



Bibliometric Analysis of Child Protection Policy Performance in ASEAN

Zakki Fuad Khalil,¹ Putri Marzaniar,¹ Ratnawati,² Cut Zamharira¹, Muazzinah¹

¹ Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry, Banda Aceh

² Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 3 Banda Aceh

Email: zakki.fuad@ar-raniry.ac.id

Abstract

Children's issues are a matter of significant public concern, especially given their crucial role as the nation's next generation. As valuable national assets, children possess numerous rights that their countries must guarantee. This research aims to analyze child protection policies in ASEAN countries through a systematic literature review. The data synthesis process involved comparing 60 articles that met stringent quality assessment, inclusion, and exclusion criteria. The data was subsequently processed and presented in tabulated form. The results revealed various forms of violence against children prevalent in the ASEAN region, including sexual, domestic, and cyber violence, exploitation, and neglect. Furthermore, the nodality model is the most dominant child protection policy formulation model adopted by ASEAN countries, primarily focusing on law enforcement and the fulfillment of children's rights. However, existing policies are more oriented toward handling cases after children become victims rather than prioritizing preventive efforts. Most notably, while conventional policies often focus solely on children's rights post-birth, a compelling multi-area perspective emerges from Islamic teachings. These teachings comprehensively regulate child protection starting even before birth, through pre-marital guidance and pregnancy preparation, extending to the parenting stages with a strong emphasis on moral and spiritual character development, and encompassing the entire spectrum of formal and informal child education. This finding highlights a critical gap in child protection within the ASEAN region, underscoring the urgent need to strengthen preventive measures. This research is expected to contribute to the development of more comprehensive and effective child protection policies across the ASEAN region, potentially integrating these holistic Islamic principles.

Keywords: Child protection policy, Systematic Literature Review, ASEAN

Abstrak

Permasalahan anak sudah semestinya menjadi perhatian public, mengingat peran krusial mereka sebagai generasi penerus bangsa. Dengan demikian, Anak sebagai aset bangsa memiliki hak yang harus dijamin oleh negaranya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kebijakan perlindungan anak di negara-negara ASEAN. Penelitian ini merupakan tinjauan sistematis (Systematic Literature Review). Proses data sintesis dalam penelitian ini dilakukan dengan cara membandingkan 60 literature yang memenuhi penilaian kualitas serta kriteria inklusi dan eksklusi. Data diolah dan disajikan dalam bentuk tabulasi. Hasil penelitian mengungkap beragam bentuk kekerasan terhadap anak yang terjadi di kawasan ASEAN, seperti kekerasan seksual, domestik, cyber violence, eksploitasi, dan pengabaian. Kemudian model nodality menjadi model perumusan kebijakan perlindungan anak paling dominan diadopsi oleh ASEAN yang berfokus pada penegakan hukum dan pemenuhan hak-hak anak. Meskipun demikian, kebijakan yang ada lebih banyak berorientasi pada penanganan kasus setelah anak menjadi korban, ketimbang upaya pencegahan. Temuan ini mengindikasikan adanya kesenjangan dalam perlindungan anak di kawasan ASEAN, di mana upaya preventif masih perlu diperkuat. Penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan kontribusi bagi pengembangan kebijakan perlindungan anak yang lebih komprehensif dan efektif di kawasan ASEAN

Kata Kunci: Kebijakan perlindungan anak, systematic literature review, ASEAN

Introduction

Child protection is a crucial priority in the ASEAN region. This article specifically analyzes research trends over the last decade (2014-2024) concerning the performance of child protection policies, focusing on children's rights and case handling¹. The main argument of this study is that child protection policies in ASEAN continue to evolve alongside the heightened awareness driven by both governments and civil society regarding children's rights². However, challenges in policy implementation persist across various countries, including violence against children, child neglect, child exploitation, and the need for stronger legal protections

¹ Rosemary Sheehan, "Child Welfare in the South Pacific: Deciding Child Protection Matters Across Pasifika Nations," *International Journal on Child Maltreatment: Research, Policy and Practice* 4, no. 4 (2021).

² Ngianga-Bakwin Kandala et al., "Child Rights Situation Analysis Within the ASEAN Region," *International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology* 22, no. 6 (2015).

for vulnerable child victims.³ UNICEF underscores the importance of integrated child protection mechanisms to effectively address these issues.⁴

In addition, in various studies also noted, while various regulations have been in place in each country.⁵ However, disparities in the fulfillment of children's rights are a major problem for all countries and societies⁶. Additionally, the success of child protection policies also needs to involve many stakeholders to maximize its implementation.⁷ As a result, a bibliometric analysis was conducted. This article aims to identify key trends and research areas related to child protection policies in ASEAN.

