

Violence in Schools: A Study on Child Abuse in Elementary Schools of Lamba Leda Utara Subdistrict

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Abstract. This study analyzed the violence in elementary schools in Lamba Leda Utara Subdistrict, East Manggarai Regency. Using a survey method, data were collected through questionnaires. The results indicated that 80% of respondents have witnessed violence in schools, with 85% acknowledging its negative impact on the quality of learning. Contributing factors include a lack of understanding in conflict management, inconsistent supervision, and social issues within the school environment. Students often play the role of both perpetrators and victims (60%), while 20% of cases involve violence between teachers and students. The majority of respondents (45%) feel unsupported in handling cases of violence, and 80% support specialized training for teachers. Preventive efforts are considered ineffective, and stigma hinders the reporting of incidents. Recommendations include strengthening prevention programs, providing teacher training, increasing support from school authorities, and improving conflict management. This study offers valuable insights into creating a safe and supportive learning environment.

Keywords: Violence, Elementary Schools, Lamba Leda Utara Subdistrict

1. Introduction

We can take pride in the fact that our country has been recognized as the third-largest democracy in the world, following India and the United States. Unlike other Southeast Asian countries that have experienced setbacks as a consequence of the autocratic systems they have implemented, Indonesia is claimed to have made significant progress in applying democratic values [1]. These values include equality, dialogue, and cooperation, collective decision-making mechanisms to achieve consensus, the legitimacy of power entrusted to professionals, and institutional transformation through transparent and accountable methods [2] A practical approach to institutionalizing these democratic values is pursued by strengthening the democratic education system that advocates for human rights and equality, ensuring freedom from aggressive or violent behavior [3].

However, at the grassroots level, we still observe practices that contradict the claimed success of democracy, as symptoms of violence remain evident in educational institutions. Within educational institutions, we witness the persistence of power and violence dynamics among students and teachers. Violence is correlated with longstanding patterns in educational institutions that continue to perpetuate as an antithesis to the democratic spirit, which has yet to

fully take hold. We are aware that Indonesia's history is deeply rooted in authoritarianism, which suppressed the mentality of fighters, creativity, and individual autonomy. Under authoritarianism, people are prohibited from thinking freely, as obedience to the leader is demanded. Individuals surrender their thoughts to those in power, thus fulfilling orders becomes an entrusted duty. The homogenization of thought is strongly enforced to maintain the status quo, and the structure and hierarchy of power are deeply ingrained. The weakness of individual autonomy and the constant drive to conform to authority sow seeds of tyranny for the future. Those who are frequently given orders tend to behave in a tyrannical manner once the power over them disappears [4]. Someone who has often been commanded and treated harshly by their superiors will act similarly when they become a senior. Their harsh treatment of subordinates is perceived as legitimate. It is no surprise that similar phenomena are found in schools where practices are still heavily based on dominance-based relationships [5]. Our society will remain trapped in a cycle of violence as long as the process of individualization is not promoted in school [6].

Violence is often viewed as aggressive behavior directed toward an individual, resulting in harm or force [7]. According to Law No. 21 of 2007 on Human Rights Court Procedures, violence is defined as any unlawful act, with or without the use of means, that inflicts harm on an individual physically or psychologically, endangering their life or body, or resulting in the deprivation of their freedom [8]. Law No. 35 of 2014, which amends Law No. 23 of 2002 on Child Protection, defines violence as any act against a child that results in physical, psychological, sexual suffering, and/or neglect, including threats of violence, coercion, or unlawful deprivation of freedom. From these definitions, four indicators can distinguish an act as violence: 1) it is intentional; 2) it is unwanted; 3) it is unbeneficial; and 4) it is harmful [9]. In terms of form, violence can manifest as physical violence [10], psychological violence [11].

Children in elementary educational institutions should grow in a democratic climate, free from all forms of violence [12]. Elementary schools play a significant role and have the responsibility to address violence, both between peers and violence from teachers toward students, through preventive measures and systematic interventions [13]. Every child has fundamental rights protected by law, including protection from violence and exploitation. According to data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection [14] as of June 1, 2024, there were 8,782 cases of violence against children, with females being the most frequent victims of violence. In terms of location, schools are the second most common place for such incidents [15].

