

Analysis of the Negative Impact of Corporal Punishment by Parents Against Child (6 - 12 Years)

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ABSTRACT

Children aged 6 – 12 years are experiencing a new phase and need support from their families, especially their parents. Children will be very dependent on their parents because they are the people who have the closest relationship to the child. Therefore, parents must be able to motivate children and also provide support in facing new challenges in different environments. These challenges will certainly become new stressors for parents and children, as children will often make mistakes because they are still developing.

Therefore, parents often apply physical punishment with the intention of correcting a child's behavior or mistakes. However, physical punishment applied by parents can have negative effects such as physical or mental injuries, and even damage to the relationship between parents and children. Even people who use physical punishment are often not aware that this method is considered child abuse behavior.

Therefore, social workers have an important role in helping children as victims. Social workers can build trust with children through art therapy or play therapy. In this way, children realize that they are not alone and that not all adults have bad intentions so they can be trusted.

Keywords: children, corporal punishment, parents, social workers

INTRODUCTION

The negative impact on a child due to physical punishment or corporal punishment carried out by adults is important to study. This is important because physical punishment is still one of the methods used by adults to discipline children. However, this method does not necessarily have a

positive effect, in fact it often has a negative impact on the child's development process.

Children will go through various important stages that affect the process of growth and self-development. This process is crucial because it has an impact on the physical, cognitive, emotional, psychosocial, and skills development of a child

(Hutchinson, 2019). During this period, children will get used to relying on their parents as the main providers of affection. The family, especially parents, has a crucial role in the child's growth and development process.

Based on the stages of psychosocial development conveyed by Erikson (1998), children who are in the middle childhood stage, namely 6-12 years old, will begin to expand their world by becoming more independent, going to school, and meeting new people in their lives. Not only does the family have an important role, but the school also plays an important position at this stage. Therefore, parents must be able to motivate children and also provide support in facing new challenges in an environment different from the family.

In addition, according to Kohlberg who expressed the theory of stages of moral development, children in the early pre-conventional stage will tend to still move based on self-interest that is interesting to them so that they will often act based on their will. Thus, it is important for parents to be authority figures so that children are aware that there are consequences for their actions. However, parents often hold parenting patterns that are based on physical punishment or corporal punishment.

In Indonesia, there are still frequent cases of violence, namely physical punishment carried out by parents against their children. Based on data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, in 2024 alone there were around 1000 children aged 6-12 years who were victims of physical punishment by parents (Map of the Distribution of the

Number of Violence Cases by Province, 2024). Meanwhile, the law that applies child protection has existed through Law No. 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection. Thus, it can be seen that there are still many parents who violate the law and use physical punishment against their children.

According to the United Nations Committee based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), physical punishment is any form of punishment in which physical action is used and causes pain. Usually this punishment is in the form of hitting the body, slapping the cheeks, hitting the buttocks, throwing objects, kicking, and various extreme behaviors against a child. Physical punishment can cause various psychological problems that cause various negative responses to arise. Thus, physical punishment from parents has a negative impact on the child's development process, one of which is on their mental health.

Thus, to overcome this problem, intervention from social workers is needed, for the child and also both parents. Social workers have a responsibility to protect the child from their parents if physical punishment continues. Social workers also need to work to provide assistance with problems that arise, such as in aspects of mental health problems experienced by children. Furthermore, parents also need intervention against parenting behaviors that have a negative impact on their children. Parents need to be given awareness and change attitudes that their actions will endanger their children's future.

This research article is based on a journal written by a researcher named

Andrew Grogan – Kaylor in 2004 with the aim of proving the negative impacts that arise due to physical punishment behavior on the psychological and behavioral aspects of a child. In addition, a journal written by an expert named Vicki Ashton in 2000 became the basis for how social workers deal with, intervene, and overcome problems that arise due to physical punishment by parents towards children. Through these two journals, researchers can research more deeply the impact of physical punishment by parents on the mental health of children aged 6 – 12 years

METHOD

In the process of writing the research article, the researcher used a qualitative approach method based on literature study to analyze the impact of physical punishment by parents on the development process of children aged 6-12 years. The qualitative approach is useful for helping the process of analyzing the impacts that arise from physical punishment actions carried out by parents against their children. The process of analyzing the impact of these actions is carried out by looking at the parenting patterns used by parents that cause problems in the child's growth and development process.

