The Impact of Household Poverty on Child Abuse in Indonesia

Nailah Rohadatul'aisy[1*], Donny Hardiawan[2], Estro Dariatno Sihaloho[3]

[1,3]Department of Economics, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Padjadjaran, Indonesia
[2]Center for Economics and Development Studies, Universitas Padjadjaran, Indonesia
E-mail: [1]nailah21003@mail.unpad.ac.id, [2]donnyhardiawan@gmail.com, [3]estro.sihaloho@unpad.ac.id
[*]**Corresponding author**

ABSTRACT

Research Originality: This study utilizes the expenditure approach as a measure of poverty and incorporates household-level factors to assess their impact on psychological and physical child abuse in Indonesia.

Research Objectives: This study aims to analyze the impact of household characteristics, especially variations in poverty status on the risk of child abuse in Indonesia.

Research Methods: This study uses Social Defense Module of the 2020 National Socio-Economic Survey (Susenas) data and the logistic regression model.

Empirical Results: The results showed that children in households living below the poverty line have the highest probability of experiencing psychological and physical abuse. Factors that also increase the likelihood of abuse are female-headed households, unemployment, low education levels, households with only boys and/or children aged 6-12 years, and living in rural areas.

Implications: These findings highlight that child protection and abuse prevention policies should focus more on economic and social interventions, with poor households as the primary target.

Keywords:

child abuse; poverty; family socioeconomic status; household expenditure

INTRODUCTION

Children are the nation's next generation who play an important role in developing a country. Childhood is always a golden moment for parents in learning and character-building (Hariawan et al., 2019; Hidayati, 2018). Therefore, all parents have ways of disciplining their children, and most parents shape their children's behavior through solid disciplinary habits. Giving physical and/or psychological punishment is a method of disciplining children (Dewi et al., 2023). According to Norman et al. (2012), child abuse covers a broad spectrum of maltreatment, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse and neglect. Abuse can often have long-term physical, mental, and health consequences for the child (Lefebvre et al., 2017).

The scope of the problem of child abuse is staggering. The World Health Organization (WHO) suggests that approximately 1 billion children experience violence of some kind every year (WHO, 2020). In Indonesia, the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) recorded at least 48.8% proportion of households with children aged 1-17 years who experienced physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by their caregivers in 2020 (BPS, 2019). This data means that almost half of children in Indonesia experience abuse during their lifetime. Data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection in the year 2024 indicated 19,635 cases and 21,658 victims, with 70.4% of them being girls (Ministry of PPA, 2024). Unfortunately, that figure does not include unreported cases, so there is still a possibility that the number of victims is higher than that. In a cross-sectional survey, the cases are more substantial; three provinces with the highest levels of violence against children are DKI Jakarta (67.66%), Riau Islands (63.85%), and DI Yogyakarta (60.56%), and the lowest rate is Papua (30.39%) (Kemen PPPA & BPS, 2020).

The Law of The Republic of Indonesia No. 35 of 2014 provides the legal basis for child protection, including prohibiting all forms of physical, psychological, and sexual abuse and neglect of children. Unfortunately, there are still many people who are not aware of this issue. Based on studies conducted in Bandung, West Java, it is assumed that Indonesian parenting culture assumes abuse is severe if it results in injuries and necessitates hospitalization. They consider that the objective of punishment is not to abuse but to safeguard the child's life, create character, and educate the child (Dewi et al., 2023)

Of the many cases of child abuse, parents are the most common perpetrators, whereas some other family members are also abusers (Derakhshanpour et al., 2017). This condition must be a concern considering that the family is the party closest to the child, but in most cases, they are the ones who do not fulfill the child's rights and even commit child abuse. Household circumstances affect the parent's treatment of their children, and economic pressure can be the main trigger for child abuse behavior (Maguire-Jack et al., 2022). Poverty has always been a complex problem related to economic welfare and in the context of behavioral patterns in households. Poverty, which is the cause of parents' inability to meet their children's basic needs, such as regular and adequate nutrition, clothing, healthcare, and education, can create a stressful environment (Beasley et al., 2022). In addition, a lack of knowledge of suitable parenting methods for child

development can easily lead to patterns of behavior that are detrimental to their children and also contribute to child abuse (Geprägs et al., 2023; Jia, 2017).

