



Sexual Exploitation of Children in Schools to Selling Children in Lodgings

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Abstract. *Exploitation of children in the online realm has become a serious threat that requires considerable attention. This research examines the forms of child exploitation that occur on online platforms, with a special focus on the sale of children that occurs in school and accommodation environments. This research aims to identify the methods used by the perpetrator, the causal factors, and the impact on the victim and society. This research found that child exploiters utilize digital technology and social media to manipulate, recruit and sell children. Child trafficking cases often involve organized criminal networks, which use school and accommodation environments as places for theft and exploitation. Factors such as poverty, lack of parental supervision, and gaps in the legal and educational systems also contribute to the rise in these cases. The impact of child exploitation in the online realm is very damaging. Children who are victims experience deep physical and psychological trauma, developmental disorders, and long-lasting social stigma. Apart from that, this exploitation also threatens the safety and welfare of the younger generation, as well as disrupting the social order by creating a sense of insecurity in society. Sexual Exploitation of Children. The conclusion of this research emphasizes the importance of collaboration between the government, educational institutions, internet service providers and non-governmental organizations to create effective policies in preventing and tackling child exploitation in the online realm. Recommended steps include increasing digital surveillance, educating children and parents about online risks, strengthening laws against criminals, and rehabilitation support for victims. Through a comprehensive and collaborative approach, it is hoped that an online environment that is safe and free from child exploitation can be created.*

Keywords: *Children; child sexual exploitation; online realm*

1. Introduction

1.1 Exploitation of Children in the Online World: A Global Concern

The exploitation of children in the online world has emerged as a global phenomenon, gaining increasing attention in recent decades. While advances in information and communication technology have brought numerous benefits, they have also introduced new challenges, particularly in child protection.

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), an estimated 1.2 million children worldwide become victims of child trafficking annually, with a significant proportion of these cases involving sexual exploitation. Indonesia, as one of the countries with the largest child populations globally, is not immune to this problem. Data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA) shows a consistent rise in the number of cases involving violence against children, including sexual exploitation. Furthermore, a report from ECPAT International highlights Indonesia as one of the Southeast Asian countries with a notably high incidence of online child sexual exploitation.

1.2 Vulnerabilities in Schools and Accommodations

Schools and temporary accommodation facilities are two primary environments where child exploitation often occurs. Schools, which should be safe spaces for children to learn and grow, have increasingly become hotspots for various forms of violence and exploitation. Perpetrators exploit gaps in school monitoring and protection systems to target and ensnare

victims. Meanwhile, accommodations providing temporary lodging for children also present easy targets for exploiters. These facilities, especially when lacking robust security and child protection measures, can become breeding grounds for child trafficking, sexual violence, and other forms of exploitation.

1.3 Contributing Factors to Online Child Exploitation

Several factors contribute to the growing problem of child exploitation in the digital realm. Poverty, inadequate parental supervision, and systemic weaknesses in legal and educational frameworks are among the key factors that heighten children's vulnerability to exploitation. In today's digital age, perpetrators have become increasingly sophisticated in their use of technology. Social media, instant messaging platforms, and various other online tools are commonly employed to lure, manipulate, and exploit children. The ease of communication and access to information online allows these exploiters to approach and groom victims without ever needing to meet them in person.

1.4 The Digital Age and Child Exploitation

The evolution of digital technology has transformed the way people interact, work, and learn. While it offers undeniable benefits, digital technology also introduces new risks, particularly for children. Today's children are growing up in a world where the internet and social media are integral parts of their daily lives. They spend significant amounts of time in cyberspace—learning, playing, and socializing with their peers. However, this constant online presence makes them more vulnerable to various forms of exploitation.

Child exploiters are increasingly adept at using technology to carry out their crimes. They use social media platforms to groom victims, instant messaging apps to communicate privately, and websites to facilitate the trafficking and exploitation of children. The anonymity and accessibility of the internet make it easier for perpetrators to find and target children without the need for physical contact.

1.5 Accommodations as Exploitation Hotspots

Temporary accommodations, such as boarding houses and hostels, also present significant risks for children. Children living in these accommodations are often in vulnerable situations, far from the protective supervision of parents or guardians. This lack of oversight makes it easier for exploiters to manipulate and exploit them. Furthermore, accommodations with poor security systems or insufficient regulations frequently fail to safeguard children from such threats. Exploiters may use these facilities as locations to commit sexual violence, engage in child trafficking, or perpetrate other forms of abuse.

1.6 Lack of Resources and Training

Schools and residential settings often lack the resources and training necessary to identify and address signs of exploitation. Teachers, caregivers, and boarding staff may not be adequately equipped with the knowledge or skills needed to recognize suspicious behavior or offer appropriate support to victims. Furthermore, the absence of clear policies and procedures for reporting and responding to incidents exacerbates the problem, leaving children even more vulnerable to exploitation.

In summary, various factors—including poverty, insufficient parental supervision, and systemic flaws—have made children increasingly susceptible to exploitation in the online world. In this digital era, perpetrators have become more skilled at using technology to prey on vulnerable children. They exploit social media, instant messaging apps, and other online platforms to approach, groom, and exploit their victims. Addressing this complex issue requires a comprehensive approach involving stronger legal frameworks, increased awareness, improved technology safeguards, and more robust protective measures in both educational and residential environments.

2. Literature Review

The factors that contribute to child exploitation in the online world are very diverse and interrelated, including economic aspects, family supervision, weaknesses in the legal and

educational systems, access to technology, as well as social and cultural norms that apply in society.