Table 1. Gender-based Victims

Gender	Victims	Percentage
Boys	1.932	22%
Girls	7.661	78%

Table 2. Location-based Victims

Location of the Incident	Victims	Percentage
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Home	5.079	58%
Schools	1.384	16%
Public Area	1.112	13%
Others	1.207	14%

This study was conducted with teachers in elementary schools (SD) across the Lamba Leda Utara Subdistrict, Manggarai Regency, NTT, with the aim of exploring their understanding and gathering insights from their experiences when faced with the issue of child violence in schools. The issue of violence has become a significant problem that educators must confront, particularly in the context of primary education. In order to assess the potential risks of violence, as well as to understand its impacts and underlying causes, conducting a survey is considered the ideal approach [16]. The purpose of this survey is to collect data related to incidents of violence in the elementary schools of Lamba Leda Utara, analyze the patterns and characteristics of these incidents, and identify the various factors that might be contributing to the occurrence of violence in these settings [17]; [18];. By gathering this data, the study seeks to provide a clearer understanding of the prevalence and nature of violence within primary school environments. It also aims to identify the root causes and the factors that may be perpetuating such violence [19]. Ultimately, the findings from this survey are expected to offer valuable insights into the broader issue of violence in primary education and provide a foundation for developing more effective strategies for prevention and intervention. The goal is to help create a safer and more supportive learning environment for both students and educators, and to develop targeted actions that can address the issue of violence more effectively within schools [20].

2. Method

This study employed a quantitative research design to examine the issue of violence in elementary schools. A survey-based approach was utilized to gather data from teachers and school principals, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the prevalence and nature of violence as reported by educators. The research aimed to identify patterns, emerging trends, and contributing factors through a structured data collection and analysis process.

The study was conducted in several elementary schools within the Lamba Leda Utara Subdistrict. The participants included 27 teachers and school principals selected through total population sampling, ensuring comprehensive representation of educators within the region. Teachers were chosen as the primary focus due to their significant role in the educational system and their potential involvement in instances of violence against students. By highlighting their perspectives, this study aimed to provide a deeper understanding of school violence in elementary education.

Data were collected using a structured survey, which served as the primary instrument for gathering information on the experiences and perceptions of violence in schools. The survey was designed to assess: 1) The prevalence of violence experienced by students; 2) The contexts in which violent incidents occurred; 3) The role of teachers in preventing or contributing to such incidents. In addition to the survey, interviews were conducted with selected participants to supplement the quantitative findings with deeper insights into the nature and causes of violence in the school environment.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods to identify key patterns and trends. The analysis focused on: 1) Prevalence and frequency of violence as reported by teachers; 2) Correlations between teacher perceptions, school environment, and violent incidents. 3) Identifying contextual factors influencing school violence. This thorough examination was essential for developing appropriate strategies for addressing and preventing violence in primary schools.

3. Result and Discussions

Violence in schools is one of the issues that haunts education in the Lamba Leda Utara Subdistrict. This phenomenon clearly impacts the interactions between students and educators at school and damages the learning environment, which should be a safe and conducive space for the growth and development of children. Through this research report, we can delve into various aspects related to violence in schools, from the perceptions of teachers as key stakeholders to the factors influencing the effectiveness of prevention and intervention efforts. Schools must ensure that there is a strong supervision mechanism and consistently enforced disciplinary policies. The role of school supervisors needs to be strengthened so they can provide support to schools in preventing and addressing cases of violence. Schools must have clear and transparent procedures for handling violence cases, including investigation mechanisms and fair sanctions for perpetrators. Strengthening the role of the school committee in supervision and rule enforcement is necessary to encourage broader community involvement in creating a safe learning environment [23].