Previous research on the association between poverty and child abuse (Farrell et al., 2017; Schenck-Fontaine & Gassman-Pines, 2020; Lindo et al., 2021) has measured at the country or region level. Moreover, several studies have focused explicitly on household socio-economic factors that lead to child abuse (Atteraya et al., 2018; Choi et al., 2018; Lefebvre et al., 2017; Cerna-Turoff et al., 2021; Wong et al., 2009), similar to the current study. A study by Beatriz & Salhi (2019), which focuses on child discipline practices in low- and middle-income countries, found a correlation between lower household wealth and the likelihood of practices of violent discipline to children, even when the caregiver did not think it was necessary. Another study by Martins et al. (2023) revealed that the risk of feeling stressed is four times higher in low socio-economic status (SES) parents compared to those with high SES, which enables a greater tendency for parents with low SES to commit child abuse. A study by Atteraya et al. (2018) confirmed that household heads with higher levels of education and household wealth status reduced the likelihood of physical abuse, emotional abuse, and child labor. However, some studies have shown that higher socio-economic levels do not necessarily reduce child abuse. For example, a study by Wong et al. (2009) found that high-SES families with highly educated and employed parents in China were more likely to use violence as a form of discipline.

Although previous literature has helped improve our understanding of the relationship between poverty and child abuse, most of the studies measure poverty based on household income or assets (Choi et al., 2018; Lefebvre et al., 2017; Wong et al., 2009; Beatriz & Salhi, 2019). However, this approach has limitations, as income is often volatile and biased in its reporting, while assets do not always reflect current welfare. Alternatively, this study uses household expenditure as a measure of poverty, as it is more stable and better reflects the economic pressures that households face daily, especially in developing countries. In addition, understanding the relationship between child abuse and the characteristics of perpetrators of abuse offenders in the micro-system of the family (household and beyond) is essential in developing effective interventions and support systems for vulnerable families (Okechukwu & Abraham, 2022). Hence, research needs to involve the specific surrounding environment of the household as a crucial factor. However, studies on child abuse in Indonesia are still limited to macro or perception-based approaches.

In contrast, research that combines poverty and factors at the household level as predictors of child abuse using quantitative approaches remains rare. Additionally, no study in Indonesia has classified whether different levels of poverty impact the risk of child physical and psychological abuse. One of the available data is the Indonesian National Socio-economic Survey (Susenas), which provides a more detailed overview of household expenditure and identification of specific types of abuse.

Based on these related issues, this study aims to examine the relationship of variations in poverty levels and household socio-economic and demographic characteristics to the risk of child physical and psychological abuse in Indonesia as a contribution to the literature on poverty and child abuse with a focus on household socio-economic factors in Indonesia. The

findings are expected to be taken into consideration by policymakers to develop targeted interventions to reduce child abuse, especially in vulnerable households in Indonesia.

METHODS

This study uses secondary data from the Social Defense Module of the 2020 National Socio-Economic Survey (Susenas). The Bureau of Statistics Indonesia (BPS) initiated and developed the survey after establishing the Directorate of Social Security Statistics in 2001. This survey covers a household of 75,000 samples spread across 34 provinces and 514 districts/cities in Indonesia. However, the clean data after checking the completeness is 67,280 households. This study identifies households with children aged 1-17 as admissible units of analysis. Thus, we excluded the sample of households with no children under 18 years old and households with only children under 1 year old. Based on this, the final sample size for this study was 43,406 households. The use of Susenas data for the Social Defense Module in 2020 is not only because there is information on parenting but also because during this period, BPS made several changes to the questions in the questionnaire in response to the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This study defines child abuse as a child who has been subjected to punishment in the form of physical abuse and/or psychological aggression by a parent or adult member of the household. The preparation of child abuse variables was obtained from indicators taken from Block VIIA on childcare patterns in the past year and Block IV as information on household members. The criteria for determining child abuse are several categories that include physical abuse and psychological aggression, with survey answers 0=no and 1=yes as follows: (1) Calling the child stupid, lazy, useless, saying you do not love them anymore, or other similar names; (2) yelling or scaring them; (3) locking up or leaving the child alone in a particular room/space; (4) pushing/shaking their body; (5) pinching or pulling the ear; (6) slapping, hitting, grabbing, or kicking. If a child encounters at least one of these behaviors, either physical or psychologically abusive treatment, it is categorized as child abuse (BPS, 2019). This study then categorizes psychological aggression against children by experiencing at least one treatment of categories (1), (2), and (3). Meanwhile, physical child abuse is defined as experiencing at least one treatment from categories (4), (5), and (6).