The performance of child protection policies in ASEAN countries varied in approach, challenges, and successes faced by each country⁸. In Indonesia, child protection policies are implemented by integrating service mechanisms from prevention to treatment⁹. However, many challenges remain, such as violence, abuse, and exploitation of children¹⁰. Meanwhile, the Philippines adopted a community-based approach which successfully reduced violence against children through family-based protection programs¹¹. In Malaysia, child protection policies focus on the integration of education and rehabilitation programs¹². Singapore succeeded in

³ Michael P. Dunne et al., "Violence against Children in the Asia Pacific Region: The Situation Is Becoming Clearer," *Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health*, 2015.

⁴ Shohreh Mousavi, Behnam Rastegari, and Rohaida Nordin, "Legal Analysis on the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility within ASEAN," *Social Sciences (Pakistan)* 8, no. 2 (2013).

⁵ Muslim Zainuddin; Mukhsin Nyak Umar; Dedy Sumardi; Mansari; Zakki Fuad Khalil. M, "Protection of Women and Children in the Perspective of Legal Pluralism: A Study in Aceh and West Nusa Tenggara," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 8, no. 3 (2024), p. 1948–73.

⁶ Fira Maya Shilfa and Junifer Dame Panjaitan, "Paradigma Baru Hukum Perlindungan Anak Dari Kekerasan Seksual Pasca Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Pidana Nomor 1 Tahun 2023," *COMSERVA : Jurnal Penelitian Dan Pengabdian Masyarakat* 3, no. 08 (2023).

⁷ Putri Marzaniar and Agustinus Subarsono, "Stakeholder Salience Analysis in the Policy Formulation of Anti-Violence Against Women and Children," *Journal of Contemporary Governance and Public Policy* 4, no. October (2023), p. 149–74.

⁸ Mubarak Rahamathulla, "Cyber Safety of Children in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Region: A Critical Review of Legal Frameworks and Policy Implications," *International Journal on Child Maltreatment: Research, Policy and Practice* 4, no. 4 (2021).

⁹ Yanuar Farida Wismayanti et al., "The Problematisation of Child Sexual Abuse in Policy and Law: The Indonesian Example," *Child Abuse and Neglect* 118, no. June (2021), p. 105157.

¹⁰ Wismayanti et al.

¹¹ Ma. Vida Teresa Sales et al., "Factors Affecting the Prevalence of Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children in Camarines Sur, Bicol Region, Philippines," *Asean Social Work Journal*, 2023.

¹² Nadhilah A.Kadir and Azizah MohSales et al.d, "Child Protection Through Intercountry Adoption in Malaysia: A Literature Review," *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)* 7, no. 11 (2022).

strengthening child protection by using technology to track child abuse cases¹³. Thailand, child protection through child rights fulfillment model¹⁴.

In another literature review, ASEAN countries such as Malaysia and Vietnam successfully reduced cases of violence against children through education¹⁵ and integrated fulfillment of children's rights¹⁶. Protection models that combine community roles and participations with prevention and recovery strategies such as those implemented in Indonesia¹⁷ and Philippines¹⁸ provide a significant impact on the welfare and fulfillment of children's rights. In addition, in supporting child protection policies, the importance of the community's role through community-based programs to strengthen child protection¹⁹. The success of the above model of protection and fulfillment of children's rights is a key element to be adopted by other ASEAN countries.

This article distinguishes itself from previous research, which largely comprises single-country case studies or purely normative discussions on child protection regulations. It adopts a unique bibliometric approach to analyze trends in child protection policy research across the ASEAN region over the past decade. This methodology facilitates the mapping of scientific collaborations, the distribution of research themes, and dominant keywords within the discourse on child protection policy. The novelty of this study lies in its application of bibliometric analysis, a method not yet widely utilized in child policy studies within ASEAN. Consequently, this provides a broader, more measurable perspective for understanding the trajectory of scientific development and for recommending replicable policy practices in Indonesia, drawing on successful models from other countries.

This research significantly contributes to the advancement of Islamic family law in Indonesia. A comparative analysis of child protection approaches in ASEAN countries, especially those with Muslim majorities or Sharia-based legal systems,

¹³ Parvathy Pathy et al., "Child Protection and Children's Rights in Singapore," *Adolescent Psychiatry* 4, no. 4 (2015).

¹⁴ Rohanee Machae, Abdul Basir Mohamad, and Mutsalim Khareng, "Children Maintenance: The Rights in Islamic Family Law and the Law of Thailand," *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 6, no. 4 (2015).

¹⁵ Roslina Che Soh @ Yusoff et al., "Protecting the Children's Right to Nationality in Malaysia: An Appraisal," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 9, no. 6 (2019).

¹⁶ Nigel Spence and Nguyen Thi Thai Lan, "Family Sustainability and Child Protection in Vietnam," *Children and Youth Services Review*, 2021.

¹⁷ Wiwik Puji Mulyani et al., "Model Pencegahan Dan Penanganan Kekerasan Anak Berbasis Masyarakat," *Demography Journal of Sriwijaya* 1, no. 2 (2017).

