Violence against children during the COVID-19 pandemic: Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) analysis on Lowokwaru District, Indonesia

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Abstract

The high number of cases of violence against children has become a big concern, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Research purposes to analyze the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) in violence against children during the COVID-19 pandemic in Lowokwaru District, Malang City. Research design a quantitative analytic study with a cross-sectional study primary data. Research instrument used was a questionnaire with Google Form application which was online collecting by 100 mothers. Analysis technique uses Somers'd and Ordinal Logistic Regression. Variables related to the intention to commit violence against children are subjective norms (p=0.00<α=0.05) and behavioral control (p=0.002 <α=0.05), while attitudes are not related to the intention to commit violence against children (p=0.501 >α=0.05). Variables that have a significant effect on the intention of violence against children are subjective norms (p=0.001<α=0.05) and behavioral control (p=0.002<α=0.05). Subjective norms and behavioral control are related and have an effect on the intention to commit violence against children, while attitudes do not.

Introduction

A new history was engraved in 2019. A mysterious case of pneumonia was first reported in December 2019 in Wuhan, China.[1] This disease is caused by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-COV2) which is included in the large family of Coronaviruses, which is also a family with Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)[1]. Common symptoms that appear in patients with COVID-19 include cough, fever and short-ness of breath.[2] The existence of the COVID-19 pandemic not only endangers health, but also affects the balance of many sectors in social life.[3] One of the impacts felt by the community is the new policy imposed by the government which requires people not to leave the house if it is not for emergency needs.[3] This policy requires that study and work activities are carried out online.[4] As a result, the household burden is increasing.[5] The existence of a Learning from Home (BdR) policy requires parents to take a dual role in replacing the position of teachers in schools in assisting children to learn.[5] The number of new things due to the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the need for adjustments, including adjustments in parenting.[5] These things result in parents having the potential to experience emotional vulnerability so that children are vulnerable to being victims of violence from their parents.[5] Elementary school age children still really need adult assistance (especially parents) in carrying out the online learning process, so that online learning for children can be carried out properly and learning objectives can be achieved.[6]

Another consequence is the existence of economic problems that are getting worse due to salary cuts or even being laid off by the company.[7] The pressures arising from the COVID-19 pandemic can interfere with mental health so that parents can consciously or unconsciously vent their burdens of thoughts by committing acts of violence against family members.[7] Data recorded in the Online Information System for the Protection of Women and Children during January 1 – June 19, 2020, there were 3,087 cases of violence against children, 852 cases of physical violence, 768 cases of psychological violence and 1,848 cases of sexual violence. In addition, based on the results of a survey on the Fulfilment of Rights and Protection of Children during the COVID-19 Pandemic Period conducted on children and parents, it was found that the most common form of physical violence experienced by children during the COVID-19 pandemic was pinching (23%), beaten (10%) and grabbed (9%). Parents also admitted that they physically abused their children, including pinching (29%), pulling (19.5%) and hitting (10.6%). In addition, the majority of children experienced psychological violence in the form of being scolded (56%), compared to other children (34%) and being yelled at (23%). Parents also admitted that they had psychologically abused their children, including scolding (72.1%), glaring (33.1%) and yelling (32.3%). The majority of the perpetrators of pinching and scolding children are

mothers.[8] Data from international research states that there are 3 out of 4 children (or around 300 million children) aged 2-4 years who routinely receive physical punishment or psychological violence from parents and caregivers.[9] The majority of deaths resulting from child abuse are inappropriately attributed to burns, falls, drowning and other causes.[9] Children are the responsibility of parents, who must be treated humanely and are entitled to great love from both parents.[12] However, the situation in society still shows that children are a vulnerable group who are often victims of domestic violence.[3] Not all parents treat their children with love.[12] Some parents take care of children with harsh treatment or even abuse children so that children obey their orders.[14]

Parents feel entitled to treat their children as they wish, so parents tend to mistreat their children under the pretext of educating and disciplining children in their own way.[15] UNICEF in 2015 noted that violence against children has occurred in Indonesia, as many as 40% of children aged 13-15 years reported that they had been physically abused at least once in a year, as many as 26% of children reported having been abused. physical punishment by parents or caregivers at home, and as many as 50% of children reported that they experienced bullying at school.[16]