Independent variables in this study are poverty, with three different variables included in each model. This study uses the basic needs approach through household expenditure to measure consumption-based poverty. Total household expenditure itself is measured by combining two expenditure indicators from Block IX, namely total (rupiah) expenditure on food/foodstuffs, beverages/beverages, and cigarettes consumed/eaten/ drunk/cooked/ used/spent by the household during the past month and total (rupiah) expenditure on non-food items of the household during the past month.

The Logistic Regression Model is used to estimate the probability of socio-economic factors in households, especially the rate of poverty status that affects the treatment of child abuse, with standard deviations grouped at the household level. This method assumes that there is a relationship in the risk of child abuse among children from the same household, even though the individual child variable used is the oldest child from each

household. Average marginal effects, which represent the average change in the expected probability of the outcome for a one-unit change in the predictor, are used to interpret the effects of predictors (Wooldridge, 2014).

In this study, 6 models to see the effect of the same control variables on physical abuse and psychological abuse. Then, we consider these models with variations in poverty levels grouped into 3 variables for comparison across different models. The first model used wealth status based on quantile expenditure is used to see the likelihood of child abuse at all levels of household wealth.

$$ln\left(\frac{p}{1-p}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 totalexp + \beta_2 age + \beta_3 agesq + \beta_4 gender + \beta_5 work + \beta_6 education$$
$$+ \beta_7 age\_child + \beta_8 gender\_child + \beta_9 hhsize + \beta_{10} urban + \varepsilon$$

The next model used the absolute poor as a baseline in a predictor to see how a household's per capita expenditure below the poverty line from the provincial per capita expenditure based on the area (urban or rural) where they live affects their treatment of children.

$$ln\left(\frac{p}{1-p}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 poor + \beta_2 age + \beta_3 agesq + \beta_4 gender + \beta_5 work + \beta_6 education$$
$$+ \beta_7 age\_child + \beta_8 gender\_child + \beta_9 hhsize + \beta_{10} urban + \varepsilon$$

The last model illustrates the likelihood of child abuse based on indicators for determining relative poverty, we take 40% of the households with the lowest welfare or expenditure level (Adji et al., 2020)

$$ln\left(\frac{p}{1-p}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 relpov + \beta_2 age + \beta_3 agesq + \beta_4 gender + \beta_5 work + \beta_6 education$$
$$+ \beta_7 age\_child + \beta_8 gender\_child + \beta_9 hhsize + \beta_{10} urban + \varepsilon$$

All models were controlled for household-level factors, including the age of the household head, gender of the household head, employment status of the household head, education level of household head (0 = uneducated/not completed senior high school; 1=educated/completed senior high school or above), age of the oldest child in the household, gender of all children in each household, number of household members, and region of residence.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that of the total sample, 32.19% of households have committed physical abuse, while 45.33% of them committed psychological aggression at least once. Unemployed (46.37%) and low-educated (47.19%) household heads are more often associated with psychological abuse. Child abuse also occurs more in rural households (46.58%) than in urban areas (43.47%).

In terms of children, the 6-12 age group experiences the highest psychological abuse (47.6%) and physical abuse (35.43%). Girls tend to experience less abuse than boys or households with children of both genders. In terms of economy, households in the poorest and poorer categories have higher levels of psychological abuse (47%) than the richest households (41.95%). In addition, households below the poverty line experience