¹⁸ Steven Roche and Catherine Flynn, "Local Child Protection in the Philippines: A Case Study of Actors, Processes and Key Risks for Children," *Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies* 8, no. 3 (2021).

¹⁹ Karen Healy, "Participation and Child Protection: The Importance of Context," *British Journal of Social Work* 28, no. 6 (1998).

offers crucial insights into harmonizing international legal principles with religious values. Such insights are vital for formulating a comprehensive and adaptive Islamic family law framework capable of addressing contemporary challenges like child marriage, custody, and adoption, all while aligning with maqashid syariah and the best interests of the child. Identifying best policy practices in fulfilling children's rights across ASEAN provides an applicable model for Indonesia to adapt child-friendly Islamic family law. Case studies on integrating child protection into marriage regulations, juvenile justice, and social welfare systems in neighboring countries can inspire legal reforms in Indonesia. For instance, exploring concepts of child participation in legal processes or violence prevention mechanisms rooted in religious values. Thus, this journal not only enriches the theoretical framework of Islamic family law in Indonesia but also offers practical, effective policy recommendations for ensuring child protection and welfare from an Islamic perspective.

The studies contained in the Scopus and Sinta 1 databases will be analyzed using bibliometrics to identify the distribution of co-authorship in child protection policy research in ASEAN countries between 2014-2024. This analysis is important to understand the collaboration between researchers and the direction of the developing research²⁰. In addition, this study aims to analyze research trends through the co-occurrence of keywords in the Scopus and Sinta 1 databases, which allows researchers to detect keywords that often appear together in related publications²¹. This provides an overview of the main topics that ASEAN research has focused on in child protection policy over time.

The next stage carried out in the bibliometric analysis study research is to search for documents on the Scopus and Sinta 1 databases on November 30, 2024 by entering keywords: Key (child OR children OR adolescent AND handling OR protection OR prosedur AND (Limit To (Affilcountry, "Indonesia") OR Limit To (Affilcountry, "Thailand") OR Limit-To (Affilcountry, "Singapore") OR Limit To (Affilcountry, "Malaysia") OR Limit-To (Affilcountry, "Vietnam") OR Limit To (Affilcountry, "Philippines") AND (Limit-To (Language, "English"))).

The results showed that there were 417 documents found. In the next stage, the researcher limits the year of publication from 2014 to 2024 referring to the establishment of SDGS in 2015, so this study will examine the results of the Scopus and Sinta 1 databases starting from the implementation of SDGS for 10 years. These 417 documents have been limited to the types of articles and subject areas of social sciences, Psychology, and environmental science. Then these 417 articles will be

²⁰ Ali Akbar Khasseh, Faramarz Soheili, and Afshin Mousavi Chelak, "Co-Authorship Network Analysis of IMetrics Researchers," *Library Philosophy and Practice* 2017, no. 1 (2017).

²¹ Hardiyanto Rahman, "Analisis Bibliometrik Perkembangan Penelitian Inovasi Kebijakan Di Indonesia," *Matra Pembaruan* 7, no. 1 (2023).

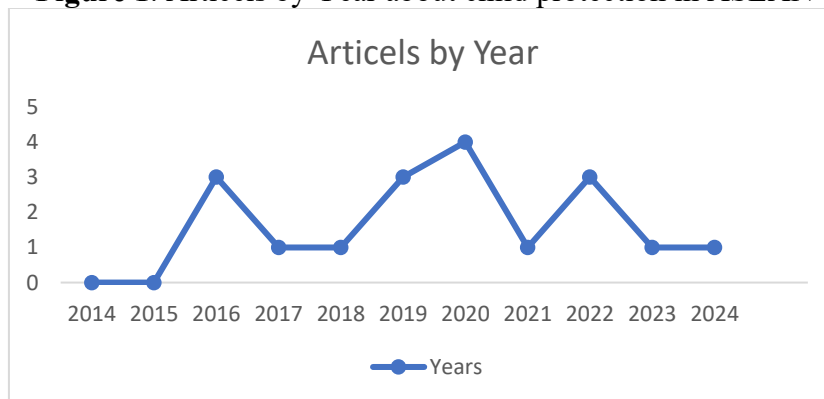
filtered using covidence software. The eligible data obtained as many as 60 articles will be downloaded in .ris format and uploaded to the VOS Viewer application to identify the co-authorship and co-occurrences of the article bibliometric information.

The researcher used VOS Viewer to determine the relationship between countries in the co-author network, organizations, authors, and keywords. VOS Viewer is software for describing and visualizing bibliometric networks. The software uses a mapping technique called VOS (visualization of similarity), which positions items (such as countries, organizations, authors, or keywords) in a two-dimensional space based on their similarity, measured by the number of co-occurrences or co-authorship. The size of items reflects their frequency or importance, while the distance between items indicates their relatedness. VOS Viewer also uses color to group items into clusters, based on a modularity optimization algorithm. Using the VOS Viewer, researchers can identify key actors, topics and trends in the child protection policy field.