Literature study is also used as the main method in the research process. Through this method, the researcher will review previous journals that have conducted various studies related to the topic of the article. By looking at the results of research from other experts related to the topic of the article, the researcher is expected to be able to reveal new research results that can

provide different views in finding solutions to the problems being studied.

In the research process and also searching for related journals, the researcher will focus on finding previous research related to the giving of physical punishment to children by their parents. In this study, the focus is on children aged 6-12 years as victims of physical punishment by their parents. In addition, researchers must look for the importance of family relationships in a child's development and also the negative impacts that arise if this cannot be realized. Furthermore, researchers must also look for data related to physical punishment by parents towards children in Indonesia to strengthen the results of the research findings. Data in Indonesia will support finding out whether physical punishment is still happening in this country, and whether there are laws that protect the problem. Through the literature study conducted, researchers can determine whether the problem can be solved with the help of social workers. Thus, researchers can find the right solution that can be used by social workers to solve the problem.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

According to Rogoff et al. (1975), children aged 5-7 years have begun to enter the "age of reason" stage where they have begun to have their respective roles in the family, school, and community. Meanwhile, starting from the age of 10-12 years, children are usually said to have begun to enter the preteen stage where this age is considered a transition to adolescence. Therefore, at this stage children will begin to enter formal education, namely elementary school. Being

in a new environment that is very different from usual will require time and energy to adapt. However, at this stage it is not uncommon for children to be required to mature quickly and not bother their parents. Children are taught to be independent, even though in reality they still need their parents as guides. Children are very dependent on their parents because they are the people who have the closest relationship with the child. Since birth, parents are the primary caregivers of the baby who care for and maintain it so that it can grow healthily. How the child will grow and develop depends on the parenting pattern of their parents. Children aged 6-12 years will need parents as role models and tend to imitate what their parents do. In addition, two experts named Brocki and Bohlin who conducted research on the study of the growth process of children aged 6-13 years in 2004 have concluded that children at this stage will usually store memories through visuals or sight.

As an expert named Batholomew (1990) explained in the theory of the model of attachment, children will tend to make their parents a model to follow. However, parents are not necessarily able to be models who provide positive examples for their children. If parents only show negative behavior or attitudes in their daily lives, such as the application of physical punishment, then the child will grow up to have a negative view and become a child who is easily afraid (fearful). Children aged 6-12 years who show this attitude will have difficulty mingling at school or having the ability to achieve academic achievement.

According to an expert named Davies (1999), the application of physical

punishment has a major impact on damaging the closeness of a child's relationship with his parents. This is because children will imitate the actions or behaviors usually shown by their parents. Supporting this statement, Vuchinich in 1992 also explained that physical punishment by parents can cause antisocial behavior and not be able to regulate their emotions properly.

Although parents often apply physical punishment with the intention of correcting a child's behavior or mistakes. However, often this does not provide the desired results, but only wounds the child and even causes a feeling of accumulated stress. The description of an expert named Rohner etc. (1996) also strengthens the fact that physical punishment received by a child can have a negative impact on the process of his development because feelings of rejection by both parents arise.

If the child continues to be exposed to negative actions that become stressors in his life, then the risk of behavioral problems in the next stage of life becomes great. According to research conducted by Mulvaney and Mebert in 2007 to determine whether physical punishment has an influence on the emergence of attitude problems, physical punishment that is carried out continuously over a long period of time will accumulate in the child, causing disturbances in the development process and even the child's health, such as showing aggressive attitudes and also mental health problems. The World Health Organization (WHO) also clearly emphasizes that children who are victims of physical punishment will usually show many problems, both physically and psychologically. In addition, the negative

impacts experienced by children can be felt immediately and can also leave a mark for the long term and even affect how the child will grow and develop. Some of the negative impacts described by WHO are as follows:

1. Physical wounds that appear as a result of physical punishment by parents.
2. Mental health problems that continue into adulthood.
3. Imperfect cognitive and socio-emotional development, especially in regulating emotions and problem-solving skills.
4. Unsuccessful education, such as dropping out.
5. Damaged family relationships.
6. Increased aggression in children, and many other negative effects.

