

ARTICLE

Preventing Violence Against Women and Children in Mandailing Natal Regency: A Criminological Perspective

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ABSTRACT ENGLISH:

This study analyzes the patterns and characteristics of violence against women and children in Mandailing Natal Regency during 2023-2024, focusing on sexual violence, domestic abuse, and homicide. The primary aggravating factors include poverty, gender inequality, early marriage, low educational attainment, and weak law enforcement. A criminological approach, drawing on Social Disorganization, Strain, Social Control, and Labeling theories, was employed to uncover root causes and propose prevention strategies based on economic empowerment, education, and legal reform. A qualitative methodology, utilizing literature review and content analysis, was applied to assess key themes in primary and secondary data sources, including books, scholarly articles, and local and national news reports. The findings reveal that sexual violence constitutes the most prevalent category, followed by domestic abuse often resulting in fatalities, and a rising incidence of child sexual exploitation, predominantly perpetrated by acquaintances of the victims. Factors such as gender disparity, poverty, limited educational opportunities, and inadequate law enforcement significantly exacerbate these conditions. Effective mitigation requires synergy among government agencies, community stakeholders, and related sectors, including strengthening legal frameworks, enhancing law enforcement capacities, and providing integrated support services. Community-based interventions and sustained educational programs, engaging religious and customary leaders—are expected to foster a safer, more inclusive environment. Cross-sector collaboration is identified as the key to reducing violence and bolstering public confidence in the justice system.

Keywords: Prevention; Women's Violence; Child Abuse; Criminology

ABSTRACT INDONESIAN:

Penelitian ini menganalisis pola dan karakteristik kekerasan terhadap perempuan dan anak di Kabupaten Mandailing Natal pada periode 2023-2024, dengan fokus pada kekerasan seksual, penganiayaan domestik, dan pembunuhan. Faktor utama yang memperburuk situasi ini adalah kemiskinan, ketimpangan gender, pernikahan dini, rendahnya tingkat pendidikan, dan lemahnya penegakan hukum. Pendekatan kriminologi, dengan menggunakan teori Disorganisasi Sosial, *Strain*, *Social Control*, dan *Labeling*, diterapkan untuk menggali akar permasalahan dan menawarkan solusi pencegahan berbasis pemberdayaan ekonomi, pendidikan, serta reformasi hukum. Metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi literatur dan analisis konten digunakan untuk menilai tema-tema utama dalam data primer dan sekunder, termasuk buku dan artikel jurnal, serta laporan berita local dan nasional. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kekerasan seksual adalah kasus dominan, diikuti oleh penganiayaan domestik yang sering berujung pada kematian, serta meningkatnya eksploitasi seksual terhadap anak, terutama oleh pelaku yang dikenal korban. Faktor-faktor seperti ketimpangan gender, kemiskinan, rendahnya pendidikan, dan lemahnya penegakan hukum berperan besar dalam memperburuk kondisi ini. Penanggulangan kekerasan memerlukan sinergi antara pemerintah, masyarakat, dan sektor terkait, termasuk penguatan regulasi, peningkatan kapasitas aparat penegak hukum, serta penyediaan layanan terintegrasi. Pendekatan berbasis komunitas dan edukasi berkelanjutan diharapkan dapat menciptakan lingkungan yang lebih aman dan inklusif, dengan melibatkan tokoh agama dan adat. Kolaborasi lintas sektor menjadi kunci dalam mengurangi kekerasan dan meningkatkan kepercayaan terhadap sistem hukum.

Kata Kunci: Pencegahan; Kekerasan Perempuan; Kekerasan Anak; Kriminologi

Introduction

Violence against women and children, including sexual violence and homicide, reflects the failure of effective legal protections as well as the complex influence of social factors such as poverty (Miah & Sifat, 2024; Small et al., 2024), low education (Yuliartini, 2021), patriarchal culture (Gupta et al., 2023; Menjívar & Diossa-Jiménez, 2023), gender inequality (Fahlgren et al., 2020; Pierik, 2022), and early marriage (Putra et al., 2023; Qamar et al., 2022; Salihu, 2024). These issues pose serious challenges in Indonesia, as in many other countries (Peterman et al., 2020), demonstrating the urgent need for more assertive policies to promote gender equality, improve access to education, and eradicate social structures that reinforce the subordination of women and children.

