Does Poverty Have any Effect on Child Neglected in Indonesia?

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ABSTRACT

Child neglect is the most common maltreatment that is not directly visible and difficult to be identified than other various forms of children maltreatment. Child neglect is also alleged having a harmful and long-term impact on child development, especially in mental and physical health, cognitive, intelligence, emotional and psychological aspects, and social behavior as well. In term of demographic point of view, the relationship between poverty and child neglect is an interesting topic, and is still being questioned by experts. This research aims to explain the effects of household poverty on child neglect in Indonesia. Based on SUSENAS 2015 data, this research applies a multinomial logistic regression in analysis. The result of the analysis shows that the household poverty level statistically has a significant influence on child neglect. In other words, children living in poor households tend to be neglected. The research findings report that poverty has a multiplier impact on neglected child. Other socio-demographic variables, such as age and gender of children, education level of their mothers, employment status of their parents, presence of biological mother within household, size of household and place of residence also have significant effects on child neglect. Therefore, this study provides information that is highly relevant to child neglect prevention strategies.

JEL Classification: I31, I32

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INTRODUCTION

Naturally, all parents love and care for their children but some do not take good care of them, that is known as maltreatment. In developed countries, children maltreatment is generally defined as acts including violence and neglect commonly performed by their parents. These acts may have adverse effects, potential hazards, or threats that may harm a child regardless of parents' intent (Gilbert, et al, 2009).

Gilbert, et al. (2009) defined child neglect as a failure to adequately supply children's basic needs such as foods, clothings, shelter, supervision, education, and health care. In some cases, it includes failure to meet the emotional needs of children. According to Papalia and Martorell (2014), neglect is the most common form of child maltreatment. It is a continuous failure to meet the basic needs of children and leave them hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health protection.

In Indonesia, the number of children aged under five years old (*balita*) in 2015 reached 24.03 million people and about 1.4 million of them experienced neglect (Ministry of Social Affairs, 2016). This figure increased compared to 2012 in which the number of children aged 5-17 years was estimated as many as 59.6 million children, and about 1.8 million children experienced neglect. Children in the category of almost being neglected also need to get attention due to their high number; and they are potentially neglected.

The tendency of children being neglected is caused by many factors; one of the factors is the household economic condition. Slack, et al. (2004) argued that socioeconomic condition is one of the most common factors associated with neglect, where families with low or poor socioeconomic conditions are more likely to neglect their children. Similar situation was also found by Jones and McCurdy (1992) where children from low-income families are more likely to be neglected than children from higher-income families. Malik (2010) conducted a research to 200 children, consisting of 100 boys and 100 girls with ages ranging from 8-12 years living in five major cities of Punjab region in Pakistan; he found different result stating that the socioeconomic status of families was not significantly proven to be different between children who experienced mild, moderate or severe violence.

The publication of Social Welfare Problems (PMKS) in 2015 showed that almost half of neglected toddlers were from the lowest income households by 40 percent. This figure declined comparing to 2012. However, there were about 22 percent of neglected toddlers in the high expenditure households of 20 percent; and this figure increased comparing to 2012.

According to McCoy and Keen (2014), neglect affects differently accord to the child age. Infants may risk of having serious physical growth problem and no strong bond with parents. Moreover, children may risk of having language delays problem, intellectual and academic problems, and social disorders. In adolescence, they are at risk of escaping, experiencing social isolation, having intellectual and academic problems, engaging in crime, and experiencing psychiatric disorders.

Since neglect impacts greatly to the children's future lives, it requires early detection of factors risking the child neglect. Besides identifying the risk factors, this research aims to explain the effects of household poverty and other factors on children neglect in Indonesia. By understanding determinant factors (demographic characteristics) of child neglect, this research is expected to give some contributions in preventing child neglect in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Becker (1991) explaine that the level of human capital investment by parents to their children depends on the gender, capability, and other child characteristics. Children from the same parents do not necessarily get the same treatment. For example, due to gender preferences, whether parents prefer boys over girls will impact on parental treatment differences of each child.

