

The Importance of Sex Education Literacy in Efforts to Prevent Sexual Violence in Children

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Abstract

Technological developments cause people to be able to access what they want, especially about sex and anything related to it. Wrong education can influence and give rise to the consequences of sexual abuse by children in their future development phase. The phenomenon of violence and sexual harassment that is detrimental to children in their own environment is caused by several factors, one of which is the lack of sex education for children. This study aims to provide encouragement to educators, especially counselors to provide preventive services related to sex education literacy to children through classical services as early as possible in an effort to protect themselves. The research method used was observation, literacy studies, and case studies of 10 child victims of sexual abuse in Sleman. The results of the study show that children are very easily influenced by the invitation of sexual harassment perpetrators, so it is necessary to have sex education literacy and self-protection by parents, schools, and related social services so that children always understand that sexual harassment can be committed by anyone, including those closest to them. Provisions from sex education literacy are expected to prevent sexual harassment, so that children can grow and develop in healthy physical and spiritual conditions.

Keywords: Sex Education Literacy, Sexual Harassment, Parents, children's mental development.

A. Introduction

The characteristics of a person are different so that humans are often called unique creatures, individuals respond and adapt to the environment around them as a form of stimulus that guides them in growing and developing. The characteristics of children will develop along with the behavior obtained from parents and the surrounding environment, therefore it depends on how the environmental conditions and the people around the child treat them so that they grow the characteristics that are as expected (Nuryanti, 2008: 43).

Some people think that sex education is taboo, this is wrong. In fact, early childhood development has an impact on the basic development of children's character, so sex education must be given by parents to early childhood (Hughes, 2010: 90). Sex education is closely related to how to educate children both at home and at school, therefore parents' responsibilities are very important in developing children's learning processes at an early age. Dimiyati & Mudjiono (2002: 9) explain that learning is a process of exploring information by children, and is applied through actions and behavior. By learning, children practice developing the ability to understand the environment and the people around them as best they can. So at an early age, children need to be guided during their development so that in the learning process individuals can think and act as expected (Hurlock, 2005: 132).

Camelia & Nirmala (2017: 28) reveal that sex education is an effort to guide someone to understand and understand the meaning and function of their sex life so that they can be responsible for all risks throughout their life. Sex education and literacy to prevent deviant behavior need to be given to children as early as possible, so as to form the belief that children

know the dangers and consequences of these deviant things. Sexual violence or abuse that occurs against children is coercion, deception and threats to children in sexual activities (Paramastri, et al. 2010: 2). These actions are very detrimental to children so that children experience very bad impacts both physically and psychologically. In line with this, Sakalasastra & Herdiana (2012: 71) reveal that the impact experienced by victims of sexual harassment is in the form of trauma and leaves psychosocial impacts. A child who is a victim of sexual abuse tends to avoid the social environment because he feels ashamed and guilty towards himself.

Sumera (2013: 40) stated that some of the victims targeted by sexual harassment perpetrators were mostly women, including sexual harassment and sexual violence crimes. Apart from girls, boys are also vulnerable to becoming victims of sexual harassment, because children are still relatively innocent and do not have the strength to resist the deviant actions of perpetrators of sexual harassment.

Based on Law No. 23 of 2002 on child protection, article 66 paragraph 1 concerning special protection for children who are economically and/or sexually exploited as referred to in article 59 is an obligation and responsibility of the government and society. Data obtained from Kompas.com during 2020-2022, there have been around 98 cases of sexual harassment in which the perpetrators were mostly people close to the victim. Wardhani & Lestari (2007: 294) explain that cases of sexual abuse occur when the perpetrator has more power than the victim. It does not rule out the possibility that victims of sexual abuse against children will continue to increase if there is a lack of sex education and parental responsibility and teachers in schools in responding to problems that occur during the process of personal development (Handayani & Amiruddin, 2008: 38).

One example of inadequate guidance and learning that is detrimental to other people is the incident that occurred in Sleman in 2019. Through the news made on jogja.tribunnews.com, one of the teachers sexually harassed an elementary school student during 'Scouting' activities. This was confirmed by the UPTD for the Empowerment of Women and Children (PPA) of Sleman Regency that there was indeed a report regarding this incident (the student is a resident of Seyegan). Researchers had the opportunity to carry out counseling with victims as responsive treatment for the events that occurred. Therefore, researchers are trying to dig up information about this incident and design a preventive service program as an effort to prevent similar cases from happening again.