Throughout 2023-2024, Mandailing Natal District faced an increase in cases of sexual violence (Hasibuan, 2024; Humas Polres Mandailing Natal, 2024; Karyadi, 2024; A. H. Lubis, 2023, 2024; Rahyuni, 2023; Redaksi, 2024b; Syahren, 2024), maltreatment (Rahyuni, 2024b; Redaksi, 2023; Redaksi23, 2024), and murder of women and children (Haji, 2024; Rahyuni, 2024a) some occurred in private spaces with perpetrators coming from the victim's immediate environment (Admin, 2023; Karyadi, 2024; A. H. Lubis, 2024; Rahyuni, 2024a; Redaksi23, 2024), although there were perpetrators from outside the environment (Haji, 2024; Hasibuan, 2024; Humas Polres Mandailing Natal, 2024; Rahyuni, 2024b). Law enforcement efforts have not been fully optimized (Savitri & Sitanggang, 2022; Setyadi et al., 2021; Yusrina & Sarurie, 2022), exacerbated by the lack of public awareness of the rights of women and children (Koeswanto et al., 2023; Yuliartini, 2021), so this issue remains complex and requires a systematic approach that includes legal empowerment, public education, and strengthening social protection.

Table 1. Forms of Violence against Women and Children in Mandailing Natal District (2023-2024).

Forms of Violence	Amount
Sexual Violence	8
Maltreatment	3
Murder	2
Total	13

There were 13 cases of violence against women and children in Mandailing Natal District during 2023-2024, dominated by sexual violence (more than 50%), followed by maltreatment and murder. Perpetrators of violence were generally close relatives or people known to the victim, reflecting the intimate relationship between the perpetrator and victim. Despite an increase in reports to the police, many cases remain unsolved due to fear or threats from perpetrators. Data shows the prevalence of sexual violence, with 8 cases identified (Hasibuan, 2024; Humas Polres Mandailing Natal, 2024; Karyadi, 2024; A. H. Lubis, 2023, 2024; Rahyuni, 2023; Redaksi, 2024b; Syahren, 2024), while maltreatment was recorded in 4 cases (Rahyuni, 2024b; Redaksi, 2023; Redaksi23, 2024) and murder in 2 cases (Haji, 2024; Rahyuni, 2024a).

Various studies have been conducted related to the discussion of violence against women and children. Research by Mannell et al. (2022) revealed that patriarchal culture, gender inequality and social structure are the main factors that trigger violence against women in various countries. Peterman (2024) showed that better education in rural areas can significantly reduce the rate of violence against women and children. Meanwhile, Zurnetti & Muliati (2022) highlighted the role of customary criminal law in resolving cases of domestic violence in Minangkabau society. Eleanora & Supriyanto (2020) found that the power imbalance between men and women contributed greatly to the high rate of violence against women. Zanah et al. (2023) emphasized that legal protection for women and children in Indonesia still faces serious challenges, especially due to the weak performance of law enforcement agencies.

Although there have been many studies on violence against women and children in Indonesia, most only highlight the social or legal aspects separately. To date, there have been no studies that thoroughly combine criminological reviews with social and legal factors related to violence against women and children, particularly in Mandailing Natal District. This research aims to fill this void through a more comprehensive analysis, with a criminological approach based on local social and cultural factors in Mandailing Natal Regency.

The focus of this research is to examine the patterns and characteristics of violence against women and children in Mandailing Natal Regency throughout 2023-2024. This research covers the forms of violence that occur as well as the factors that influence the high rate of violence, such as social, economic, cultural aspects, and weaknesses in the law enforcement system. A criminological approach is used to understand the root of the problem in order to provide strategic recommendations for prevention and control. These recommendations are expected to include effective social interventions and strengthening legal policies that are responsive to the protection of vulnerable groups.

Method

This study uses a qualitative method with a literature review approach to analyse in depth patterns of violence against women and children. The approach used is descriptive-analytical. The descriptive approach is used to map the forms and patterns of violence against women and children in Mandailing Natal Regency in 2023-2024. Meanwhile, the analytical approach focuses on identifying the causal factors of violence from a criminological perspective (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The primary data sources in this study are relevant journal articles and scientific books, while secondary data are obtained from local and national news. Journal articles and books provide the theoretical foundation and previous research results that support the analysis, while local and national news provide current information and the context of the events. Data is analysed using content analysis by identifying the main themes emerging from the entire dataset. These themes are then verified and compared with criminological theories (Nicmanis, 2024). The analysis is expected to reveal patterns of violence, its causal factors, and offer relevant and applicable solutions based on a criminological approach.