Based on data from the National Center for Child Abuse and Neglect (DHHS, 1994), Sedlak & Broadhurst (1996) found that sons are at increased risk of emotional neglect. This is proven from the greater percentage occurring in sons who experienced emotional neglect than daughters.

Another child characteristic is the age of children; Antai, et al. (2016) found that younger children (0-9 years) more likely experience all forms of maltreatment compared to children over 14 years old. The vulnerability of child to maltreatment will increase depending on the interaction between small physical size, child's need for care, and parental characteristics. Sedlak and Broadhurst (1996) also analyzed the risk of neglect by taking into account the child's gender and age variables and found that boys aged 12 years or less more likely experience maltreatment, while

girls aged 13 and older have a greater risk.

Poverty is a fundamental risk factor for child neglect (DePanfilis, 2006). DePanfilis (2006) stated that when poverty is combined with other risk factors, such as substance abuse, social isolation, financial uncertainty, continued family chaos, or lack of available transportation and poor child care can put children at greater risk for neglect.

Another research found that in an economically disadvantaged community, there is a strong correlation between certain aspects of poverty and the occurrence of physical neglect and other aspects. For example, perception of caregivers where economic difficulties are positively correlated with child neglect. Therefore, information on economic condition can be an important signal to determine the target of an intervention program to prevent further neglect (DePanfilis, 2006).

Low income families and poor families were found to consistently have an increased probability of children maltreatment (Stith et al, 2009 in Berger and Waldfogel, 2011). A research specifically correlates between poverty and neglect was conducted by Jones and McCurdy (1992). They found that children from low-income families are more likely neglected than children from higher-income families. The result of this research is also consistent with the finding of Coulton et al. (1999), that families in the poorest family group most likely neglect their children.

Becker (2009) explained that in richer families, the amount of human capital investment given by parents to their children depends only on the characteristics of the child and does not depend directly on the number or capability of their siblings. Whereas in poor families, the amount invested in human capital directly depends on the capability and the number of siblings, because poor parents must choose between the equity and the efficiency of their investment.

Poor families invest more human capital in more capable children, although the relationship is weaker than rich families. They expect that their return margin level is greater when they invest in a more capable child. Parents expect more capable children to be altruism so as to help their brothers/sisters. The result of a research in the United States showed that more capable brothers have higher education and higher incomes, especially in wealthy families (Griliches, 1979).

METHOD OF ANALYSIS

This research is a quantitative research with cross sectional data collection type. Main data used in this research come from the National Socio-Economic Survey of Socio-Cultural and Educational Module 2015 (Susenas MSBP 2015). Data collection of Susenas MSBP 2015 was conducted on September with the total sample of 75,000 households spread s across provinces and regions/cities in Indonesia.

The reason of using the Susenas MSBP 2015 as the main data source of this research is because the description of neglect child as a focus of this research is contained in the Socio-Cultural and Educational Module. One of the objectives of Susenas MSBP 2015 activities is to provide information related to Problems of Social Welfare (PMKS), and the neglect child data are one of them. Susenas MSBP 2015 is the latest data containing information of neglect child owned by the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS).

Related to the objectives of this research, the unit of analysis used is the population aged 0-17 years, status as a child of heads of households, not married, and living with parents. The age limit of under 18 years follows the concept of a child based on the 1989 United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child and Law Number 23 of 2002, which is a population of less than 18 years old. The limit of unmarried is used because the needs fulfillment of unmarried children is a parental responsibility where they still get intervention from parents. The limitation of living with parents is intended because this research would like to see parents' characteristics who tend to neglect their children. The parents referred here are the household heads and their spouses.

The concept of neglecting children is broad so that it requires many indicators to describe a neglected child. The criteria used to measure the child neglect refer to the study result of Variable Identification of Social Welfare Problems held in 2002. One of the results identifies several criteria for child neglect indicators. The criteria used to measure the child neglect are differentiated for toddlers and children aged 5-17 years.