B. Research Methods

The research was carried out using a qualitative descriptive approach, with case study methods, direct observation of the subjects, and literature study as the basis for the qualitative research carried out. Subjects in the study of 10 children, carried out in Sleman, collaborated with the Empowerment of Women and Children (PPA) Sleman. This research is a follow-up to the implementation of Individual Counseling by researchers from the period August 2019-present.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Results

Based on findings from interviews and case studies of 10 victims of sexual harassment (average aged 11-12 years) in Sleman, researchers obtained the following data:

Counselor's Contribution in Dealing with Client Problems

Experienced Obstacles	Counselor's Contribution
1. Children feel they can't do anything (including reporting the incident to their parents), because they are threatened by the perpetrator	<i>Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT)</i> counseling and provide assistance.
2. Children are afraid to go back to school because they are traumatized and find it difficult to forget what happened to them	Carry out traumatic counseling accompanied by the victim's parents.
3. 6 out of 10 child victims of sexual abuse do not want to be given counseling/rehabilitation because they are embarrassed	Counselors through parents provide encouragement and curative services
4. The victim with the initials NMA (resident of Seyegan) was very afraid of meeting new people, especially men	Victims accompanied by their parents are given <i>shelter</i> facilities
5. The victim's parents did not allow any party to interview their child.	The Office of Social Affairs provides direction regarding post-event sex education
6. Access to houses and lack of transportation to UPTD PPA Kab. Sleman causes a lack of reporting data.	Counselors carry out <i>home visits</i> to the homes of each victim with the permission of the Social Service
7. The perpetrator has not been criminally punished (until December) and is still on the loose/on duty in the school area	The Social Service and officials temporarily froze the status of the perpetrator (PNS teacher) and banned him from entering the school area.

The implementation of services provided by counselors (researchers) is always accompanied by the Sleman Regency Women's and Children's Empowerment UPTD (PPA) and the local Social Service. Based on this data, researchers are trying to design classical services as a preventive measure so that this case does not happen again.

2. Discussion

The results of the qualitative study show that all victims and their parents feel worried and afraid if a similar incident occurs again, so they expect the parties responsible to follow up on incidents of sexual abuse experienced by children.

Hidayati (2014: 70) explains that one of the factors that influences someone to act defiantly related to sexual harassment is high curiosity. The role of parents is a big responsible for the mental development of children in responding to problems regarding sex so that during their development towards maturity, things that are detrimental to the child and the people around them do not happen.

Providing children with an understanding of sex education along with the values and norms that apply in society will foster responsibility and ethics that shape children's mentality so that they avoid actions that should not be carried out in everyday life. In the family environment, the role of parents in guiding children regarding the function of limbs is very important. Introduction to body parts and their functions is the right start for parents in introducing their children to sex education so that it doesn't seem rushed and children understand more about how their body parts function (Justicia, 2017: 6).

Hariwijaya (2010: 172) explains that basic instructions for sex education can be given by telling frankly about various facts, using short sentences so as not to confuse children, speaking honestly by giving input when children ask questions, and being prepared to repeat. After children know how each body part functions, parents can provide an understanding of gender differences related to the differences in genitalia between men and women.

The existence of a guidance and counseling program should be able to facilitate children in understanding and responding to sex issues so that in the future children can be independent in making decisions in behavior and not involved in wrong associations. Therefore, the need for an understanding of sex education in early childhood is expected to provide new insights for preventing the emergence of sexual violence and sexual harassment that occurs in children (Ami & Prayitno: 2013: 114).

An important point for parents is protecting children from all forms of threats. Yafie (2017: 19) explains that the biggest warning lies in how parents educate their children regarding sex education that is taught to children at an early age, so as to prevent and protect children from deviant behavior related to sexual harassment in the future.

Nawita (2013: 5) explains that sex education literacy is a delivery of information about identifying body parts (names and functions), understanding male and female gender differences, explaining intimate relationships between men and women, as well as knowledge of the insights of values and norms related with gender in society.

Counselors can become facilitators in providing sex education in schools through classical guidance services, individual counseling with Gestalt, REBT, CBT approaches, and counseling/treatment approaches related to sexual harassment (Erford, 2016: 269). By providing the correct information, the child will know the difference between male and female genitalia so that the child does not have high curiosity about it.

Komalasari, et al. (2011: 151) explains that for preventive services, counselors can provide classical guidance services in the classroom in the form of providing material about sex education, so students can understand about sex education that is not given by their parents and can compare sex education from the perspective counselors with what parents have taught them at home, so that students are guided to be independent in sorting out good things and bad things in socializing with their friends at school and outside of school.

Responsive services provided by counselors can be carried out when meeting several students who are involved in cases of sexual deviation or harassment, both for perpetrators and for victims of sexual harassment (Nurihsan, 2008: 82). For perpetrators of sexual harassment, counselors can provide individual counseling to find out the motivation and reasons why students can commit these immoral acts, and provide appropriate counseling techniques so that students who are perpetrators of sexual harassment do not repeat the bad behavior again.

Indeed, this is considered taboo by society, but with sex education, children will feel they have a responsibility and motivate children to take care of themselves so they do not violate the values and norms in society.

D. Conclusion

The role of parents and teachers/educators at school has a big responsibility in providing sex education literacy for children at an early age. The aim is none other than to prevent children from actions or behavior that deviate from the values and norms that apply in society. As well as preventing children from harassment and sexual deviation, both when children have entered adolescence and adulthood, as well as to protect children from perpetrators of sexual harassment on the loose.

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