

Child Psychology in Indonesia: Problems and Contributions

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Abstract:

Child related problems in Indonesia have demonstrated more serious concerns both in the variety of cases as well as its incidences and intensities. The data reported by the Indonesian Child Protection Commission recently indicates significant increases of child related problems influenced by parental divorce, children unfriendly television show, violence happened at school, and social media related pornography. Being the victims of the problems stated above, affected children are at higher risk to become perpetrators of physical, psychological, and sexual violence in the future.

These days, children are also prone for trafficking and exploitation (both as factory workers and as prostitutes through online prostitution). Research findings and professional practices of child psychology in Indonesia have contributed to the management of problems mentioned above, for the development of promotion and prevention programs, and for being involved in creating specific intervention. Postgraduate students undertaking professional psychology in Indonesia have been given internship or placement opportunities to be involved in managing children's problems aiming for optimizing the children's development and for developing suitable interventions. However, the field of child psychology in Indonesia is facing bigger challenges to take more important roles, in particular suggesting vital government policies as preventive and protective actions which address the above concerns.

Presentation:

Self Introduction

Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for having me. I am going to be speaking to you today about Child Psychology in Indonesia: Problems and Contribution. The presentation will briefly outline 3 topics:

1. About Indonesia,
2. Child related problem in Indonesia, and
3. Programs toward Child Issues.

1. About Indonesia

Republic of Indonesia is a unity, transcontinental sovereign state located mainly Indonesia Southeast Asia, with some territories Indonesia Oceania. Situated between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, it is the world's largest island country, with more than thirteen thousand islands.

Indonesia has a multicultural, multilingual and multi-ethnic society. Indonesia consists of 34 provinces, around 300 of distinctive ethnic and linguistic groups, with the largest-and

politically dominant ethnic group being the Javanese. A shared identity has developed, defined by lanai languaga ethnic diversity religious pluralism within a Muslim~ majority population. Indonesia's national motto, "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" (mean Unity in Diversity) articulates the diversity that shapes Indonesia. More than 742 different languages and dialects are spoken in Indonesia. The official language is Indonesian.

Indonesia has human resources related to psychology expertises, which is more than 1000 lecturers in universities and more than 15.000 psychologist member. There are 123 universities offering undergraduate Psychology, 19 universities offering master of professional Psychology, and 6 universities offering doctor of psychology. Indonesian Psychological Association (HIMPSI) already has regional chapters in 27 provinces. Location of universities offering study program of psychology and also psychologists have not spread evenly on all islands of Indonesia, mostly they are in Java. That is an unfavorable condition for Indonesia in general.

HIMPSI also have 15 division of psychology specialization. Two of the divisions, which are Division of Developmental Psychology and Division of Educational Psychology have engaged with child issues.

2. Child related problem in Indonesia

In a large and diverse country like Indonesia, and which is fast emerging as one of the strongest economiess, children and young people play a key role in future development. Around 32% - or one third - (Indonesia's population are about 258 million people), are children under the age of 18.

There are many good things and achievement of Indonesian Children. Some of that are Indonesian students won seven medals in the 11th International Earth Science Olympiad (IESO) in France. Indonesian students very often win international science Olympiad. But of course, we still have many child related problems that challenge child psychology to contribute to solve that.

Some child related problems in Indonesia listed from some sources are:

- Only less than 18% child with age between 0-6 years come in Early Childhood Education class.
- An increase in cases of child victims of bullying in school; as well as an increase in cases of children who become an actor of bullying in school.
- An Increase in cases of child caused by pornography and cyber-crime.
- An increase in cases of child who have to deal with law such as child victims and perpetrators of sexual violence
- An increase in the exploitation of children and children as victims of trafficking

3. Programs toward Child Issues

There are some programs initiated by Government, Non Government Organization (NGO), Universities and also Indonesian Psychological Association to support the effort of overcoming child related problems and optimizing child development in Indonesia. These programs are developed with Psychology concepts and theories as the basis.