the highest levels of abuse, both psychological (52.03%) and physical (40.81%). Likewise, the classification of relatively poor households (expenditure ≤40%) has a higher level of psychological abuse (47.03%).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variables		Mean	SD				
Age		46.35	11.25				
Age-squared		2275.04	1128				
Number of households		4.57	1.467				
		Total		**Psychological**		**Physical**	
		n		**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Gender	Male	38,962		17,698	45.42	12,618	32.39
	Female	4,444		1,979	44.53	1,354	30.47
Working status	Not working	23,599		10,944	46.37	7,804	33.07
	Working	19,807		8,733	44.09	6,168	31.14
Education level	Uneducated	27,088		12,784	47.19	9,097	33.58
	Educated	16,318		6,893	42.24	4,875	29.87
Living area	Rural	26,016		12,118	46.58	9,085	34.92
	Urban	17,390		7,559	43.47	4,887	28.10
Age of Child	1-5	5,989		2,430	40.57	1,755	29.3
	6-12	17,272		8,222	47.6	6,175	35.75
	13-17	20,145		9,025	44.8	6,042	29.99
Gender of Child	Boy	11,428		5,096	44.59	3,530	30.89
	Girl	9,822		3,994	40.66	2,593	26.4
	Both	22,156		10,587	47.78	7,849	35.43
Wealth Status	Poorest	8,682		4,083	47.03	2,849	32.82
	Poorer	8,681		4,083	47.03	2,912	33.54
	Middle	8,681		3,950	45.5	2,952	34.01
	Richer	8,681		3,919	45.14	2,764	31.84
	Richest	8,681		3,642	41.95	2,495	28.74
Household per capita expenditure	Above poverty line	38,013		16,871	44.38	11,771	30.97
	Below poverty line	5,393		2,806	52.03	2,201	40.81
Percentage of Expenditure	Middle and upper class (>40%)	26,043		11,511	44.2	5,761	33.18
	Relative poverty (≤40%)	17,363		8,166	47.03	8,211	31.53

Source: Susenas, Author's calculation

The empirical results of logit regression are presented in Tables 2, 3, and 4 with the Odds Ratio and confidence intervals of the main predictor variables presented in Table 5 to provide a comparative picture of the odds of variation in poverty status on child abuse. Our findings indicate that poverty provides a statistically significant influence on increasing the risk of child psychological and physical abuse. In addition, household characteristics, namely age, working status, education level of household head; living area, gender of child, and wealth status, negatively and significantly affect child abuse. While gender of household head and age of child have a positive and statistically significant influence on child abuse.

Table 2. Logit Regression the Effect of Wealth Status on Child Psychological and Physical Abuse

	Variables	Psychological abuse		Physical abuse	
		Coefficient	Marginal Effect	Coefficient	Marginal Effect
	Age	-0.0332***	-0.0081***	-0.0634***	-0.0133***
		(0.0061)	(0.0015)	(0.0065)	(0.0014)
	Agesq	0.000202***	0.0000***	0.000416***	0.0001***
		(0.0001)	(0.0000)	(0.0001)	(0.0000)
Gender	Male				
	Female	0.114***	0.0276***	0.175***	0.0368***
		(0.0341)	(0.0083)	(0.0371)	(0.0078)
Working status	Not working				
	Working	-0.112***	-0.0272***	-0.117***	-0.0245***
		(0.020)	(0.0049)	(0.0216)	(0.0045)
Education level	Uneducated				
	Educated	-0.173***	-0.042***	-0.125***	-0.0262***
		(0.0218)	(0.0053)	(0.0235)	(0.0049)
Living area	Rural				
	Urban	-0.0363*	-0.0088*	-0.236***	-0.0495***
		(0.0208)	(0.0051)	(0.0226)	(0.0049)
Number of households		0.139***	0.0337***	0.206***	0.0432***
		(0.0081)	(0.0019)	(0.0085)	(0.0017)
Age of Child	1-5				
	6-12	0.271***	0.0656***	0.286***	0.0603***
		(0.0315)	(0.0075)	(0.034)	(0.007)
	13-17	0.160***	0.0385***	0.032	0.0065
		(0.0328)	(0.0078)	(0.0359)	(0.0072)
Gender of Child	Boy				
	Girl	-0.155***	-0.0374***	-0.212***	-0.0374***
		(0.0281)	(0.0068)	(0.031)	(0.0068)
	Both	-0.0122	-0.0025	0.0325	0.0069
		(0.0257)	(0.0063)	(0.0276)	(0.0059)
Wealth Status	Poorest				
	Poorer	-0.0453	-0.0111***	-0.021	-0.0045
		(0.0309)	(0.0076)	(0.0331)	(0.0071)
	Middle	-0.122***	-0.0299***	-0.0187	-0.004
		(0.0313)	(0.0076)	(0.0334)	(0.0072)
	Richer	-0.133***	-0.0324***	-0.111***	-0.0236***
		(0.0319)	(0.0078)	(0.0343)	(0.0072)
	Richest	-0.255***	-0.062***	-0.244***	-0.0503***
		(0.0336)	(0.0081)	(0.0365)	(0.0075)
Constant		0.342**		0.432***	
		(0.145)		(0.154)	
Observations		43,406		43,406	