Result and Discussion

Violence against women and children in Mandailing Natal District in the 2023-2024 period showed a concerning trend. Data compiled from various local media reports identified several dominant types of violence, namely sexual violence (Hasibuan, 2024; Humas Polres Mandailing Natal, 2024; Karyadi, 2024; A. H. Lubis, 2023, 2024; Rahyuni, 2023; Redaksi, 2024b; Syahren, 2024), abuse (Rahyuni, 2024b; Redaksi, 2023; Redaksi23, 2024), and homicide (Haji, 2024; Rahyuni, 2024a). Among these three types of violence, cases of sexual violence occupied the highest position, with the majority of perpetrators coming from the victim's immediate environment, such as acquaintances, friends, family members, or in some cases, perpetrators unknown to the victim.

In addition to sexual violence, physical abuse of women and children also recorded significant numbers. Most of these cases occur in domestic settings, with the main triggering factors being family conflict and economic problems. These violent incidents often lead to more severe abuse and even murder, as happened in Siabu, Mandailing Natal in 2024. In this case, a biological son took the life of his mother (Rahyuni, 2024a). Another murder case also occurred in the same year, where the perpetrator killed the victim who was his girlfriend, then threw her body into the river and stole the victim's belongings, including a vehicle (Haji, 2024). Although murder cases are not as numerous as sexual violence cases, the number of incidents is still worrying and requires serious attention in overcoming it.

The pattern of violence against children shows an alarming trend, especially in the form of sexual exploitation. Sexual violence against children is often committed by perpetrators who have an emotional closeness or family relationship with the victim, such as neighbors, uncles, or even friends of the victim's parents. For example, in 2024, a teenager was abused by raping his own niece, causing bleeding (A. H. Lubis, 2024; Redaksi, 2024b). Another case involved an adult man who raped a child by choking, knocking down and raping the victim (Hasibuan, 2024; Redaksi, 2024b). These incidents reflect the high potential threat to the safety of children, especially girls.

All the data collected shows that violence against women and children occurs more often during the day, especially in quiet situations. This suggests that perpetrators tend to take advantage of times and circumstances where victims are less vigilant. The dominant location of the incident at home or in the neighborhood around the victim's home confirms that the domestic space is still a place that is vulnerable to violence.

Factors Causing Violence Against Women and Children in Mandailing Natal

The high rate of violence against women and children in Mandailing Natal Regency is influenced by a variety of complex factors, with poverty as one of the main causes. Poverty triggers frustration in perpetrators, who often take their violence out on family members who are considered weaker, namely women and children, thus exacerbating the cycle of domestic violence (Miah & Sifat, 2024; Small et al., 2024). Data shows that the majority of perpetrators of violence against women and children come from underprivileged families. For example, the murder of a mother by her son because he was not given money (Rahyuni, 2024a), as well as domestic violence, which is often triggered by family economic pressure (Admin, 2023; H.

Lubis, 2023; Redaksi23, 2024). Another case was the murder of a woman followed by the theft of the victim's vehicle after her body was dumped (Haji, 2024).

Gender inequality due to patriarchal culture is also one of the main factors causing violence against women (Fahlgren et al., 2020; Pierik, 2022). Patriarchy, which is strong in many countries, often causes adverse effects such as psychological and mental health disorders (Gupta et al., 2023), and can also hinder their legal protection (Menjívar & Diossa-Jiménez, 2023). In Mandailing Natal District, dominant patriarchal social norms place women as subordinates in the family and community (Rambe et al., 2022). This inequality makes women and children vulnerable to violence, difficult to resist, and less protected by law (Eleanora & Supriyanto, 2020). Social stigma and the tendency to cover up cases of violence, especially domestic violence, exacerbate the situation, making victims reluctant to report and cases difficult to uncover (Gurm et al., 2020).

The high rate of violence is also influenced by a lack of education and understanding of the rights of women and children (Yuliantini, 2021). Small et al. (2024) revealed that education level has a significant correlation with violent behavior. In Mandailing Natal, a case of mistreatment of a child by several adults, including unscrupulous village officials, reflects the low education level of the perpetrator (Rahyuni, 2024b). This finding is in line with research by Kuunibe et al. (2023) which states that perpetrators with low education are more prone to violence. Victims' lack of education often makes them unaware of their legal rights, so they tend to accept violence or discrimination without reporting it (Cullen, 2023; Peterman, 2024).