The programs are:

1. Mother-Class Program initiated by Ministry of Health. Mother-Class Program consists of 2 classes: Class for Pregnant Women and Class for mothers of children younger than five years of age.

A primary objective of~ the Mother class program is to increase parents' use of the maternal and child health handbook. Handbook contains practical tips and important guidance on pregnancy, delivery, post-partum mother and baby care, immunization requirements, breastfeeding and nutritious foods across the early years, common illnesses, and benchmarks for child growth and development.

2. Building Families of Young Children Groups by National Board on Family Planning

National Board on Family Planning offers parenting classes called Building Families of Young Children Groups. That program reaching parents in most districts and providing comprehensive content and messages that reflect all domains of child development in age specific ways.

3. Parenting Education by Ministry of Education and Culture

A program designed to increase engaging parent with children in school. There are three strategies for that:

- * Parenting classes: Goal of program is to facilitated discussion among parent about parenting. So, parents can learn good parenting practice from each other. Ministry facilitated 37 books that may be used as materials and background reading for facilitators to use for parenting classes.
- * "Parents' Days:" The goal of program is to increase parents' involvement in children's learning by having parents participate in children's educational and cultural development programs. Participation could be that a parent comes in to the classroom to demonstrate an activity, teach a new skill, tell stories, or help celebrate a holiday.
- * Home visits: Teachers have a chance to talk privately with parents. In most cases, home visits occur because a teacher has a concern about a child.

4. Children with Special Needs Program by Faculty of Psychology Universitas Airlangga

A program designed to train on how to handle child with special needs, especially autism. The program target is to increase knowledge and skills of the participant towards children with autism. In specific the participant will be able to explain the definition and characteristics of autism, able to develop matrix to identify characteristics, effect and strategy towards autism in the area of communication, social, information processing, sensory, motoric processing and attitude, and able to demonstrate basic strategies to deal with and handle children with autism.

5. Psychology Class for Teacher of Early Childhood Education by Faculty of Psychology Universitas Airlangga

To increase the number of children who get access to early childhood education, the city government of Surabaya, in East Java, established early childhood education class in every small community. Teachers of early childhood education class are volunteer mothers who do not have special education in early childhood education. To improve the quality of the teachers, Faculty of Psychology UNAIR provide psychology training for 35 hours within 6 weeks. They learned Developmental Psychology, Play Psychology, and other topics of psychology which important for their tasks in early childhood education.

6. Positive Youth Project by Indonesian Psychological Association

The purpose of program is to give a space to high school students to learn and study the basic understanding of leadership and social issues. The program is also designed to strengthen leadership values to create positive changes on self and close neighborhood.

Study of World Bank about Parenting in Indonesia concluded that the majority of programs in Indonesia facilitated by an unpaid paraprofessional who may have little more education or experience, and typically lacks substantive training or ongoing professional development opportunities. That condition is almost similar in another programs, not only parenting program. There are practical reasons for this approach (there are more needs, but resource of experts are limited). But the evidence suggests it is not a particularly effective way to change parents attitudes and behaviors, much less to affect children.

The challenge of Indonesian psychologists to disseminate psychology knowledge and skills to people in order to they can strengthening program design and delivery improve program effectiveness. Transfer of psychology knowledge and skills from psychologist has to intended so people have competence to design and delivery program that could:

- increasing the sense of self-efficacy so participants of program believe in themselves and think they can apply a new skill;
- Providing rewards and incentives when necessary
- Helping participants of program determine and remember why they are motivated to make behavioral changes;

- Match interventions to participant of program' stages of awareness;
- Raising awareness through educational materials, confrontation, media campaigns, and individual feedback;
- Include messages that include multiple methods of delivery, are high in emotional content and connect to past experiences;
- Stress the social appropriateness of the desired behavior, and the benefits of that behavior

Thank you very much for your attention.