

Physical abuse in adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

Covid-19 has now spread to almost all parts of the world which has caused changes in the social order of life for humans. The spread of Covid-19 in Indonesia is relatively high, so the Indonesian government has adopted a policy using social distancing (large-scale social restrictions). Various pressures experienced by residents tend to result in excessive stress and emotions. This can have an impact on the occurrence of violence in families and generally the victims are adolescents. Physical abuse is an act that can cause physical pain such as slapping, strangling, hitting, kicking, stabbing, twisting the arm, threats with sharp weapons or weapons, and murder. The method used in this research is descriptive analytical method. The research sample was 192 people from various provinces in Indonesia aged 10-24 years. The results of this study revealed that some of the physical abuse behaviors were obtained by adolescents at elementary school age, namely in the age range of 10 years or more with details, including hard encouragement by others with a total of 48 (25.0%), getting hit with a hand with a total of 38 (52.8%), getting slapped by other people with a total of 43 (22.4%), getting hit with a hard object from another person with a total of 22 (11.5%), having been pushed and also being arrested with a total of 16 (8.4%), having been pelted with something painfully from others with a total of 24 (12.5%), and had received treatment in the form of being bitten, punched, and kicked by another person with a total of 26 (13.5%). Physical abuse can have long-term effects, such as physical and psychological disturbances from the teenager, which can even lead to death. In addition, physical abuse can also cause adolescents to experience mental disorders such as depression and show traumatic symptoms.

Introduction

Covid-19 has now spread to almost all parts of the world which have caused changes in the social order of life for humans. The spread of Covid-19 in Indonesia is relatively high, so the Indonesian government has adopted a policy using social distancing and PSBB (large-scale social restrictions).¹ With this policy, many sectors have been affected due to the Covid-19 pandemic and policies taken by the government, such as in the economic, education, religious, government, industry, and food sectors, as well as a lot of false news related to the Covid-19 pandemic.²

Various pressures experienced by residents tend to result in excessive stress and emotions. This can have an impact on the occurrence of violence in the family and generally, the victims are adolescents.³ Violence against adolescents is an act of violence either physically, emotionally, or sexually perpetrated by the surrounding environment.⁴ Based on UNICEF, Domestic Violence Against Women and Girls physical abuse is an act that can cause physical pain such as slapping, strangling, hitting, kicking, stabbing, twisting the arm, threats with sharp weapons or weapons, and murder.⁵ Generally, physical abuse is mostly perpetrated by men and women are more likely to be victims of physical violence. According to data taken from (who book), the prevalence of involvement in cases of physical abuse is highest in Samoa with 73% in men and 62% in women. Physical abuse can result in victims experiencing a physical injury, trauma, and even death.⁶

Materials and Methods

The method used in this study is a descriptive-analytical method with a survey method, namely distributing questionnaires to the target, namely adolescents aged 10-24 years who are carried out online with a research period during July-August 2021. This study uses the "Childhood Experiences of Abuse Questionnaire (CEVQ)" from a study by Walsh *et al.* (2008).⁷

Results

The number of respondents is 192 people who are generally female (69.3%). In addition, the age of the respondents ranged from 19-24 years (92.7%) who were in their late teens. For the distribution of provinces to respondents, three provinces were found, namely East Java (64.1%), West Java (10.4%), and Central Java (10.4%) (Table

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Key words: Physical Abuse, Adolescents, Covid-19 Pandemic.

Contributions: RE contributed to the conceptualization of the study, funding, methodology, resources, supervision, validation, review and editing of the final manuscript; ANR, contributed to data analysis, review and editing of final manuscript, data curation, project administration, visualization and validation of field data; KA contributed to data analysis, data curation, project administration, visualization and validation of field data; NRAC contributed to the study concept and design, statistical analysis and interpretation of the data, and drafting of the final manuscript; PS contributed to supervision, study design and approved the final manuscript.

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no potential conflict of interest.

Acknowledgments: The authors thank the participants and the entire research team. We also thank to Faculty of Sport Science, Universitas Negeri Malang that support this study.

Conference presentation: This article was presented at the 4th International Scientific Meeting on Public Health and Sports (ISMOPHS 2022).

Received for publication: 20 October 2022.

Accepted for publication: 17 November 2022.