Publication Trends

Over the past decade (2014-2024), studies on child protection in ASEAN produced 417 documents, 399 Scopus indexed (scientific articles), and 18 Indexed by Sinta 1 (scientific articles) with the highest number of publications of 49 publications in 2022. The scientific articles indexed by Sinta 1 that are published on child protection, can be seen in the figure below:

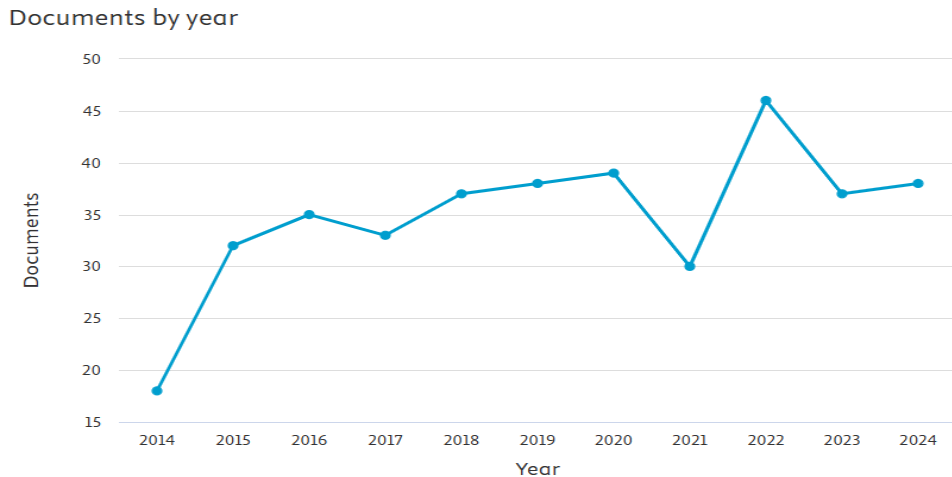
Figure 1. Articles by Year about child protection in ASEAN



Source: Author's Compilation

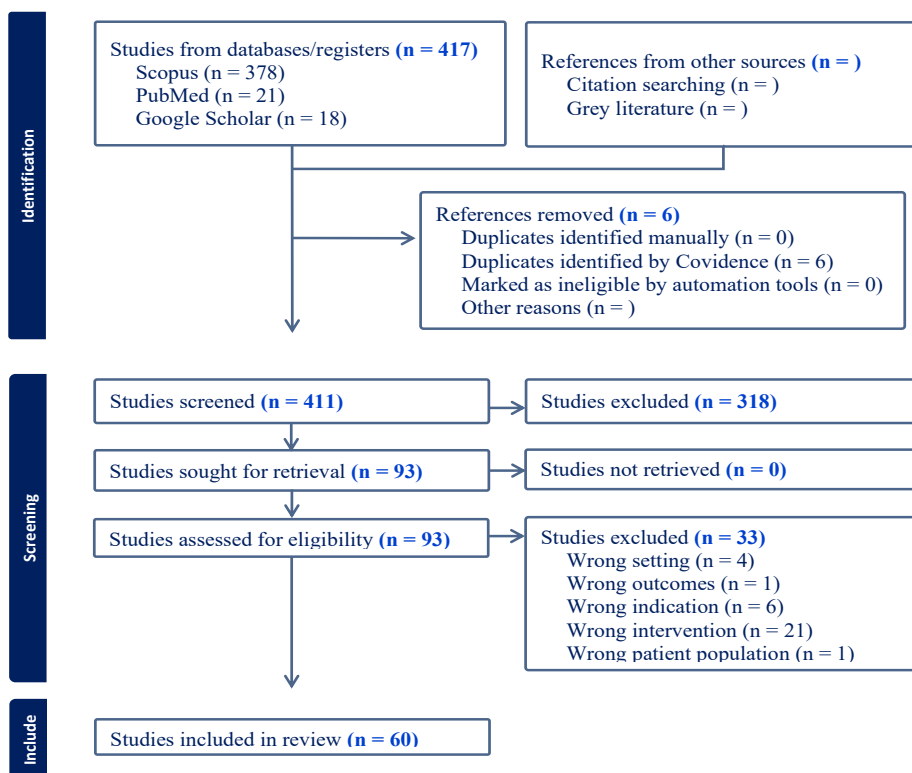
The figure 1 showed the fluctuation of Sinta 1 indexed child protection publications in ASEAN. The same condition also occurs in the publication of scopus indexed articles which can be seen in the figure below.

Figure 2. Dokument by Years about child protection in ASEAN



Source: Author's Compilation

The scientific articles collected from above need to be sorted out to ensure that the data will be used as the main source of reference in understanding child protection in ASEAN. Data was selected by using inclusion and exclusion standards which were then displayed into Prisma (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses) to assess the quality of the article.