Based research on MI (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah) Muhammadiyah 1, 5, 6 and 9 Malang City in 2019, it was found that the prevalence of children aged 8-13 years who experienced violence in boys was 56%, while for girls it was 44%.[17] The forms of physical violence experienced by the majority of respondents were in the form of pinching, hitting, and yelling.[17] Most perpetrators of violence are biological mothers (42%) followed by biological fathers (21%).[17] In this case, it can be seen that there are still many parents who use corporal punishment as a way to discipline their children, especially if children do not obey their parents' orders.[17]

Women Cricis Center (WCC) Dian Mutiara is one of the community institutions located in Malang City, East Java. Based on a simple interview conducted with the authorities at WCC Dian Mutiara, it can be seen that the Lowokwaru is one of the sub-districts with the highest number of cases of Domestic Violence in Malang City in 2020, with a total of 7 cases.[3] Violence against children is a public health problem at the global level that has the potential to have a lifelong impact on victims if they do not get proper treatment.[18] This study aims to analyze violence against children during the COVID-19 pandemic in Lowokwaru District, Malang City using Theory Of Planned Behavior (TPB). TPB explains that a person's intention is influenced by three components, attitudes, subjective norms (SN) and behavioral control (BC).[20] The existence of a behavioral control component that is added to the TPB aims to estimate an individual's behavior more specifically.[19] In addition, the TPB is a standard theory that has been widely used in predicting a behavior, and is considered a conventional social psychology theory.[21] So in this study the analysis of violent intentions against children is seen through attitudes, SN and BC.

Materials and Methods

Data resources

Quantitative analysis Research using a cross-sectional study design. sample of 100 people was determined using a purposive sampling technique, with inclusion criteria being mothers who have elementary school-aged children who go to school online and live in Lowokwaru District, Malang City. The age range of the mothers who became respondents was 24-53 years, with the children's age range being 6-12 years. Data was collected using a survey method, by distributing online questionnaires by Google Form in the May-July 2021.

Measurement of Attitude, Subjectives Norms and Behavioral Control

The questionnaires contained 10 positive and negative statements in each section. The measurement of uses a Likert scale where respondents are required to choose one answer from Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree and Strongly Agree.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out in three stages, univariate, bivariate and multivariate analysis. Univariate analysis aims to analyze descriptively the characteristics of respondents whose results are shown using a frequency distribution table. Bivariate analysis using Somers'd formula with a significance value of = 0.05 or Confidential Interval (CI) of 95% to examine the relationship between attitudes, (SN) and (BC) on intentions. Then proceed with the analysis using the Ordinal Logistics Regression formula with a significance value of = 0.05 or Confidential Interval (CI) of 95% to test the effect of the variables that are proven to show a relationship.

Ethics Approval

Approved by the Health Research Ethic Committee State Polytechnic of Health Malang (Reference Number 156/KEPK-POLKESMA/2021). Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to questionnaire administration.

Results

Table 1 shows characteristics of respondents based on six aspects. The majority of mothers who have a high school education level are 56 people (56%). A total of 66 mothers (66%) do domestic work (housewives). The majority of mothers earn family income of Rp. 1,000,000 – Rp. 3,000,000

Table 1. Characteristics of respondents.

Characteristics	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Recent educational history		
Magister or Doctor Degree	1	1
D4 or Bachelor Degree	27	27
Diploma	3	3
Senior high school	56	56
Junior high school	10	10
Elementary school	3	3
Mother job status		
Housewife	66	66
Working mom	34	34
Family income per month		
> Rp 5.000.000	6	6
Rp 3.000.000 – Rp 5.000.000	18	18
Rp 1.000.000 – Rp 3.000.000	48	48
< Rp 1.000.000	28	28
Number of children		
> 3	7	7
3	31	31
2	44	44
1	18	18
Member in the house		
Nuclear family	68	68
Extended family	32	32
People who take care of children everyday		
Mother	83	83
Grandma	8	8
Nanny	3	3
Others	6	6

per month, as many as 48 people (48%). Majority mothers (28%) earn a family income of < IDR 1,000,000 per month. The majority of mothers have 2 children, 44 people (44%). Another characteristic of mothers seen in this study is in terms of living with anyone. Most of the mothers live with their nuclear families, with their husbands and children, as many as 68 people (68%). In other categories, the answers from respondents include the daily care of the children carried out by the father and mother; father, mother, grandmother and grandfather; grandmother and mother; and finally, there is an answer that children are at home alone when their parents have to work in the office.