However, the 13-year time span in this research certainly shows some changes that may affect on the sensitivity of the criteria used in identifying the child neglect. In addition, it is realized that criteria such as "not having father and mother (orphan)" and "under-five mother who is responsible for working or having outdoor activities during the past week" are more likely to be "factors that increase the risk of children to be neglected or almost neglected" rather than as "factors of child neglecting identification".

Different points of view on this subject may lead to different interpretations that must be addressed with caution. For example, is a child of a working mother or an out-of-home activity surely neglected? Or is a child of a working mother at risk of becoming neglected?. Paxson & Waldfogel (2002) found that the risk of child neglect increased in children with working mothers. Meanwhile, the orphaned status does not automatically make a child to be neglected, but it may increase the risk of the child to be neglected. Thomson, et al (1994) stated that adoptive parents generally provide a lower level of warmth and support to their children than biological parents. Therefore, in this research, the criteria used to identify whether a child is not neglected, almost neglected, neglected without including "orphan" criterion and 'toddler mother working or having out-of-home activities".

Household poverty variable in this research uses a per capita expenditure approach compared to the poverty line in September 2015 according to urban and rural areas in each province issued by BPS. The household per capita expenditure is obtained by dividing the amount of households' food and non-food expenditure during a month by the number of households' members. Based on the poverty line, households are divided into two groups; poor households, when household per capita expenditure is below the poverty line according to urban and rural areas in each province; and non-poor households, when household per capita expenditure is equal or higher than the poverty line according to urban and rural areas in each province.

In Indonesia, one of poverty measurements is conducted by BPS (Central Bureau of Statistics). The concept of poverty used by BPS is the ability of a person or a household to fulfill their basic needs. Based on this approach, BPS defines poverty as the economic inability of an individual or a household to meet the basic needs of both food and non food measured by the expenditure side. Monthly per capita expenditure is used as a variable and is compared to the Poverty Line to determine whether a person/household is categorized as poor or not poor. A person/household, who has an average monthly per capita expenditure under the Poverly Line, is categorized as poor.

This research uses multinomial logit model to describe the model of relationship between household poverty level and child neglect. The child neglect is the dependent variable which is formed into three categories, namely Y= 0, not neglected (if satisfies less than 2 criteria of neglected); Y= 1, almost neglected (if satisfies 2 criteria of neglected)[†]; Y= 2, neglected (if satisfies 3 or more criteria of neglected). Category Y=0 is a reference category. Multinomial logistic regression model is used because the dependent variable is categorized with more than two categories (Nachrowi and Usman, 2002). It is realized that using ordered logit model for this situation is more appropriate than using multinomial logistic regression model. The ordered logit model will be employed in another paper to analyze this case.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on Susenas MSBP 2015 data, it can be seen that most children in Indonesia are not neglected. The neglected children are 2.94 percent, where neglected toddlers are 0.96 percent and neglected children aged 5-17 years are 3.54 percent. The almost neglected children are 9.61 percent, the almost neglected toddlers are 12.35 percent and almost neglected children aged 5-17 years are 8.79 percent. Based on the household poverty level, neglected children are more likely to be in poor households.

Meanwhile, according to other social demographic characteristics, it is seen that the neglected children are: mostly boys, having mothers with education level of primary school, having fathers working in the informal sector, having mothers working in informal sector, not living with their biological mothers, living in a household with 7 or more members, and living in rural areas. The distribution of child neglect status is shown in Table 1 as a result of descriptive statistics analysis.

[†] The criteria of neglected has been determined by Ministry of Social Republic of Indonesia (2002).