Figure 3. PRISMA Flow Diagram

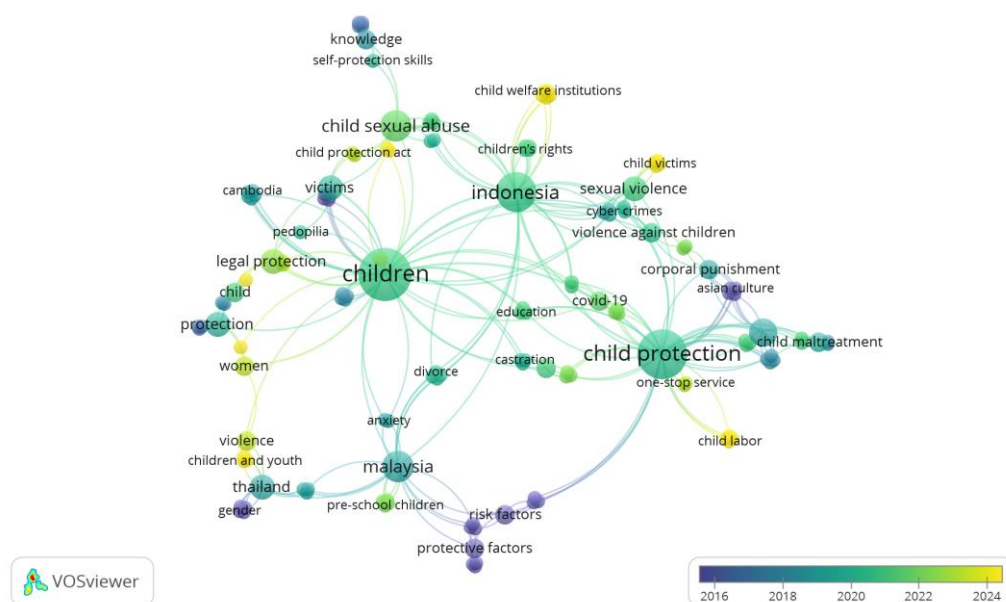
Source: created by the Author using Convident

Based on the PRISMA method that has been carried out, results can be obtained from a total of 417 articles indexed by Sinta 1 and Scopus that have been identified. Then of the 417 articles there are 378 scopus categories, 21 pubmed, and 18 articles obtained from google scholar. Furthermore, 6 articles were excluded due to duplication of data, while 318 others did not meet the inclusion and exclusion criteria. This left 93 eligible articles. Among the 98 articles, 33 were excluded because they did not fit the research setting and were unable to provide the information needed by the author. Finally, there were 60 studies included in the review that were used in this literature study.

The data synthesis process in this study was conducted by comparing literature that had met the quality assessment and inclusion and exclusion criteria. Data synthesis refers to the research objectives, namely child protection in ASEAN countries. Then data extraction, using a table consisting of the name of the researcher, year of publication, research title, research objectives, research objectives, research design, research location, research results, forms of child protection, forms of child abuse, research recommendations.

Furthermore, the 60 articles that have been filtered above are visualized using VOS Viewer to see a map of the scope of research on child protection in ASEAN in the last 10 years.

Figure.4 Scope Distribution Map of Previous Studies



Source: Created by the Author Using the Vos Viewer

The figure above shows that studies on child protection according to the 60 selected articles that studies on children (in general) are quite widely conducted, and it was found that Indonesia is often used as an object of research on child studies. The topics of child protection studies are quite varied, including: child maltreatment, child labor, one stop service, asean culture, violence against children, cybercrime, sexual violence, child victims, children rights, child welfare institution, child sexual abuse, child protection act, pedophilia, legal protection, pre-school children, risk factors, protective factors, gender, castration, education, divorce, covid-19, knowledge self protection skills, and so on. Not only that, most of this research was conducted in 2018-2020. On the other hand, research on child protection is quite rare in 2024.

The Influential Countries of Publication

The scientific articles used in this study represent child protection policies in ASEAN countries with different numbers of articles. The following is a list of ASEAN countries in the number of publications for “Child Protection Policy”.

Table 1. Number of child protection policy publications based on ASEAN countries

Rank	Country	Document
1	Indonesia	30
2	Thailand	7
3	Malaysia	7
4	Singapore	6
5	Brunei Darussalam	-
6	Vietnam	4
7	Cambodia	1
8	Myanmar	1
9	Lao	-
10	Philippines	-
11	Multiple country in ASEAN	4
Total		60

Source: Author's Compilation

The table 1 demonstrates that Indonesia has the first position with the highest number of articles (30 articles) that discuss child protection policies. According to the KidsRights Foundation in The KidsRights Index 2023, Indonesia is ranked 111th in the fulfillment of children's rights and child participation. Then the second position with the highest number of publications is occupied by Thailand and Malaysia and the third position is Singapore. According to The Internet Watch Foundation published a child sexual abuse report for 2022, in Southeast Asia, Thailand ranks 8th with 7,893 cases, closely followed by Malaysia at the 10th position with 7,384 cases.