Survey data indicates that violence in schools is not an unfamiliar issue to the majority of respondents. As many as 80% of respondents reported having witnessed or experienced violence in the schools where they teach. Although considered commonplace, nearly all respondents (95%) agreed that violence in schools is an issue that should not be taken lightly. This reflects an awareness that violence should not occur in the teacher-student relationship, as it contradicts the very essence of education. Schools should serve as child-friendly environments that prioritize the safety, well-being, and holistic development of students. A conducive educational setting must be free from any form of violence, ensuring that children can learn, interact, and grow without fear or psychological distress. The presence of violence not only disrupts the learning process but also has long-term negative effects on children's cognitive, emotional, and social development [24]. Awareness of violence in schools is not only reflected in the acknowledgment of violent incidents but also in the recognition of its negative impact on various

aspects. As many as 85% of respondents agreed that violence in schools affects the quality of learning and the psychological well-being of children. The results of correlation tests showed a "very strong" connection between violence and children's mental health.

Table 3. Correlation tests Results

		X8	X9
X8	Pearson Correlation	1	.918**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	27	27
X9	Pearson Correlation	.918**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	27	27

The strength of the relationship between variables in the "Very Strong" category is found between X8 (acts of violence in the school environment can negatively impact students' psychological well-being) and X9 (whether acts of violence can cause students to feel unsafe at school). From these results, it can be concluded that acts of violence negatively impact students' psychological well-being and cause students to feel unsafe at school. Furthermore, violence also affects a decrease in students' learning motivation. The strength of the relationship between these variables is "strong," with X11 (violence can cause students to experience a decrease in learning motivation) and X12 (acts of violence can lead to other behavioral disturbances in students). In fact, violent acts result in a decrease in students' learning motivation and other behavioral disruptions. Acts of violence in schools have a profound impact on students' academic engagement and overall behavioral patterns. Exposure to violence, whether as direct victims or witnesses, often leads to a decline in learning motivation, as students may experience heightened anxiety, fear, and emotional distress that hinder their cognitive focus and academic performance. Prolonged exposure to violence can contribute to the development of maladaptive behaviors, such as aggression, withdrawal from social interactions, or defiance toward authority figures, further disrupting the overall learning environment. Without appropriate intervention, these behavioral disturbances may escalate, negatively affecting not only the individual students involved but also the broader school community, ultimately undermining the fundamental purpose of education as a nurturing and transformative process [25].

This situation raises concerns about the potential disruption to the educational process, which should be a top priority in the school environment. The main causes of violence in schools can be attributed to several factors. First, there is a lack of understanding regarding how to manage conflicts in a peaceful and effective manner. Schools, as academic communities, often fail to cultivate rationality, dialogue, and openness when dealing with conflicts or expressing emotions. Second, there is a lack of supervision and consistent enforcement of rules within the school environment. Third, there are social issues in the surrounding community that influence students' behavior at school. These factors interact with each other, exacerbating the situation and creating an environment that does not support students' positive development. Therefore, a

more comprehensive approach is needed to create a safe and supportive school environment. Strengthening the role of teachers, parents, and the community in addressing violence is crucial to ensuring that education can proceed optimally [26].

When examining who is most vulnerable to violence in schools, the data shows that students are the most common perpetrators and victims. As many as 60% of respondents reported that violence most often occurs between students. However, violence between teachers and students should not be overlooked, with 20% of respondents acknowledging the occurrence of violent behavior by teachers towards students. Furthermore, the survey report reveals a lack of support from the school in addressing cases of violence, which is a common issue. As many as 45% of respondents felt that there was insufficient support from the school in handling cases of violence. This indicates a gap between the need for addressing violence cases and the school system's ability to provide adequate support. The lack of proper intervention and support systems exacerbates the negative effects of violence, making it difficult for students to feel safe and secure in their learning environment. Without effective policies and resources, the cycle of violence is likely to continue, hindering the overall educational experience. It is essential for schools to not only acknowledge this issue but also implement comprehensive strategies to prevent and address violence in all its forms. By doing so, schools can foster an environment where both students and teachers can thrive without fear of harm [27].