Early marriage is also a significant factor in triggering violence against women and children. Research conducted by Putra et al. (2023) in Siabu, Mandailing Natal, showed that marriage at a young age has a correlation with an increased risk of various household problems, including family violence. These findings are reinforced by international research especially in low-income countries, such as the study by Qamar et al. (2022), which showed that women who married at an early age were 22% more likely to experience violence than those who married at an older age. The main cause is the lack of emotional and economic maturity of young couples, which often results in disharmony, relationship instability and inability to cope with household stress (Salihu, 2024). The data emphasizes the importance of addressing early marriage as an effort to prevent violence against women and children.

Weak law enforcement is also one of the causes of high rates of violence against women and children. Although regulations have provided a framework for protection, implementation in the field is often constrained by limited resources, lack of apparatus training, and a legal culture that does not support the optimization of protection (Savitri & Sitanggang, 2022; Setyadi et al., 2021; Yusrina & Sarurie, 2022). Research by Raaijmakers et al. (2024) confirmed that low legal awareness and the inability of officials to recognize cases of violence are significant obstacles. This situation is further exacerbated by cases of unscrupulous officers' involvement in criminal offenses, such as in Mandailing Natal in 2023, which involved alleged mistreatment by correctional officers of elementary school children (Redaksi, 2023).

A recent report noted the involvement of law enforcement officials in serious cases, including extortion and assisting perpetrators of sexual violence against women (Humas Polres

Mandailing Natal, 2024), which further deteriorates the image of the legal system. Such actions not only undermine public trust in law enforcement officials, but also deeply traumatize victims and their families. This condition indicates a serious dysfunction in the mechanism of supervision and enforcement of apparatus ethics (Koeswanto et al., 2023). Without strict supervision mechanisms, the role of the apparatus in protecting vulnerable groups becomes ineffective, even becoming part of the problem that exacerbates violations. Research by Menjívar & Diossa-Jiménez (2023) in Central America shows that this approach not only fails to protect victims, but also has the potential to exacerbate structural injustices.

Criminological Analysis of Violence Against Women and Children

The Social Disorganization Theory outlined by Shaw & McKay highlights that the breakdown of social structures, high population mobility, and poverty create an environment that is vulnerable to violence, including against women and children (Errol et al., 2021). The situation in Mandailing Natal reflects weak social structures, which exacerbate the risk of violence in the community. Community-based approaches are emerging as an effective solution to address this issue. McDowell & Reinhard (2023), emphasized the importance of strengthening social ties and community solidarity as a strategy to reduce the risk of violence.

Concrete implementation in the form of establishing village-based complaint posts can play a strategic role in the prevention and handling of violence. This post serves as a center for information, mediation, and victim assistance, while allowing the community to be actively involved in monitoring and reporting cases. One example of the success of this approach can be seen in initiatives in Sukabumi and Purwakarta districts, where the Empowerment Network for Resilient Women (Jaringan Pemberdayaan untuk Perempuan Tangguh/JEKATA) manages 13 posts to address Gender-Based Violence (GBV), which has proven effective in reducing levels of violence (Daron, 2024).

The approach is in line with Social Disorganization theory, which suggests that community empowerment is more effective than top-down interventions in solving complex social problems (Goodson & Bouffard, 2020). In addition to providing direct protection to victims, these community-based programs strengthen social security, raise collective consciousness and build community resilience to conflict. This confirms that strengthening local solidarity is not only a prevention strategy, but also a mechanism to build stronger social structures.

Strain Theory, introduced by Robert K. Merton, provides a powerful analytical framework for understanding violence against women and children. This theory explains that socio-economic stress can drive deviant behavior, including domestic violence, as a response to the inability to achieve expected social goals (Nguyen & Ngo, 2021). In Mandailing Natal District, structural poverty and limited access to economic resources are significant factors that exacerbate domestic violence. Men's inability to fulfill the normative role of breadwinner often results in frustration that is vented on women and children, as suggested by Lanchimba et al. (2023), who found that depression and emotional instability play a fundamental role in domestic violence. This phenomenon reflects the close relationship between socio-economic inequality and domestic violence, consistent with the concept of structural stress in Strain Theory.