Child Definition Comparison between ASEAN Countries

Children are a vulnerable group that must be protected by every country in the world. In the UN convention in 1989 that countries in the world must guarantee the growth and development of children, the opportunity to get an education, get protection from the state, be heard, and be treated fairly. Likewise, in ASEAN countries, children have their own definitions that are limited by age limits. As the definition based on the age limit of the child as the following table:

Table 2. Definition of A Child According To ASEAN Member State Regulations

Member State	Definition of a child	Source
Indonesia	“every human being under the age of eighteen (18), including those still in the womb.”	Undang-Undang Nomor 35 tahun 2014 tentang Perubahan Atas Undang-Uundang Nomor 23 tahun 2002 tentang Perlindungan Anak

Lao	PDR “any person below 18 years of age.”	Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Children 2023
Malaysia	“child” – (a) means a person under the age of eighteen years	Child Act 2001.
Myanmar	”child” is defined as any person under the age of 18 years.	Child Rights Law 2019.
Philippines	“”Children”” refers to person below eighteen (18) years of age or those over but are unable to fully take care of themselves or protect themselves from abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation or discrimination because of a physical or mental disability or condition”	Republic Act 7610 “Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act.”
Singapore	“children and young persons refers to persons below the age of 18 years” ³²	Children and Young Person Act (CYPA) 2001
Thailand	“a person below 18 years of age, but does not include those who have attained majority through marriage”	the Child Protection Act, B.E. 2546,2003
Viet Nam	“Vietnamese citizens aged under 16 years.”	Child Law (2016)

Source: Repost Children In ASEAN by UNICEF and has been modified with the latest rules

Based on the table 2, there is not much change in the definition of a child between the UN convention and ASEAN countries. This means that the definition of a child is generally under 18 years old. A different thing is addressed by the country of Vietnam, that the definition of a child is under 16 years old. In 1990 Vietnam was the first country to ratify the UN convention. This means that there are inconsistencies and ambiguities between the adoption of child protection laws in Vietnam and international regulations in defining the age limit of children²². In addition, the age limit set by Vietnam contradicts the ASEAN Regional Action Plan on the Elimination of Violence against Children. According to the Declaration on

²² Dhimas Okta Anugerah and Shannaz Mutiara Deniar, “Upaya UNICEF Dalam Menangani Child Trafficking Di Vietnam Tahun 2017-2020,” *Sang Pencerah: Jurnal Ilmiah Universitas Muhammadiyah Buton* 8, no. 4 (2022).

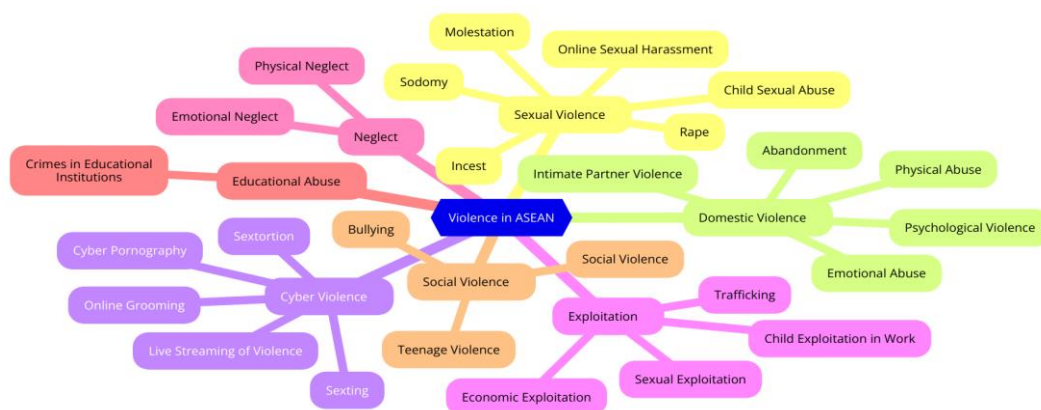
the Elimination of Violence against Women and on the Elimination of Violence against Children in ASEAN, a child is a person under the age of eighteen.

Violence Against Children in Southeast Asia

The phenomenon of child abuse in ASEAN countries, particularly in developing nations, resembles an iceberg, with most cases remaining hidden beneath the surface. Although data indicate the existence of various forms of abuse, including sexual abuse, domestic violence, cyber abuse, exploitation, and neglect, the actual reality is far more widespread and alarming. Ironically, the handling of child abuse in the region predominantly focuses on post-incident responses, such as law enforcement and victim rehabilitation, and rarely emphasizes aspects of prevention or early intervention. This reactive approach, which neglects the proactive dimension, has the potential to exacerbate the cycle of violence and fail to address its root causes, thereby leaving children vulnerable and at high risk.