Given the many negative impacts that arise for children, especially during a time when they should be focused on growing and developing, it is important to eradicate physical punishment by parents. Physical punishment must be understood as not improving children's behavior but only worsening the situation and also damaging so many other factors.

In Indonesia itself, there are still cases of physical punishment by parents against their children. According to a survey conducted by the YouGov organization in 2019, seven out of ten parents in Indonesia still apply physical punishment to their children. Furthermore, 55% of parents who were the subjects of the study stated that physical punishment was needed to discipline children. And finally, around 66% stated that physical punishment was not a form of violence against children.

Thus, it can be seen that physical punishment is still often used by parents as a method to discipline children. Although physical punishment has been proven to be ineffective in improving children's behavior or mistakes, many parents still consider it reasonable to use this method, and even feel that this action is not a form of violence against children. Therefore, intervention actions related to this problem by social workers are considered important.

Social workers have a duty to help those who need help. In this case, children and parents are the targets of social workers to be given assistance. First, social workers can work to help the child who is the main victim. In the process of helping children, it is very important for social workers to pay attention to the child's condition. This was expressed by Harry Ferguson (2016) regarding how often in handling cases related to violence against children, the child's condition and health are neglected until the child eventually dies. When supervising or monitoring families who have a history of child abuse, the main focus of social workers is the child and not the parents. Social workers must make decisions by looking at the child's condition and the environment in which the child lives. Ferguson calls this phenomenon the "invisible child". This also occurs because social workers have certain limitations in their work, such as organizational policies, codes of ethics, applicable systems, and also families who do not accept that their children need intervention. Therefore, social workers must be able to determine and know clear boundaries to categorize a child as a victim of violence who needs help. When working

directly with children, social workers must understand that children are human beings who have individual rights and do not deserve to be treated violently. Social workers must be able to identify or assess the problems experienced by the victim. The assessment process can begin by looking at the environment where the child lives by applying the Person in Environment theory. This theory will help social workers to find out how the dynamics of interaction are in the place where the child lives and get an idea of the relationship between the child and both parents. This step is very important to determine the appropriate treatment plan for the child.

An important target for social workers in helping children who are victims of physical punishment from their parents is to ensure that the physical and mental injuries received will not continue into adulthood. Children may have difficulty expressing their emotions or feelings, therefore social workers can use play therapy or art therapy techniques to help children become more open and trust practitioners. Building trust between social workers and children is very important so that children know that they are not alone and have someone they can trust. Smitansky in 1971 defined play therapy as the act of imitating various roles and imagining various game scenarios.

Meanwhile, Gunter (2000) explains art therapy as an intervention method that provides stability to children who have strong mental defense mechanisms. According to an expert named Goodman (2009), playing is one of the intervention methods of social work that is very important as a means of communication with children. Therefore, it

can be concluded that both methods are very effective in the treatment process for children who are victims of physical punishment by their parents.

CONCLUSION

Children aged 6-12 years are in a phase that experiences many new things and requires support from their families, especially their parents. Adapting to a new environment such as school, meeting new people such as peers or teachers, facing academic challenges where children are motivated to achieve at the institution where they study. These challenges will certainly be new stressors for parents and children, especially if both adult figures are busy.

Therefore, it is not uncommon for parents to end up using physical punishment methods to discipline their children or vent their emotions. However, such actions will not have a positive or deterrent effect on children. What will happen is that it will only have a negative impact on the child who is growing up. Children can get physical and mental injuries and damage family relationships.

Thus, it is important for social workers to handle these problems, by focusing on helping children who are victims. Social workers must ensure that children as victims do not feel abandoned, do not have people they trust, are alone, and do not recover from the wounds they feel. This shows that physical punishment can be categorized as violence against children if it is done continuously and causes major injuries to the child.

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