Table 1 Distribution of Child Neglect Status by Independent Variables

Independent Variables	Neglect Status of Children			Total
	Not neglected	Almost neglected	Neglected	
Poverty Status				
- Poor	76.64	17.65	7.70	100%
- Not Poor	89.94	8.11	2.05	100%
Family Size				
- 3-4	90.05	7.82	2.13	100%
- 5-6	86.67	10.16	3.17	100%
- 7+	80.60	14.29	5.10	100%
Sex of Child				
- Male	86.80	9.99	3.21	100%
- Female	88.15	9.20	2.65	100%
Mother's Level of Education				
- Primary School and below	83.00	12.29	4.71	100%
- Junior – Senior high School	91.65	7.16	1.19	100%
- Diploma/Univeristy	94.75	4.87	0.38	100%
Status of Father's Job				
- Unemployed	87.55	9.39	3.06	100%
- Informal Sector	84.30	11.56	4.14	100%
- Formal Sector	92.37	6.58	1.05	100%
Status of Mother's Job				
- Unemployed	89.35	8.73	1.92	100%
- Informal Sector	83.42	11.92	4.67	100%
- Formal Sector	93.96	5.30	0.75	100%
Presence of Biological Mother				
- Yes	87.44	9.64	2.93	100%
- No	88.04	7.60	4.36	100%
Characteristic Place of Residence				
- Urban	93.09	5.86	1.05	100%
- Rural	83.64	12.15	4.22	100%

From the result of data processing using multinomial logistic regression, it can be seen that household poverty level variable has a significant effect on the child neglect. This means that households' different economic conditions in terms of the poverty level have different effects on the child neglect. Children living in poor households are more likely to be neglected than children living in non-poor households. The complete results of multinomial logit regression on probabilities of children to be neglected are presented in Appendix.

This finding is in accordance with the study conducted by Wolock and Horowitz (1979) identifying factors related to child maltreatment among poor families; 380 beneficiaries in northern New Jersey who received protection services from child and community welfare agencies are compared to random samples of 144 beneficiaries who were not identified to perform maltreatment to their children. This study found that the children from poor families are more likely to experience maltreatments, especially in the form of neglect.

This is because poor parents have limited resources to fulfill their children needs. A prosperous economic condition provides space for a person to make choices in his life regarding the problems faced. Conversely, the poor and not prosperous ones have limited choices. As a result, the decision-making is based on what should be received and not on the number of alternative options. Therefore, parents will devote a lot of time and energy to meet the needs of life so that other things such as parenting and supervising children tend to be ruled out.

According to Gunarsa and Gunarsa (1991) in Khaizu (2009), low income family condition causes parents to treat children with inadequate attention, appreciation, and compliment for doing good in following rules, lacking practice and moral cultivation. The relationship between poverty and child neglect not only deals with parents' limited ability to meet the needs of their children. The result of longitudinal study proves that negative parenting patterns tend to recur among generations in poor families (Kovan, et al, 2009). Poor families neglect their children not only because they are not financially capable, but also because they apply an improper parenting pattern to their children. In addition, according to Pelton (1978), poverty is also characterized by poor housing and environmental condition. Poor environmental condition can increase the chances of children to environmental hazards such as low health condition.

The relationship between poverty and child neglect is not only direct, but also indirect; it may contribute to other factors affecting child neglect, such as food insecurity, malnutrition mothers, depressed mothers, and stressful lives (Weill, 2012 in Korbin J.E and Krugman, R.D., 2014). These factors can increase the childrens' probability to be almost neglected or neglected.

Nevertheless, Sedlak, et al (2010) stated that many low-income families do not neglect their children. Child neglect can occur in all economic classes in various forms of neglect; But there are risk factors that can be used as predictors or contribute to neglect, such as poverty and poor housing condition.