The various forms of child abuse in ASEAN mentioned in the 60 articles that have gone through the filtering process can be found below:

Figure 5. Forms of child abuse in ASEAN



Source: Created by Author's by Using Presentation and Diagram Generator by AI

A Model for Child Protection Policy Formulation in ASEAN

To explain this case, the author will use the NATO model, to analyze the policy model in the formulation of child protection in ASEAN. This policy formulation model is adapted from Christopher Hood's typology of Nodality, Authority, Treasure, and Organization. Nodality focuses on how governments “traffic in information”, Authority is defined as the use of legal or official power to “determine”, in the sense of “allowing” and “prohibiting”. Or it can also be understood as an interest in the way governments exercise authority, Treasure focuses on an interest in the way governments raise and spend money, and organization focuses on an interest in the way governments directly govern their own

architecture or directly provide services²³. The abstraction results from 60 journals show a variety of child protection policy formulation models in ASEAN, which can be seen in the table below.

Table 3. ASEAN child protection policy formulation model based on NATO typology

Member of State	Nodality	Authority	Treasure	Organization
Indonesia ²⁴	Marriage dispensation application	Strengthening legal instruments	Enhanced funding of social	Deinstitutionalization of the referral process,

²³ Jack Rabin, *Handbook of Public Policy: Theory, Politics, and Methods*, ed. F Fischer, Gerald J Miller, and Mara S Sidney (US: Taylor & Francis Group, 2007); Michael Moran, Martin Rein, and R O Bert E Goodin, *The Oxford Handbook of Public Policy* (United States: Oxford University Press Inc., 2006).

²⁴ Ni Luh Putu Maitra Agastya et al., "Transformation of Child Welfare Institutions in Bandung, West Java: A Case of Deinstitutionalization in Indonesia," *Children and Youth Services Review* 159 (2024), p. 107545; Anak Agung Istri Ari Atu Dewi et al., "The Role of Human Rights and Customary Law to Prevent Early Childhood Marriage in Indonesia," *Sriwijaya Law Review* 6, no. 2 (2022), p. 268–85; Wismayanti et al., "The Problematisation of Child Sexual Abuse in Policy and Law: The Indonesian Example"; Andry Harijanto, Siti Hatikasari, and Juliet Musabula, "The Model of Legal Protection for Children Victims of Domestic Violence Based on Justice," *Journal of Human Rights, Culture and Legal System* 2, no. 2 (2022), p. 100–112; Rahmat Hidayat et al., "Review of Maqasid Al-Syari'Ah Concerning the Fulfillment of Child Rights Post-Divorce in Budi Aji Village, Simpang Pematang District, Mesuji Regency," *Al-Risalah: Forum Kajian Hukum Dan Sosial Kemasyarakatan* 22, no. 2 (2022), p. 213–28; Yusefri, Mu'adil Faizin, and Wahyu Abdul Jafar, "Protecting Child Labor Rights: Maqasid Sharia Framework and Policy Recommendations," *Samarah* 8, no. 2 (2024), p. 1187–1215; Entin Kartini, "Policy Implementation of Child Protection in Bandung City, Indonesia," *Res Militaris* 13, no. 1 (2023), p. 103–14; Yanti Shantini, Elly Malihah, and Siti Nurbayani, "Local Government Efforts in the Protection of Women and Children during the COVID-19 Pandemic," *Journal of International Women's Studies* 24, no. 8 (2022), Article 6; Universitas Islam and Negeri Sumatera, "Legal Protection to Children against Domestic Violence in the Urban Community of Indonesia during COVID-19 Pandemic," *International Journal of Criminal Justice Science* 16, no. 2 (2021), p. 119–30; Amran Suadi et al., "Legal Protection of Women's and Children's Rights after Divorce through the E-MOSI CAPER App," *Jurnal Hukum Novelty* 15, no. 1 (2024), p. 35–52; Fakultas Hukum and Universitas Airlangga, "Legal Protection for Child Victims of Bullying from the Perspective of Child Protection Law," *Yuridika* 39, no. 1 (2024), p. 79–96; Siany Indria Liestyasari et al., "Challenges of Implementing Child-Friendly School Model in Surakarta, Indonesia," *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education* 12, no. 4 (2023), 2130–37, <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v12i4.25149>; Marlina and Mahmud Mulyadi, "Building Restorative Justice in Gampong as a Bottom-up Legitimation of the Protection of Children in Conflict with the Law in Indonesia: Case Study in Aceh," *Cogent Social Sciences* 10, no. 1 (2024); Dani Krisnawati and Ria Restu Wikansari, "Addressing the Challenges in Protecting Child Victims of Sexual Violence within Non-Formal Education Institutions," *Sriwijaya Law Review* 8, no. 2 (2024), p. 249–68; Henky Fernando et al., "The Dual Burden of Child Sexual Abuse: Victim Experiences and Law Implementation Gaps," *Jurnal Hukum Novelty* 14, no. 2 (2023), p. 154–69, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.26555/novelty.v14i2.a27059>; Anak Agung et al., "Balinese Local

	guidelines, Community education, Complaint services, Social rehabilitation services, Spiritual guidance services, Legal assistance services, Repatriation services, Social reintegration services, Education services and Public awareness raising	, Enforcement of customary law, Juvenile justice, Fulfillment of children's rights, Enforcement of Islamic law, Implementation of E-MOSI CAPER application, and One Stop Crisis Center	rehabilitation services	specialized Child and Women's Units within the Police, Cross-sector collaboration, and Strengthening Child Protection institutions or communities
Lao ²⁵	-	One Stop Crisis Centre	-	-
Cambodia ²⁶		Oral health program for children with HIV, criminal law enforcement, One Stop Crisis Centre.		Childcare center