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: 2020 National Socioeconomic Survey & Author's calculation

Table 3. Logit Regression The Effect of Absolute Poverty on Child Psychological and Physical Abuse

	Variables	Psychological abuse		Physical abuse	
		Coefficient	Marginal Effect	Coefficient	Marginal Effect
	Age	-0.0349***	-0.0085***	-0.0643***	-0.0135***
		(0.0061)	(0.0015)	(0.0065)	(0.0014)
	Agesq	0.000217***	0.0000***	0.000424***	0.0001***
		(0.0001)	(0.0000)	(0.0001)	(0.0000)
Gender	Male				
	Female	0.119***	0.029***	0.175***	0.0366***
		(0.0341)	(0.0083)	(0.0371)	(0.0078)
Working status	Not working				
	Working	-0.106***	-0.0258***	-0.111***	-0.0234***
		(0.020)	(0.0049)	(0.0216)	(0.0045)
Education level	Uneducated				
	Educated	-0.207***	-0.0504***	-0.156***	-0.0328***
		(0.0211)	(0.0051)	(0.0228)	(0.0048)
Living area	Rural				
	Urban	-0.0591***	-0.0144*	-0.257***	-0.0539***
		(0.0205)	(-0.005)	(0.0223)	(0.0046)
Number of households		0.118***	0.0287***	0.184***	0.0386***
		(0.0080)	(0.0019)	(0.00845)	(0.0017)
Age of Child	1-5				
	6-12	0.276***	0.0668***	0.290***	0.0613***
		(0.0314)	(0.0075)	(0.034)	(0.007)
	13-17	0.164***	0.0394***	0.0369	0.0074
		(0.0327)	(0.0078)	(0.0359)	(0.0072)
Gender of Child	Boy				
	Girl	-0.153***	-0.0373***	-0.213***	-0.0436***
		-0.0281	-0.0068	(0.031)	(0.0063)
	Both	-0.0128	-0.0031	0.0296	0.0063
		(0.0257)	(0.0063)	(0.0275)	(0.0059)
Household per capita expenditure	Above poverty line				
	Below poverty line	0.145***	0.0352***	0.194***	0.0407***
		(0.0305)	(0.0074)	(0.0316)	(0.0066)
Constant		0.366**		0.472***	
		(0.144)		(0.154)	
Observations		43,406		43,406	

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: 2020 National Socioeconomic Survey, Author's calculation

Table 2 explains the grouping of wealth status based on household expenditure quintile shows significant results in the middle, richer, and richest groups (p < 0.01). The marginal effect value of the richest quintile group is -0.062, which means that households in the richest quintile have a 6.2% lower probability of committing psychological child abuse. Meanwhile, in Table 5. the odds ratio value is 0.7747, which shows that the richest household has a 0.77 times smaller chance of committing child physical abuse (OR=0.77 [95% CI: 0.82, 0.93], p<0.001) than the poorest group. Similarly, physical child abuse was 5% less likely or 0.78 times smaller to be perpetrated by the richest group than the poorest quintile group (OR=0.78 [95% CI: 0.73, 0.84], p<0.001). Furthermore, the middle group had around a 3% lower probability of committing psychological abuse. However, there was no significant probability between the middle group and the tendency of child physical abuse. Likewise, the poorer group was insignificant compared to the poorest in all models.

The findings of this model indicate that the higher the economic status of a household, the less likely adult household members are to use violent punishment. This result is consistent with the study by Choi et al. (2018), which stated that children from the poorest quintile are more likely to experience physical punishment than children from the richest quintile, with the gap between households increasing over time. These observations also align with Atteraya et al. (2018), who found that children from rich and richest households protected children from physical and emotional abuse. This result suggests that economic well-being acts as a protective factor in preventing child abuse. Households with higher expenditure levels generally have better access to education, health services, and a social environment that supports positive child development.

Table 3 explains that households living below the poverty line had a 4.1% higher probability of committing child physical abuse (OR=1.21 [95% CI: 1.14, 1.29], p<0.001) compared to households living above the poverty line. A similar pattern was observed in child psychological abuse, where households with expenditure per capita below the poverty line had a 3.5% (OR=1.15 [95% CI: 1.09, 1.23], p<0.001) higher probability of committing child abuse compared to households that were not in absolute poverty. This can also be explained by the odds, which indicate that absolute poor households are 1.15 and 1.2 times more likely to commit child psychological and physical abuse, respectively.