Addressing domestic violence requires a strategy based on reducing socio-economic stress through multidimensional interventions. This approach includes economic empowerment through skills training, access to business capital, and inclusive job creation. On the other hand, the legal system must be strengthened to ensure victim protection and strict sanctions for perpetrators. Community education on gender equality and emotional management is also key in building healthier social dynamics, as evidenced by Hidayah et al. (2020) who showed that emotion management and gender equality contributed significantly to the management of marital conflict. Sustainable structural change can be realized by integrating these measures, and encouraging the reduction of violence and the creation of a more just and harmonious society.

Travis Hirschi's Social Control Theory offers a framework for understanding the sustainability of violence against women and children. This theory asserts that individuals with strong social ties, especially within families and communities, have a lower risk of engaging in criminal behavior (Costello & Laub, 2020). In Mandailing Natal, weak social control within families and communities exacerbated the escalation of violence. The inability to manage internal conflicts, lack of law enforcement, and victims' ignorance of their legal protection rights create conditions of impunity that reinforce the cycle of violence (Koeswanto et al., 2023; Yuliantini, 2021). Data shows that women and child victims are often reluctant to report acts of violence, which is further exacerbated by a culture of silence and distrust of the legal system (Cullen, 2023; Peterman, 2024).

Response strategies include integrated campaigns involving the government, civil society organizations, and legal institutions to increase public legal awareness. Initiatives such as the advocacy class initiated by the HMI-Wati Corps (Korps HMI-Wati/Kohati), which highlights issues of sexual violence and gender discrimination, are real efforts carried out in person and online (Anhari, 2021). In Mandailing Natal, Kohati Mandailing Natal Branch is also active in advocating cases of domestic violence and sexual violence, with tangible results in assisting victims of sexual violence (R. D. Putri, 2024; Redaksi, 2024a). On the other hand, the routine education program by the Darma Wanita Persatuan (DWP) of the Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Mandailing Natal (State Islamic College) is a model of socialization that reaches the community on an ongoing basis (Tim Humas, 2024). This approach must be balanced with consistent law enforcement to create a deterrent effect for perpetrators. The combination of strengthened social control, community legal education, and courage against the culture of silence is expected to create a safer and more inclusive environment for women and children, and sustainably erode the root causes of violence.

Labeling Theory proposed by Howard Becker emphasizes that individuals who are labeled as criminals, either by society or legal institutions, tend to experience stigmatization that exacerbates their behavior (Agogué & Parguel, 2020). In Mandailing Natal District, victims of violence, especially women and children, often feel stigmatized by the community. They may feel ashamed or afraid of being labeled as victims, so they are reluctant to report violence. On the other hand, perpetrators of violence who have a certain social status or power in the community may not be immediately punished or condemned, thus worsening the situation and causing the continuation of violence.

Increasing legal awareness in society is a strategic step in addressing this issue (Erten & Keskin, 2022). Many victims of violence, both women and children, do not realize that they have the right to legal protection and justice (Savitri & Sitanggang, 2022; Yuliantini, 2021). Legal awareness campaigns involving mass media and social media should be promoted to provide clear information about their rights, mechanisms for reporting violence, and the importance of countering the widespread culture of silence. Collaboration between the government, civil society organizations, and the media will create collective awareness that can accelerate social change and support efforts to reduce violence against women and children.

Social Learning Theory also offers valuable insights, positing that individuals acquire criminal behaviors through interactions with others, particularly within environments that do not actively discourage violence (Carvalho & Ossorio, 2021; Nodeland & Morris, 2020). Children who witness or experience such violence tend to learn that aggression is a legitimate means of resolving conflicts or achieving objectives (Kadir & Handayaningsih, 2020). Consequently, they are more likely to reproduce these violent behaviors in adulthood. This cycle of violence is especially pernicious, as it perpetuates maladaptive behavioral patterns across successive generations.

Addressing violence against women and children in Mandailing Natal Regency requires an integrated approach that draws on criminological theory, community empowerment, and the strengthening of the legal system. Social Disorganization and Strain Theories underscore the importance of community solidarity and economic empowerment in tackling the root causes of violence, while Social Control and Labeling Theories highlight the necessity of reinforcing social bonds and empowering victims to prevent stigmatization. Community-based interventions, such as establishing complaint centers and conducting legal-awareness campaigns, have proven effective in fostering safer, more inclusive environments. A coordinated strategy that aligns criminological insights, community empowerment initiatives, and consistent law enforcement can enhance violence prevention, reduce incident rates, and bolster public confidence in the existing legal framework.