Age of children shows affecting the chances of children to be neglected. Age pattern of children in the shape of "reverse U" means that the tendency of children to be neglected increases along with the increasing age, but it decreases again in later ages. This finding is in accordance with the result of DePanfilis study (2006) stating that children aged less than 3 years are the highest in experiencing maltreatment by 16.1 per 1,000 children. In addition, children at the same age are the most at risk of being neglected; and this number declines along with the increasing age. This is probably because older children are more able to express their desires and needs. Thus, parents can understand how to meet the needs of their children. While younger children, especially infants are very dependent on the parents and they have not been able to express what they need. As a result, parents who are lack of understanding the needs of their children tend to neglect them. In addition, older children tend to be more independent so that in some ways, they can meet their own needs.

Child gender relates to the child neglect. Girls are less almost neglected than boys. The girls' chance to be neglected is also less than the boys. In other words, boys are more likely to be both almost neglected and neglected than girls. This may be due to parents' gender preferences for their children. Boys and girls have different opportunities during their childhood to adulthood in many countries and cultures. In addition, it is presumably because of the stereotype attached to boys that they tend to be stronger and more independent than girls; so that the attention paid to boys is less than to girls. This causes boys to be more almost neglected or neglected than girls.

Education is very influential in shaping attitudes and points of view of a person in understanding a problem. A person's education level may reflect knowledge of the values, norms, benefits, and consequences received from a decision made. Therefore, the education level reflects the knowledge possessed. Mothers' education level relates to the child neglect. Children of low educated mothers are more to be almost neglected than children of high educated mothers. Likewise, the chance of children with low educated mothers to be neglected is greater than children whose mothers have college education.

These results are in accordance with the finding of Dubowitz, et al (2011) reporting that low educated mothers tend to commit maltreatment to their children than higher educated mothers. Mothers who are only primary school graduates or even never attended school are difficult to obtain information including on parenting patterns. Mothers who failed providing adequate food or supervision to their children may be simply because they do not know their children's needs. In addition, it may also be because they have no understanding or skills about parenting. According to Sidebotham, et al (2001), the influence of education on child maltreatment related to knowledge and awareness of the children needs. Correspondingly, Chitiyo (2014) stated that education helps new mothers to identify their children's needs and know how to meet those needs.

Father's job status has an effect on child neglect. Children of unemployment fathers are more likely to be almost neglected than children of fathers who work in the formal sectors. Likewise, children of fathers working in the informal sectors are more likely to be almost neglected than those who have fathers working in the formal sectors. The same condition also occurs in the tendency of being neglected children. Children with unemployed fathers are more likely to be neglected than children with fathers working in the formal sectors. Likewise, children of fathers working in the informal sectors are more likely to be neglected than those whose fathers work in the formal sectors.

Talking about probability, it appears that the chance of being neglected for children whose fathers are not working is lower than children whose fathers work in the informal sectors; which is lower than children whose fathers work in the formal sectors. This is interesting because unemployed fathers can be an option to take care of the children; they tend to spend more time helping to look after the children. Therefore, it reduces the tendency to neglect. In addition, working in informal sectors is associated with uncertainty, such as uncertain working hours, uncertain wages, including mobile work sites which may cause greater tendency of children whose fathers work in the informal sectors to be neglected than children whose fathers are working in the formal sectors and even unemployed fathers.

Mother's job status affects the child neglect. Children of unemployed mothers are more likely to be neglected than children whose mothers work in formal sectors. This finding indicates that households with unemployed mothers have lower income due to the absence of mothers' income sources. Lower household income affects the ability to meet the needs of children from the material side which then affects the status of neglect.

The presence of parents, especially a mother, plays an important role in the development of children; not only limited to physical and psychological growth, but also affects the moral formation of children. In the family

environment, the moral formation of children is influenced by parents as the first teachers who teach about moral since the early age. This process occurs through a harmonious communication formed between parents and children. A child who grows and develops physically, mentally and socially under the care and protection of their parents is expected to grow and develop naturally in order to become qualified, noble and prosperous children. The government has regulated in Law No. 23 of 2002 article 7 paragraph (1) stating that every child has the right to know their parents, be raised and cared for by their own parents.