Based on Table 2, it can be seen that the majority of mothers have neutral attitude categories regarding violence against children, as many as 76 people (76%). There

are no mothers who have SN in the low category. Most mothers have SN with moderate category, 44 mothers (44%) have SN in high category. The majority of mothers have (BC) in the high category. The majority of mothers who have the intention of committing violence against children in the low category are 67 people (67%).

The three components in the TPB which are independent variables were analyzed by cross tabulation method on the dependent variable in this study. The results between attitudes, SN and BC with the intention of committing violence against children in mothers in Lowokwaru District, Malang City. Table 3 shows that most of the mothers who have an attitude in the positive attitude category, have the intention to commit violence against children in the negative attitude category. The value of p = 0.501 on the attitude towards intention variable shows

that there is no relationship between the mother's attitude and the intention to commit violence against children.

Table 4 shows that the results of the Ordinal Logistics Regression test, subjective norm variables affect the intention to commit violence against children by p = 0.001 (<α=0.05). The results of the Ordinal Logistics Regression test, BC variables have an effect on the intention to commit violence against children by p = 0.002 (<α=0.05), so it can be seen that the influence of BC is greater than the influence of SN on violent intentions against children.

Discussion

According from the characteristic ditribution while working mothers must be able to divide their time in terms of work and household matters, especially in terms of child care.[23] Based on the results of a survey on Dynamics of Change in the Household During COVID-19 in 2020 by Komnas Perempuan,[24] it shows that economic problems can be a driving factor for domestic violence. Based on the results of a survey on Dynamics of Changes in the Household During COVID-19 in 2020 by Komnas Perempuan,[4] the large number of children in the family is one of the factors that can affect stress on mothers.

The positive attitude of the mother shows that the mother is well aware that violent behavior against children is wrong and has a bad impact on children. The sufficient attitude of the mother shows that the mother does not really think about avoiding violence against the child and can at any time discipline the child using violence if

Table 2. Overview of TPB in intentions of violence against children.

Characteristics	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Attitude		
Positive	6	6
Neutral	76	76
Negative	18	18
SN		
High	44	44
Low	56	56
BC		
High	80	80
Moderate	20	20
Total	100	100
Intention		
Strong	1	1
Moderate	32	32
Low	67	67

Table 3. Results of bivariate analysis between attitudes, SN and BC with intentions to violence against children.

Category	BC with intentions to violence against children			Total	p-value
	Strong	Moderate	Low		
Attitude					0,501
Positive	0	0	6	6	
Neutral	1	29	46	76	
Negative	0	3	15	18	
SN					0,00
High	0	6	38	56	
Low	1	26	29	44	
BC					0,002
High	0	20	60	80	
Moderate	1	12	7	20	

Table 4. Results of multivariate analysis of SN and BC on intentions to violence against children.

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	p-value	Note
Subjectives norms	Intentions to violence against children	0,001	Influence
Behavioral control		0,002	Influence

necessary. The mother's lack of attitude indicates that she is not aware of the bad effects of violence against children, so she may still use violence in her daily child care. Mothers who have subjective norms with a good category indicate that mothers have a good impression of the wishes of important people around them who do not support violence against children. Mothers who have SN with sufficient categories indicate that mothers have a doubtful impression of the wishes of important people around them who do not support violence against children, so that mothers may still commit violence against children if necessary. Mothers who have subjective norms in the less category show that mothers have the impression that they do not approve of child care without violence.

There were no mothers who showed BC in the category of less about violence against children. Mothers who have good BC indicate that they believe they are capable of parenting their children without using violence. Mothers who have BC with a sufficient category indicate that the mother is quite confident that she is able to carry out child care without violence, but may still use violence in disciplining children if necessary. Mothers who have low BC indicate that they are not sure that they are able to take care of their children without violence, so it is possible for mothers to use violence in disciplining their children on a daily basis. The stronger the mother's intention to commit violence against children can potentially manifest violent behavior against children.