The Role of Government and Society in Preventing Violence against Women and Children

Preventing violence against women and children requires close collaboration between government and society. The government, which holds the requisite authority, is responsible for formulating comprehensive policies, enforcing robust legal protections, and ensuring the availability of adequate services for survivors. Society, in turn, plays a critical role in creating safe environments and supporting survivors in their pursuit of justice.

The Indonesian government has established a legal framework to combat violence through various statutes, including Law No. 39 of 1999 on Human Rights, Law No. 35 of 2014 on Child Protection, Law No. 23 of 2004 on the Elimination of Domestic Violence, and Law No. 12 of 2022 on Sexual Violence Offenses (Siregar & Prihatini, 2024). Despite this comprehensive legislation, implementation often remains suboptimal (Sinaga, 2023),

particularly in remote regions such as Mandailing Natal Regency. This gap underscores the need to enhance the capacity of law enforcement agencies to interpret and apply these provisions consistently, thereby ensuring that survivors receive equitable justice.

The provision of infrastructure for survivor support services is strategically vital for recovery and protection, especially in isolated areas with limited access. Integrated crisis centers offering medical, psychological, and legal assistance are urgently needed, as demonstrated by the success of the Integrated Service Center for the Empowerment of Women and Children (Pusat Pelayanan Terpadu Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Anak/P2TP2A) in Pabuaran, Serang Regency, which has streamlined access to support for survivors (M. S. Putri et al., 2023). Implementing a similar model in Mandailing Natal could overcome comparable barriers, while establishing safe houses at the village level would provide immediate protection, allowing survivors to report violence without fear of retaliation, as has proven effective in several districts of Jakarta (Tielung et al., 2023).

Communities play a strategic role in preventing violence against women and children through ongoing education initiatives, including seminars, community training, and efforts to shift social norms toward gender equality. Educational institutions are pivotal in this endeavor by instilling values of equality from an early age; for example, Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Mandailing Natal conducts regular outreach on gender issues and violence prevention (Tim Humas, 2024). Such initiatives not only raise public awareness but also reinforce respect for the rights of women and children, thereby fostering a more inclusive and equitable social environment.

Traditional councils and religious leaders in Mandailing Natal hold significant potential as agents of change in protecting women and children. By leveraging culturally grounded and faith-based approaches aligned with local wisdom, they can challenge lingering permissive attitudes toward domestic violence. Research by Suryani et al. (2022) documented the success of the *Bundo Kanduang* institution in West Sumatra in resolving domestic violence cases through customary mechanisms, while Jamaa & Rahman (2022) highlighted the vital contributions of Islamic religious figures in Maluku to preventing and addressing domestic abuse. Implementing similar culturally sensitive interventions in Mandailing Natal could substantially reduce violence against women and children.

Preventing violence against women and children in Mandailing Natal Regency requires a coordinated effort among government, community, and relevant sectors. The government must strengthen the enforcement of existing regulations, enhance the capacity of law enforcement officers, and prioritize the provision of integrated services and safe houses, particularly in remote areas, as demonstrated effective elsewhere. The community's role is to foster awareness and create an environment that supports justice for survivors by engaging traditional councils, religious leaders, and the private sector in prevention efforts. Cross-sector collaboration and ongoing education are critical elements that must be reinforced to establish a safe, inclusive, and equitable ecosystem for women and children.

Conclusion

Violence against women and children in Mandailing Natal Regency during 2023–2024 reflects an alarming trend, encompassing sexual assault, physical abuse, and homicide, most often perpetrated by individuals with close emotional ties to the victims. Key contributing factors include poverty, gender inequality, early marriage, low educational attainment, and weak law enforcement. Criminological theories, such as Social Disorganization, Strain, Social Control, and Labeling, provide a framework for analyzing these underlying issues. Through this lens, it becomes evident that social dynamics play a significant role in escalating violence, while deficient social controls and community norms exacerbate the situation. Economic empowerment, education, and legal reform must be integrated as comprehensive strategies to create a safer and more just environment for women and children.

Addressing violence against women and children demands synergy among government, society, and relevant organizations. The government should reinforce the implementation of existing laws, improve the capacities of law enforcement personnel, and establish integrated services and safe houses, especially in remote regions. Simultaneously, the community must be actively involved in raising legal awareness through campaigns that include traditional institutions, religious figures, and the private sector. Cross-sector collaboration and sustained educational initiatives are essential to building a secure, inclusive, and just ecosystem. Systematic and coordinated action is required to drive meaningful social change and reduce violence against women and children.

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