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Journal of Public Health in Africa 2022; 13(s2):2413
doi:10.4081/jphia.2022.2413

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1). It can be seen in Table 2, regarding the experience of physical violence, most of the adolescents experienced this violence for 1 to 2 times (26.3%). The experience of being hit with the hand often occurs 1 to 2 times (69.4%). Adolescents most often experience

the incident of being slapped by another person 1 to 2 times (69.4%). Then followed by 3 to 5 slaps (22.4%). Adolescence is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood. In this process, adolescents often experience problems of violence. The experience of being hit with a hard object. Adolescents mostly experienced beatings with hard objects 1 to 2 times (16.7%) and 3 to 5 times (4.2%). Experience is encouraged and arrested. Adolescents experience this incident at most 1 to 2 times (9.4%). The six experiences of being pelted with something painful were often felt by adolescents 1 to 2 times (21.4%). In addition, various types of physical abuse include being kicked, bitten, and punched which are often experienced by adolescents 1 to 2 times (72.4%). The last one is the experience of being strangled by another person, which is mostly experienced by adolescents 1 to 2 times (6.3%).

It can be seen in Table 3, regarding perpetrators who gave physical abuse treatment, adolescents received a lot of treatment in the form of encouragement from friends (66.7%). Most adolescents get this treatment from their father (62.5%). Adolescents are also often treated with physical abuse in the form of slaps. It was found that most adolescents were done by their fathers (33.9%). The next form of violence is treatment in the form of beatings using hard objects. Just like the previous physical violence, this beating using hard objects was also mostly done by fathers (13.0%). The next form of violent treatment is being pushed, arrested, throwing things that hurt other people, being kicked, bitten, and punched. The three treatments were mostly carried out by other people (men) with a percentage of being arrested and pushed (6.8%), throwing things that could hurt adolescents (15.2%), and being kicked, bitten, and punched (16.1%).

Based on Table 4, victims of physical abuse mostly told their parents or parents or guardians. Then followed by complaints to teachers or counselors and friends. It is found that 18.8% of adolescents told their teachers or counselors about their experiences of being pushed and arrested. Then as many as 10.4% of adolescents told their friends about the experience of being pelted with something painful. Followed by as many as 8.6% of adolescents telling their parents or guardians about their experiences of being kicked, bitten, or punched. For the experience of being strangled by others as much as 2.2% of adolescents told their parents/connecting parents /guardians.

There are various forms of violent behavior that can occur in adolescents. Various forms of treatment are in the form

Table 1. Respondent characteristics.

Characteristics		n %
Sex		
Male	59	30.7
Female	133	69.3
Age		
Early adolescence (12-15 years)	2	1.04
Middle ges (16-18 years)	12	6.25
Late adolescence (19-24 years)	178	92.7
Province		
Bali	1	0.5
Banten	5	2.6
DI Yogyakarta	4	2.1
DKI Jakarta	10	5.2
Jambi	1	0.5
West Java	20	10.4
Central Java	20	10.4
East Java	123	64.1
Borneo	3	1.6
Lampung	1	0.5
Riau	1	0.5
South Sulawesi	1	0.5
North Sumatra	1	0.5
South Sumatra	1	0.5

Table 2. Participants experiences of physical abuse.

Physical abuse	n	%
Experience driven		
1 to 2 times	50	26.3
3 to 5 times	17	8.9
6 to 10 times	2	1.1
More than 10 times	6	3.2
Experience of being hit with a hand		
1 to 2 times	50	69.4
3 to 5 times	16	22.4
6 to 10 times	4	5.6
More than 10 times	2	2.8
Experience of being slapped		
1 to 2 times	46	24
3 to 5 times	16	8.3
6 to 10 times	0	0
More than 10 times	0	0
Experience of being hit with a hard object		
1 to 2 times	32	16.7
3 to 5 times	8	4.2
6 to 10 times	0	0
More than 10 times	5	2.6
Experience pushed and arrested		
1 to 2 times	18	9.4
3 to 5 times	6	3.1
6 to 10 times	0	0
More than 10 times	1	0.5
Experience of being stoned by something painful		
1 to 2 times	41	21.4
3 to 5 times	9	4.7
6 to 10 times	0	0
More than 10 times	2	1.0
Experience of being kicked, bitten and punched		
1 to 2 times	33	72.4
3 to 5 times	15	17.2
6 to 10 times	0	0
More than 10 times	5	2.6
Experience of being strangled by others		
1 to 2 times	12	6.3
3 to 5 times	2	1.0
6 to 10 times	0	0
More than 10 times	2	1.0

of physical violence, including strong urges by others, being beaten with hands, slapped, beaten with hard objects, pushed and arrested, pelted by something painful, as well as being kicked, bitten, and punched by others. Some of these physical abuse behaviors were obtained by adolescents at elementary school age, namely in the age range of 10 years or more, the details can be seen in Figure 1, including hard pushes by others with a total of 48 (25.0%), getting hit with a hand with a total of 38 (52.8%), getting slapped by other people with a total of 43 (22.4%), getting hit with a hard object from another person with a total of 22 (11.5%). Another form of physical abuse that is often experienced by adolescents is the treatment of strangulation by others with a total of 36 (18.8%).