- a) Exploitation of children in the online world is influenced by various interrelated factors. Poverty is one of the main factors contributing to the increased risk of exploitation. According to UNICEF (2022), families in difficult economic conditions often do not have enough resources to protect their children from online risks.
- b) Lack of parental supervision also plays an important role in child exploitation. Research by Livingstone and Haddon (2021) shows that many parents do not have an adequate understanding of digital technology and have difficulty monitoring their children's online activities.
- c) Weaknesses in the legal and educational systems are also important factors. Dunne and Lawton (2022) emphasize that existing laws are often not strong enough to address cases of online child exploitation, and many schools have not included education about digital safety in their curricula (Taylor & Roberts, 2021).
- d) Exploitation of children in the online world has a significant impact both psychologically and socially. According to Miller and Smith (2022), children who are victims of online exploitation often experience deep psychological trauma, including sleep disorders, anxiety, depression, and PTSD. This impact not only affects their daily quality of life but also their long-term development (Brown & Johnson, 2023).
- e) Exploitation can also cause developmental disorders. Davies and Evans (2023) report that children who are victims of online exploitation often experience difficulties in learning, achieving at school, and interacting with peers and family.
- f) Socially, child exploitation threatens the security and well-being of young people, which can lead to social instability and increased distrust within communities. Research by Martin and Lee (2022).
- g) To effectively address child exploitation in the online world, several strategic steps need to be implemented. Strengthening the law and law enforcement is a priority by updating laws and increasing law enforcement, as proposed by Thompson and Garcia (2023).
- h) Education and awareness are key components that need to be considered. Livingstone et al. (2021) recommends integrating education on digital safety into school curricula as well as training for parents and educators.
- i) The development of security technologies and tools should also be encouraged. Johnson and White (2022).
- j) Increased inter-agency cooperation should be built through alliances between governments, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector, as proposed by Dunne and Lawton (2022).
- k) Support and rehabilitation for victims needs to be strengthened by providing counseling services and rehabilitation programs that support children's emotional and social recovery (Martin & Lee, 2022). Finally, increasing public awareness through campaigns that educate the public about the dangers of child exploitation in cyberspace is very necessary (Fitzgerald & Marks, 2023).

3. Methodology

The methodology of this study is designed to comprehensively explore the factors contributing to the online exploitation of children, assess its impacts, and propose effective solutions. This section outlines the research design, data collection methods, and analytical techniques employed to achieve the study's objectives.

1. Research Approach.
 2. Data collection
 - a) Study of literature
 - b) Participatory Observation
3. Data analysis

- a) Thematic Analysis
4. Recommendation

4. Findings and Discussions

A. Findings.

1. Poverty

Poverty is one of the main factors contributing to the exploitation of children in the online world. Families living in difficult economic conditions often do not have the resources to protect their children from online risks.

2. Lack of Parental Supervision

Lack of supervision from parents is also an important factor. Many parents are unaware of the risks their children face online.

3. Weaknesses in the Legal and Educational Systems

In many countries, existing laws are not strong enough to deal with cases of online child exploitation. Weak law enforcement and inadequate punishments often do not provide a deterrent effect for perpetrators.

4. Limited Access to Safe Technology and Educational Resources.

In areas with poor digital infrastructure, children often do not have access to adequate digital safety tools or training on how to use the internet safely.

5. Social and Cultural Norms

In some cultures, conversations about sexuality and online safety are considered taboo, which hinders education and awareness among children and parents about the dangers of online exploitation.

B. Discussions

To understand the consequences of child exploitation in the online world, it is important to evaluate the impact it has both on an individual level and on society as a whole. This exploitation not only damages the physical and mental health of the children who are victims, but also has broader social implications that affect the stability and well-being of communities. In this discussion, we will explore the various impacts that arise as a result of child exploitation in cyberspace, as well as how these impacts affect the lives of children and society more broadly.

C. Recommendations

In facing the challenges caused by child exploitation in the online world, it is important to develop a holistic and collaborative approach. Based on the analysis and findings that have been described, the following are several recommendations proposed to address and prevent child exploitation in cyberspace.

5. Conclusions

Child exploitation in the online world is a very complex problem and is influenced by a number of key factors. Poverty makes families less able to protect children from digital risks, while a lack of parental supervision gives exploiters the opportunity to get close to children undetected. Weaknesses in legal and educational systems result in a lack of protection and preparedness for children to face online dangers. Limited access to safe technology in areas with poor digital infrastructure exacerbates children's vulnerabilities.

Additionally, social and cultural norms that deem taboo conversations about sexuality and online safety hinder education and awareness. To address this issue effectively, a holistic approach is needed that includes strengthening laws, increasing education about digital security, better access to secure technology, and changing social and cultural norms to support education and awareness. A coordinated, multi-stakeholder approach will be critical to creating a safer and more supportive environment for children online.

Exploitation of children in the online world has a broad and deep impact. Victimized children often experience severe psychological trauma, including sleep disorders, anxiety,

depression, and PTSD, which can impact their daily quality of life and their long-term development. In addition, exploitation can cause disruption in learning, achieving at school, and interacting with peers and family, while the social stigma attached to victims can isolate them and worsen the developmental impact. Socially, child exploitation threatens the security and well-being of young people, potentially causing social instability, increasing distrust within communities, and exacerbating problems such as poverty and inequality.

To effectively deal with child exploitation in the online world, it is necessary to implement strategic steps that include strengthening law and law enforcement by updating laws as well as increasing the capacity of law enforcement agencies, education and awareness by integrating education about digital safety in school curricula and launching campaigns public awareness, development of technology and security tools through innovation and research in cyber technology, increasing inter-agency cooperation by building alliances and effective coordination protocols, as well as support and rehabilitation for victims by providing counseling services and emotional and social recovery programs. This comprehensive and collaborative approach engages all stakeholders to reduce the negative impacts of exploitation and create safer and more supportive environments for children.

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