To address this issue, respondents expressed their support for specialized training for teachers to handle cases of violence. As many as 80% of respondents agreed that such training is necessary for teachers. Ongoing training or socialization should be conducted to raise awareness about equality and create schools free from the tradition of violence. Teachers' skills and knowledge need to be enhanced to effectively manage situations involving violence in schools. The current efforts to prevent violence in schools are generally considered ineffective by respondents, who rate the effectiveness of these efforts as "somewhat ineffective" or "ineffective." There is an urgent need to evaluate and improve existing prevention strategies to ensure a safe and conducive educational environment for all parties involved. The data also revealed a stigma surrounding violence in schools that hinders the reporting of cases. About 45% of respondents agreed that this stigma obstructs the reporting of incidents. This stigma includes the perception of a complicated process that could damage existing relationships, leading to the neglect of violence as a seemingly safer option. Therefore, efforts are needed to address this stigma and create a supportive environment for victims to report cases of violence [28].

However, respondents emphasized that violence in schools should not be ignored. The involvement of various parties, such as teachers, students, school staff, parents, and the community, is expected to be effective in resolving this issue. To overcome this challenge, a comprehensive approach that engages all relevant stakeholders is essential. Despite these considerations, one practical solution that can be proposed is providing specialized training for educators in handling violence situations. Teachers, as the front line in the field, need adequate knowledge and skills to manage conflicts effectively. Furthermore, the role of school supervisors is crucial in maintaining consistent enforcement of rules and school policies. They should be supported with sufficient resources and receive appropriate training to address

violence effectively [29]. By implementing these solutions comprehensively, it is hoped that schools in the Lamba Leda Utara Subdistrict can create a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment that fosters the growth and development of all students [30].

Based on these findings, various strategic steps need to be taken to address violence in schools; 1) Specialized training for teachers and educators. Respondents support training for teachers in handling cases of violence. This training should include conflict management techniques, positive discipline strategies, and appropriate psychological approaches for dealing with students. 2) Enhanced supervision and enforcement of rules. Schools must ensure that strong oversight mechanisms are in place and that discipline policies are consistently applied. The role of school supervisors should also be strengthened to support schools in preventing and addressing cases of violence. 3) Building a school culture that is friendly and safe from all forms of violence. Schools should implement programs that promote mutual respect and empathy among students, teachers, and school staff. Anti-violence campaigns, mentoring programs, and parental involvement in fostering a positive school environment can serve as concrete steps. 4) Improving psychosocial support for students. School counseling services should be strengthened to provide a safe space for students who experience violence. Schools can collaborate with psychologists or social organizations to provide accessible counseling services for both students and educators. 5) Addressing the stigma around reporting violence. Socialization and education are necessary to change the perception that reporting violence is the right action to take and not something to fear. Schools can provide easier and anonymous reporting systems to reduce barriers to reporting. 6) Collaboration with the community and other stakeholders. Local governments, educational organizations, and the local community should be involved in creating more effective policies to address violence in schools. A multi-stakeholder approach will ensure more comprehensive and sustainable interventions.

4. Conclusion

Violence in schools is a serious issue in the Lamba Leda Utara Subdistrict, with 80% of respondents having witnessed or experienced it. School violence has a negative impact on the quality of education (85% of respondents agree). The main factors contributing to violence in schools are a lack of understanding of conflict management, inconsistent supervision and enforcement of rules, and social environmental issues. The most common perpetrators and victims of violence in schools are students (60%), though violence between teachers and students also occurs (20%). There is a lack of support from the school in handling cases of violence (45% of respondents feel there is insufficient support). Respondents support specialized training for teachers to handle cases of violence (80% agree). Efforts to prevent violence in schools are generally considered ineffective (respondents rated their effectiveness as "somewhat ineffective" or "ineffective"). The stigma surrounding violence in schools hinders the reporting of cases (45% of respondents agree).

From these conclusions, the following recommendations are made: strengthening violence prevention programs in schools with more effective strategies; providing specialized training for teachers to handle cases of violence; increasing support from the school in addressing cases of violence; creating an environment that supports victims in reporting violence cases;

addressing the stigma surrounding violence in schools; enhancing understanding of how to manage conflicts peacefully and effectively; strengthening supervision and enforcement of rules within the school environment; and addressing social environmental issues that affect student behavior at school.

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