Table 4 shows similar results in each category when households are in relative poverty; they tend to have a higher probability of committing psychological child abuse by 3.4% (OR=1.15 [95% CI: 1.10, 1.19], p<0.001) and 2.1% (OR=1.10 [95% CI: 1.06, 1.15], p<0.001) more likely to commit child physical abuse than the middle and upper class. In contrast to the previous model, where absolute poverty had a higher effect on physical abuse, but relative poverty had a higher effect on psychological abuse, the odds were 1.15 times greater for psychological abuse and 1.06 times greater for physical abuse.

Table 4. Logit Regression The Effect of Relative Poverty on Child Psychological and Physical Abuse

	Variables	Psychological abuse		Physical abuse	
		Coefficient	Marginal Effect	Coefficient	Marginal Effect
	Age	-0.0341***	-0.0083***	-0.0647***	-0.0136***
		(0.0061)	(0.0015)	(0.0065)	(0.0014)
	Agesq	0.000210***	0.0000***	0.000427***	0.0001***
		(0.0001)	(0.0000)	(0.0001)	(0.0000)
Gender	Male				
	Female	0.115***	0.0279***	0.175***	0.0367***
		(0.0341)	(0.0083)	(0.0371)	(0.0078)
Working status	Not working				
	Working	-0.109***	-0.0265***	-0.113***	-0.0238***
		(0.020)	(0.0049)	(0.0216)	(0.0045)
Education level	Uneducated				
	Educated	-0.191***	-0.0463***	-0.151***	-0.0318***
		(0.0214)	(0.0052)	(0.0231)	(0.0048)
Living area	Rural				
	Urban	-0.0490**	-0.0119*	-0.254***	-0.0533***
		(0.0206)	(0.005)	(0.0224)	(0.0046)
Number of households		0.134***	0.0327***	0.200***	0.042***
		(0.00801)	(0.0019)	(0.0084)	(0.0017)
Age of Child	1-5				
	6-12	0.274***	0.0663***	0.290***	0.0613***
		(0.0314)	(0.0075)	(0.034)	(0.007)
	13-17	0.164***	0.0394***	0.0386	0.0078
		(0.0327)	(0.0078)	(0.0359)	(0.0072)
Gender of Child	Boy				
	Girl	-0.153***	-0.0372***	-0.212***	-0.0435***
		(0.0281)	(0.0068)	(0.031)	(0.0063)
	Both	-0.00883	-0.0021	0.034	0.0073
		(0.0257)	(0.0063)	(0.0275)	(0.0059)
Percentage of Expenditure	Middle and Upper Class (>40%)				
	Relative Poverty (<40%)	0.138***	0.0336***	0.0991***	0.0208***
		(0.0211)	(0.0051)	(0.0226)	(0.0047)
Constant		0.228		0.390**	
		(0.146)		(0.156)	
Observations		43,406		43,406	

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: 2020 National Socioeconomic Survey, Author's calculation

Table 5. Odds Ratio from Logistic Regression

	Psychological abuse			Physical abuse		
	OR	95% CI	P-Value	OR	95% CI	P-Value
Wealth Status						
Poorest						
Poorer	0.9557	0.8995-1.0155	0.143	0.9792	0.9176-1.0449	0.526
Middle	0.8849	0.8323-0.941	0.000	0.9815	0.9192-1.0479	0.576
Richer	0.8758	0.8227-0.9323	0.000	0.8946	0.8364-0.9568	0.001
Richest	0.7747	0.7253-0.8275	0.000	0.7837	0.7296-0.8419	0.000
Per capita Expenditure Below the Poverty Line	1.1557	1.0887-1.2268	0.000	1.2139	1.141-1.2914	0.000
Relative Poverty	1.1480	1.1015-1.1965	0.000	1.10412	1.0563-1.1543	0.000

Source: 2020 National Socioeconomic Survey, Author's calculation

These results show that variations in poverty measures still have a significant influence in increasing child abuse. Of particular interest in this study was that the relationship further reinforced by the model variation with absolute poor households as measured by per capita expenditure, showing that households below the poverty line in both rural and urban areas had a higher impact on increasing child physical and psychological abuse. Likewise, when using the relative poverty indicator (Walker & Lichao, 2020; Adji et al., 2020), households living in the bottom 40% quintile for food and non-food expenditure have a strong tendency to commit child abuse. This result is consistent with a study by Lefebvre et al. (2017), which found that children living in households facing economic hardship are more likely to experience abuse, 9and in some investigations, the households ran out of money for food, housing, and/or utilities.