Discussion

According to Kusumawati and Hartono (2010) violence is considered an extreme result of anger or panic fear.⁸ Violent behavior occurs because of a condition where emotions, feelings of frustration, anger, or hatred arise. The first physical abuse is the experience of being pushed by another person.⁹ Many forms of physical abuse occur during adolescence.

From the data obtained by KPAI (Indonesian Child Protection Commission) in 2014, there were 42-58% of child abuse cases out of a total of 21,869,797 cases.¹⁰ The first form of physical abuse is getting treatment in the form of encouragement from others. There are many forms of physical abuse that are usually experienced by children and adolescents. The first is getting treatment in the form of strong encouragement from other people. This study found that adolescents received a lot of treatment in the form of encouragement from friends. This is because in their teenage years they are very happy to hang out and make many friends. However, the lack of supervision from parents can cause children to experience miscommunication and cause children to get harsh treatment in the form of physical violence. In addition, friends usually feel the child is annoying or naughty, so the child gets this treatment.

Besides that, most adolescents get this treatment from their fathers (62.5%). Usually, parents especially do this because the child does not want to obey the words of his parents. However, this is also not justified because if the child is treated with violence, it will be able to interfere with the development of the child.¹⁰ Children are often used as objects of physical abuse in the family. Given the nature of adolescents

who are still unstable and have high curiosity, they will tend to be loud and rebellious. In addition, parents, especially fathers, when they have problems usually take it out on their children so that children get harsh treatment.¹¹ This is strongly opposed because in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia number 23 of 2002 it is clearly explained that children must get protection from both parents and fulfill their rights to grow and develop.¹² This form of harsh treatment from other people, especially those of the male sex, can cause adolescents to experience trauma, and injury to their limbs, their attitude becomes moody, and it

difficult to trust others.¹³ Physical abuse can occur wherever adolescents are and is usually carried out against other people who are not known. Therefore, adolescents must always be careful to avoid unwanted things from happening. Victims of physical abuse mostly told their parents or parents or guardians. Then followed by complaints to teachers or counselors and friends. According to Sarwono (2005), the family is the smallest component of society.¹⁴ Child development, introjection of community values, the process of socialization, and the formation of the superego are carried out in the family.

Table 3. Characteristics of physical abuse perpetrated by social environment or conflict partners.

Physical abuse	n	%
Experience driven		
Siblings	16	20.5
School/college/work friends	52	66.7
Neighbor	1	1.3
Boyfriend	1	1.3
Other	8	10.3
Experience of being hit with a hand		
Father	24	62.5
Mother	6	12.5
Step father	2	3.1
Others (female)	15	1.0
Others (male)	25	7.8
Experience of being slapped		
Father	65	33.9
Mother	0	0
Step father	0	0
Stepmother	0	0
Others (female)	0	0
Others (male)	0	0
Experience of being hit with a hard object		
Father	25	13.0
Mother	7	3.6
Step father	0	0
Stepmother	0	0
Others (female)	0	0
Others (male)	0	0
Experience pushed and arrasted		
Father	4	2.1
Mother	4	2.1
Step father	0	0
Stepmother	0	0
Others (female)	3	1.6
Others (male)	13	6.8
Experience of being stoned by something painful		
Father	6	3.1
Mother	1	0.5
Step father	1	0.5
Stepmother	1	0.5
Others (female)	13	6.8
Others (male)	29	15.2
Experience of being kicked, bitten and punched		
Father	5	2.6
Mother	3	1.6
Step father	6	3.1
Stepmother	0	0
Others (female)	9	4.7
Others (male)	31	16.1

Violence against adolescents is increasing in the community.¹⁵ There are various forms of violent behavior that can occur in adolescents. Various forms of treatment are in the form of physical violence, including strong urges by others, being beaten with hands, slapped, beaten with hard objects, pushed, and arrested, pelted by something painful, as well as being kicked, bitten, and punched by others. Some of these physical abuse behaviors were obtained by adolescents at elementary school age, namely in the age range of 10 years or more. In addition, elementary school-aged children, especially those aged 10 years or more, usually experience physical growth and motor development so that the child tries to know himself as much as possible and often compares himself with other friends. If in the process the child does not get assistance from related parties such as parents and teachers, then the child will tend to adapt himself to the environment. In addition, children are also more likely to experience physical violence. Therefore, at elementary school age, teachers or parents often do this.¹⁶ Aggressive behavior in the form of physical abuse usually arises due to a lack of education, adolescents' emotions are too extreme, and experience depression due to a problem.¹⁷ This is what can trigger deviant behavior from individuals.

