given to elementary school-aged children who are considered too early to receive sex education materials. In line with the opinion of [10] that parents in Indonesia think that sexual education given to elementary school children should be given to children when they enter their teens as if they had started junior high school. Talking about sexuality is considered taboo, and if the relationship between parents and children is not close [21]. If the child reports and tells the incident that he gets to his parents or adults, the child will feel a disgrace to the family, so the child tends to be silent [22].

The inherent cultural value in Indonesia is the culture of shame. Especially if a child gets an incident of sexual abuse and is known to the public, he will withdraw from his social world [16, 21]. Culture impacts sex-related approaches, and shyness is very common [23]. Most perpetrators of sexual abuse are the closest people to the child, in line with Murfiah et al. (2020) opinion that the perpetrator is usually the closest person to the victim, such as stepfather, uncle, aunt, maid, etc. [24]. This is most likely to happen if the child does not know the area of his body, the child is easily seduced, and the child does not know the dangers and is unable to identify the perpetrator of sexual abuse who could be the closest person to the child [4].

Efforts to prevent sexual abuse in children include providing sex education such as what others can and cannot see and touch, gender differences, wearing clothes that are closed and not tight so that it does not invite lust for those who see them, and increasing

faith and piety to others the One Almighty God. Efforts to prevent sexual abuse that occurs in children with 3M include recognizing the body parts that other people may and should not see and touch, refusing if there is an act of sexual abuse against them, and reporting to adults such as teachers or parents for the events they have experienced [25].

5 Conclusion

The results showed that students in one of the public elementary schools in Surakarta could identify if they were in that situation. Almost all respondents can identify it when responding to appropriate and inappropriate touch. However, on the skills in refusing and reporting, less than half of the respondents could reject and report. The results of self-protection skills on speaking and doing skills are still relatively low because less than 35% of respondents can perform these skills. Meanwhile, in less than 40% of storytelling and reporting skills, less than 6% dared to report incidents of sexual abuse they experienced. Therefore, self-protection programs on the prevention of sexual abuse need to focus on how a person can refuse and dare to tell and then report the incident that has occurred. In educational institutions, it can be realized through sex education in elementary schools, which can be included in the curriculum. Child sexual abuse prevention programs involve teachers, students, and parents working together.

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