A previous study by Isumi et al. (2018) examined the relationship between child poverty and parental maltreatment in Japan. The results showed that poverty, as measured by household income of less than 3 million yen, lack of essential goods, or inability to pay for basic utilities, were strongly associated with child physical abuse, neglect, and psychological abuse. Helton et al. (2019) also found similar findings, where poverty measured by household food insecurity levels and household income was associated with increased rates of child psychological, physical, and total aggression.

Poor households may have limited access to resources and support, and they experience dependence on social assistance due to a lack of economic resources, creating pressure and exacerbating the stress that contributes to the risk of child abuse. Difficult financial conditions can also negatively impact parents' mental health, which in turn can affect their ability to care for their children properly (Geprägs et al., 2023). These findings are also consistent with a study by Meinck et al. (2017), who showed that adolescent health is difficult to achieve in families in South Africa who face serious challenges, especially poverty, which triggers mental stress and abusive parenting patterns. This result indicates that living below the poverty line can have a profound effect on child abuse

due to the economic pressures and stress associated with these conditions (Martins et al., 2023; Maguire-Jack et al., 2022). In Indonesia itself, Wahyuni et al. (2021) found that parenting practices aimed at ensuring child welfare in poor families are still not optimal due to limited access and the stress they experience.

The impact of poverty is reinforced by specific social, economic, and demographic characteristics of the household, which can further exacerbate the risk of child abuse. The results in each model showed that the results of the age of the household head are negative and significant. However, when age-squared is added to each model, the results are positive and significant (p < 0.01) in forming a U-shaped relationship, suggesting that the relationship between age and the probability of committing child abuse is non-linear. There will be a point where an increase in age contributes more significantly to an increase in child abuse up to a certain point and will decrease again. These findings indicated that as household heads get older, they are less likely to commit child abuse compared to younger household heads. This result is consistent with Lakhdir et al. (2019), who found that children with young mothers were more likely to experience abuse. In line with studies that found young parents are more likely to commit child abuse because they do not have sufficient parenting skills and experience to raise children properly (Thornberry et al., 2014; Dworsky, 2015). In addition, financial pressures and uncertainty about their roles as parents at a young age may increase their risk of escalating to child abuse.

All models agreed that when the head of the household is female, the probability of committing child abuse is greater than in male-headed households (p<0.01). This study is aligned with Lotspeich et al. (2020), who found a higher probability of child abuse in female-headed households. Female-headed households are particularly vulnerable as they are often stressed by the multiple roles they have to fulfill, including managing family affairs, earning a living, and doing household chores (Yoosefi Lebni et al., 2020; Shadabi et al., 2021). Sadly, BPS data shows that the number of female-headed households in Indonesia is quite high; even 1 in 10 households, or around 12.3%, are headed by women in 2023. At the same time, the reality is that the female-headed phenomenon is also closely related to economic disadvantage. Extreme fatigue and stress are what drive the greater risk of child abuse when headed by a mother (Barnhart & Maguire-Jack, 2016; Schneider, 2017; Elias et al., 2018). However, this empirical evidence contradicts Merritt (2009), which found that male-headed households are more likely to be physically abusive. This condition may be because the father's physical strength usually makes them feel they have power over their children and apply corporal punishment when children do wrong (Sanchez-Rodriguez, 2021). Cases of child physical abuse perpetrated by males are more likely to result in severe injuries and are easily identifiable (Jia, 2017).

Poverty is always associated with less education and unemployment; interestingly, this study shows linear results with these statements. The work status and education level showed a significant negative probability of committing child abuse in the household. This condition means that the education level and work status of the household head play a role in reducing child psychological and physical abuse. It can also be concluded that the increased risk of child abuse occurs when the household is headed by parents

with low education levels and/or are unemployed. Consistent with a study by Atteraya et al. (2018) that indicated the probability of child abuse is lower when the household head has a high school education level or higher compared to those with low or no education. Parents with low levels of education tend to have limited knowledge and skills in parenting and managing stress.