According to 2014 WHO global status report on violence prevention, nearly a quarter of adolescents (22.6%) worldwide suffer from physical abuse with no significant difference between boys and girls.¹⁸

29.02% of men and 11.76% of women experienced physical abuse in the last 12 months. This means that 1 in 3 men and 1 in 8 women in the 13–17-year age group experience physical violence.¹⁹ Based on our research, it was found that the most physical abuse that occurred in adolescents was driven by other people. The highest frequency of this experience is 1 to 2 times experienced, then followed by a frequency of 3 to 5 times. There are several predisposing factors for violence in adolescents, one of which is psychological factors.⁸ Adolescents often don't talk about their problems. Adolescents sometimes have a closed personality. This has increased the number of cases of violence against adolescents because no one around the victim knows about it. Psychological factors such as stress that leads to anger can cause a person to experience violence.⁸ In addition, environmental factors such as a less harmonious family can also trigger physical abuse in adolescents. Physical abuse is an act that results in physical harm from interaction with parents or someone responsible and has power. Examples of forms of physical abuse include hitting, pushing, grabbing, and injuring in the form of physical actions.²⁰ The treatment of acts of violence or abuse (abuse) on children and adolescents cannot be taken lightly, serious attention is needed because it will result in negative effects in the long term. For example, various physical and psychological disorders and even the possibility of death can occur. The general impact of acts of physi-

cal abuse on children is that they can cause mental disorders as adults.²¹ A person who experiences acts of violence also becomes vulnerable to depression and shows traumatic symptoms, so eventually, he is at high risk of becoming a perpetrator of violence. Acts of physical abuse can also interfere with the growth process, interfere with the development of intelligence, and have the potential to cause problems with behavioral deviations such as smoking, abuse of addictive substances or drugs, and free sex behavior.²¹

The personality condition of adolescent children who experience acts of physical abuse from those closest to them can lead to various forms of behavior. They can imitate these acts of violence in the future. If the child gets violent treatment simultaneously emotionally and physically, then the child's personal life or psychological condition will be worse, in addition to physical damage.²⁰ Children who experience violent events within the family scope can also experience trauma in the form of physical, mental, and emotional disorders. The experience of experiencing domestic violence by their parents can cause short-term and long-term problems. In the short term, including threats to the safety of children's lives, destroying family harmony, and experiencing mental disorders. And in the long term, the existence of physical abuse treatment creates the potential for children to be involved in violent behavior in the future, both as perpetrators and victims of violence.²²

Table 4. Characteristics of respondents to tell someone about physical abuse.

Telling someone for physical abuse	n	%
Experience pushed and arrested		
Parents / Connecting parents / Guardians	21	10.9
Teacher / Counselor Counselor	36	18.80
Child Protection Commission	0	0
Friend	0	0
Other	0	0
Experience of being stoned by something painful		
Parents / Connecting parents / Guardians	11	5.7
Teacher / Counselor Counselor	2	1
Child Protection Commission	1	0.5
Friend	20	10.4
Other	2	1.0
Experience of being kicked, bitten and punched		
Parents / Connecting parents / Guardians	16	8.6
Teacher / Counselor Counselor	2	1.1
Child Protection Commission	1	0.5
Friend	10	5.4
Other	1	0.5
Experience of being strangled by others		
Parents / Connecting parents / Guardians	4	2.2
Teacher / Counselor Counselor	1	0.5
Child Protection Commission	0	0
Friend	1	0.5
Other	5	0.7

Conclusions

Based on research on physical abuse against adolescents during the Covid-19 pandemic, it can be concluded that there are various forms of behavior that are included in physical abuse against adolescents. Physical abuse can have long-term effects, such as physical and psychological disturbances the teenager, which can even lead to death. In addition, physical abuse can also cause adolescents to experience mental disorders such as depression and show traumatic symptoms. Acts of physical abuse can also interfere with the process of growth and development, interfere with the development of intelligence, and have the potential to cause problems with behavioral deviations such as smoking, abuse of addictive substances or drugs, and free sex behavior. Another long-term impact is that they can also imitate the acts of violence they experience in the future.

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