Attitude towards intention variable shows that there is no relationship between the mother's attitude and the intention to commit violence against children. This is not in line with the research conducted by [1] which states that attitudes related to disciplining children using corporal punishment are related to the parents' intention to use physical violence in the future. Differences in research results may be caused by differences in the location and population of the study, as well as online data collection.

Attitude is not a predictor of aggressive behavior.[25] Aggressive behavior in question is behavior that aims to injure or hurt others both physically and verbally.[25] Attitude is not something that is acquired from birth but is something that can be learned, so that attitudes can be changed, influenced, formed and developed.[26] Behavior does not always reflect the attitude possessed by a person, so it is possible for someone to manifest behavior that is not in line with his or her attitude[27]. In addition, it is not only formed from a purely psychological state owned by a person, attitudes are also

formed through an individual awareness process so that it can be influenced by personal experience, other people, culture and mass media.[28]

In contrast to the attitude variable, the second variable shows that most mothers who have SN in the good category, have the intention to commit violence against children in the weak category. SN variable on intention, it can be interpreted that there is a relationship between the mother's SN and the intention to commit violence against children. These results are in line with research conducted by[1] which states that subjective norms related to disciplining children using corporal punishment are related to the parents' intention to use physical violence in the future.

Similar to the SN variable, the third variable shows that the majority of mothers who have behavioral control in the good category have the intention of committing violence against children in the weak category. BC variable on the intention shows that there is a relationship between the mother's BC and the intention to commit violence against the child. These results are in line with research conducted by[1] which states that BC related to disciplining children using corporal punishment is related to the parents' intention to use physical violence in the future.

Other research shows that SN by peers and parents affect the occurrence of aggressive behavior.[25] According to the subjects in the study, their impression of the relationship they had with peers and parents was considered more important than their attitude toward aggressive behavior. Stress is one of the factors that has been proven to give rise to the potential for violence against children.[29] Previous research has shown that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on parents is associated with increased parenting stress which leads to an increased risk of harsh parenting in children.[29] The existence of the COVID-19 pandemic requires mothers to do domestic work, childcare and workload (WFH) so that it triggers mothers to experience stress.[30] Other study showed that the amount of emotional and social support that parents received had a significant effect on lower perceptions of stress and the risk of violence against children.[29] This is in line with previous research which stated that mothers' perceptions of family support had an effect on low parenting stress, so that parents who received more support were more likely to be committed to positive parenting.[29]

BC variables have an effect on the intention to commit violence against children, so it can be seen that the influence of

BC is greater than the influence of SN on violent intentions. against children. These results are in line with previous research that parental BC affects the intention to commit physical violence on children and it is possible that BC has a greater influence than parents' attitudes towards the intention to commit physical violence against children.[1] Parents who have sufficient or less behavioral control are four times more likely to commit physical violence against children in the future compared to parents who have good behavioral control over the use of physical violence against children.[1] But there is also another possibility, if parents who have a supportive attitude towards disciplining children without violence experience difficulties or the methods they believe are less effective, they can discipline their children using violence.[1] This is related to the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic which has an impact on the increasing burden on mothers.[24] The existence of a policy of working and studying from home, a higher risk of women experiencing Domestic Violence, or even experiencing layoffs have also contributed to the emergence of violence against children[24].

BC is divided into two, perceived control and perceived difficulty.[25] The control felt by parents during the COVID-19 pandemic had an effect on reducing their perception of stress and the risk of violence against children.[29] This is supported by previous research which states that parents who have low BC have high levels of parenting stress.[29] This is related to the results of a survey on Dynamics of Change in the Household During COVID-19 in 2020 by Komnas Perempuan which stated that 1 out of 3 female respondents experienced stress, because the perceived burden of household work was increasing.[4]

Conclusions

The attitude component does not show a relationship with the mother's intention to commit violence against the child, but it would still be better if the mother could control her attitude under any conditions so that there was no violence against the child. Meanwhile, the components of SN and BC showed a significant relationship with the mother's intention to commit violence against children. The two components, SN and BC, also showed a significant influence on the mother's intention to commit violence against children. So it is hoped that mothers can be wise in making decisions and can control themselves well even though the people around them support violent behavior against children. This research

is limited to the aspect of intentional violence against children, so further research is needed to the behavioral aspect with direct observation.

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