In the relation between the presence of a biological mother and the probability of child neglect, children who do not live with their biological mothers highly tend to be neglected than children who live with their biological mothers. This is probably because biological mothers have stronger bonds to their children than those to adopted children. Thomson, et al. (1994) stated that adopting parents generally provide a lower level of warmth and support to their adopted children than biological parents.

Household size positively relates to child neglect. Larger household size makes a greater tendency for children to be almost neglected or neglected. This is in accordance with the research conducted by Dubowitz, et al (2011) who found that children of large families (defined as families with four or more children) experience an increased risk of maltreatment compared to children in families with fewer children.

The larger size of a household, either the number of its members or the number of children, will increase the responsibility of parents as the head of the household which includes the responsibility in meeting the needs of all household members as maximum as possible with limited resources; this may cause stress. Steinmetz and Straus (1974) stated that a large family size may bring great responsibility; so that parents should make more efforts as child rearing devours the available resources.

Residential areas have a significant effect on child neglect. Children living in rural areas are more likely to be neglected than children living in urban areas. Neglected children are more living in rural areas than living in urban areas. This is due to the availability and accessability of facilities related to the fulfillment of children's needs, such as school, health facilities, daycare centers, and markets that provide healthy and nutritious food choices.

In addition, the study conducted by Rusyda (2014) on children's activities found that children living in urban areas both boys and girls are more likely to attend schools than children in rural areas. While in the case of child labor, the finding of Winasis (2013) in Rusyda (2014) reported that children living in rural areas are more likely to be child laborers than children living in urban areas. Both studies show two of several neglect indicators: school and child labor. The two indicators show that children living in rural areas tend to be neglected than children living in urban areas.

CONCLUSION

This research reveals that household poverty rates have a significant effect on child neglect. Children living in poor households are more likely to be neglected or almost neglected than children living in non-poor households. Social demographic variables that are age and gender of the children, education level of mothers, employment status of parents, the presence of biological mothers within the household, household size, and the residence areas as control variables show significant effects on child neglect.

In addition, further researches are recommended to renew the indicators suited to the current conditions. For example, the criterion of consumption only considered the food shortages problem, whereas the current problem of child's over feeding should also become a consideration because obesity is also harmful to children health.

Employing ordered logit model in analysis is suggested for further researches. Another suggestion is using child birth order as one of socio-demographic characteristic. It is an important variable in explaining the probability of neglecting child beside poverty condition of households.The research finding suggests creating policies in improving welfare and income household for Indonesian people; so that child neglect can be lessened.

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Appendices

Parameter Estimated and Odds Ratio by Multinomial Logit Model

Variables	Almost Neglected		Neglected	
	β	Odd Ratio	β	Odd Ratio
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Poverty household				
Poor	0,617**	1,854	1,041**	2,833
Not poor	0[b]		0[b]	
Child age	-0,321**	0,725	0,123**	1,131
Child age^2	0,015**	1,016	-0,005**	0,995
Sex of child				
Female	-0,101**	0,904	-0,203**	0,816
Male	0[b]		0[b]	
Mother's educational level				
Low	0,530**	1,698	1,279**	3,595
Middle	0,100	1,105	0,354	1,425
High	0[b]		0[b]	
Father's job status				
Unemployee	0,225*	1,252	0,544**	1,722
Informal sector	0,195**	1,215	0,564**	1,758
Formal sector	0[b]		0[b]	
Mother's job status				
Unemployee	0,084	1,088	0,212*	1,236
Informal sector	0,376**	1,456	0,748**	2,114
Formal sector	0[b]		0[b]	
Biological mother's Presence within household				
No	-0,154	0,857	0,471**	1,601
Yes	0[b]		0[b]	
Family size	0,105**	1,110	0,063**	1,065
Residential area				
Rural	0,569**	1,766	0,902**	2,466
Urban	0[b]		0[b]	

Source: National Socioeconomics Survey, September 2015, Processed
Information: Not neglected as reference category
** = significant at α = 0,01
* = significant at α = 0,05