Meanwhile, a study by Lindo et al. (2021) found that post-termination conditions due to economic uncertainty explained to unemployed parents that layoffs increased levels of abuse. The results of this study confirm that the data taken in this study occurred in 2020, coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic, there were mass layoffs in Indonesia, which caused an increase in unemployment (Farida, 2022; Dartanto et al., 2023). Unemployment can worsen parents' mental health, leading to depression, which is a risk factor for child maltreatment. Household heads who are employed or have access to economic and financial assistance may be better able to provide a safe and nurturing environment for their children (Sano et al., 2021). In contrast, Wong et al. (2009) found that families with high levels of education and employment had a greater risk of child abuse. This may be because children of working mothers face the dual pressures of domestic and professional roles and high expectations of their children.

Children aged 6-12 years showed positive and significant to child abuse. This result means that households with children 6-12 years old or middle age had around 6% higher probability of committing child physical and psychological abuse than those with children 1-5 years old. However, there was a difference for children aged 13-17 years, where this category was positive and significant for psychological abuse but not for physical child abuse. This result aligned with a study by Horikawa et al. (2016), who found that children aged 9 to 13 years were more likely to experience maltreatment recurrence than younger age groups. In contrast, Wongcharoenwatana and Tarugsa (2021) found that although infants (<1 year) experienced less recurrent abuse, children aged 1–10 years showed a much higher risk of recurrence of abuse.

Child gender categorization is based on the gender of all children in the household. All models showed that when households had only one or more female children, the likelihood of experiencing psychological and physical abuse was lower than in households with only male children (p < 0.01). Meanwhile, there was no significant relationship when households had two or more children of mixed gender. A previous study by Sobsey et al. (1997) found that boys had higher rates of physical abuse, while girls were more likely to experience sexual and emotional abuse. This condition may be because the higher level of risk could be due to greater expectations of boys than girls, as in the case and culture of many developing countries, including Indonesia, where boys are considered the future economic backbone of the family. As a result, stricter physical treatment may be applied to boys than girls.

In addition, the number of households had positive and significant margin values, meaning that the larger the household size, the higher the likelihood of child abuse. Meanwhile, households living in urban areas had a lower probability of committing

psychological and physical abuse (p < 0.01) compared to households living in rural areas. This result is consistent with Atteraya et al. (2018), who found that larger household sizes and living in rural areas increased child physical and psychological abuse. Larger families face higher economic pressures, leading to parental stress. While in rural areas, the culture is permissive of corporal punishment, and there is a lack of access to knowledge about child protection, which further increases the risk of abuse.

Based on the empirical results of this study, socioeconomic factors within a household play a crucial role in childcare. Living in poverty and having disadvantaged household characteristics increase the risk of child abuse. Therefore, these findings confirm the need for child abuse prevention and protection efforts to focus on socioeconomic interventions, particularly in low-income households, to reduce violence and improve children's well-being.

CONCLUSIONS

The study's findings highlight the role of poverty with a household expenditure approach in increasing child psychological and physical abuse. The results indicate that households with per capita expenditures below the poverty line are consistently associated with a higher risk of child abuse. Similarly, relative poverty classification is linked to an increased likelihood of both physical and psychological child abuse. In line with this, the findings suggest that higher household wealth status reduces the risk of child abuse. Moreover, various household characteristics—including the age, gender, employment status, and education level of the household head; the age and gender of children; the number of family members; and the area of residence—significantly contribute to the likelihood of child abuse.

Most child protection policies in Indonesia still tend to focus on addressing cases after violence has occurred and imposing sanctions on perpetrators. Based on the research findings, policy recommendations for the government include strengthening the implementation of child protection and abuse prevention programs by ensuring greater access for low-income households. This can be achieved by enhancing coordination between social protection programs, such as the Family Hope Program (PKH), and child protection services. This way, the economic assistance provided will serve as a subsidy for basic needs to reduce financial pressure and include parenting education for vulnerable households.

Additionally, the government should consider various policies to expand access to education, employment, and skills training programs, particularly for underage and female-headed households, to reduce the risk of economic pressure as a preventive measure against child abuse. Furthermore, access to child protection education and services, especially in rural areas, should be expanded by increasing the number of social workers and strengthening the child abuse reporting system to enable faster intervention. With a more comprehensive combination of economic and social factors, poverty can be effectively minimized.

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