Wisdom ' s Perspective on Legal Protection for Children as Victims and Perpetrators of Sexual Abuse," *Jurnal Hukum Novelty* 14, no. 1 (2023), p. 34–50.

²⁵ Sandra Dewi et al., "Assessing Large-Scale Violence against Children Surveys in Selected Southeast Asian Countries : A Scoping Review," *Child Abuse & Neglect* 93 (2019), p. 149–61.

²⁶ Kimiyo Kikuchi et al., "'Who Cares' Is Key: Factors Associated with Oral Health Status in Children Living with HIV in Phnom Penh, Cambodia," *AIDS Care* 32, no. 4 (2019), p. 462–70; Nationally Accredited and Journal Sinta, "Cybercrime in ASEAN: Anti Child Pornography Legislation," *JILS (Journal Of Indonesian Legal Studies)* 5, no. 1 (2020), p. 57–100.

Malaysia ²⁷	Informed Consent, and Preventing Screen Dependence	Law enforcement, fulfillment of children's rights, child-friendly schools, and policies to protect children working in the entertainment industry	-	Integrated Multi-Agency Services
Myanmar ²⁸	-	Criminal law for child pornography offenders and child victims of cybercrime	-	Enhancing the role of judges in underage marriage cases

²⁷ Muzafar Mohd and Wendy Kliever, "Risk and Protective Factors for Recreational and Hard Drug Use among Malaysian Adolescents and Young Adults," *Addictive Behaviors* 50 (2015), p. 149–56; Zainal Amin Ayub and Zuryati Mohamed Yusoff, "Right of Online Informational Privacy of Children in Malaysia: A Statutory Perspective," *UUM Journal of Legal Studies* 9 (2018), p. 221–41; Nur Jannah, Abdul Ghani, and Siti Aqilah Muhamad, "A Case of Incest in a Malaysian Child : The Ethical and Legal Implications," *Education in Medicine Journal* 13, no. 2 (2021), p. 101–5; Siti Fatimah et al., "Effect of a School-Based Anxiety Prevention Program among Primary School Children," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 16, no. 4913 (2019), p. 1–11; Nor Aida Ab Kadir et al., "Protection of Best Interest : A Study on Children Working in the Entertainment Industry in Malaysia and Their Right to Education," *Social Sciences & Humanities* 29, no. S2 (2021), 43–57; Rusidah Selamat et al., "Dietary Practices and Meal Patterns among Overweight and Obese School Children in Malaysia : Baseline Data from a School-Based Intervention Study," *Ecology of Food and Nutrition* 59, no. 3 (2019), p. 263–78; Azwanis Abdul Hadi et al., "Development and Validation of a New Gadget Addiction Scale (Screen Dependency Scale) among Pre-School Children in Malaysia," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 19, no. 24 (2022), p. 16916; Samitra Parthiban and Khoo Ying Hooi, "Detention of Refugee Children in Malaysia and Thailand : Are Alternatives to Detention (ATD) Workable?," *Journal of Southeast Asian Human Rights* 3, no. 1 (2019), p. 59–80

²⁸ Nyan Linn, Kraiwuth Kallawicha, and Montakarn Chuemchit, "The Use of Corporal Punishment against Children in Myanmar: An Analysis of Data from the 2015 – 2016 Myanmar Demographic and Health Survey," *Child Abuse & Neglect* 131, no. June (2022), p. 105692; Ccredited and Sinta, "Cybercrime in ASEAN: Anti Child Pornography Legislation."

Philippines ²⁹	-	Provision of criminal law for pornography offenders, and One Stop Crisis Center	-	-
Singapore ³⁰	Community education	Legal protection, fulfillment of children's rights, and criminal law enforcement	-	Social support
Thailand ³¹	-	School-based anxiety	-	Collaboration of Jesuit and UNHCR

²⁹ Sri Rahayu et al., “Legal Protection for Children in Cases of Online Sexual Abuse: A Comparative Study,” *Jambe Law Journal* 5, no. 1 (2022), p. 81–122; Ccredited and Sinta, “Cybercrime in ASEAN: Anti Child Pornography Legislation.”

³⁰ Ccredited and Sinta, “Cybercrime in ASEAN: Anti Child Pornography Legislation”; Dewi et al., “Assessing Large-Scale Violence against Children Surveys in Selected Southeast Asian Countries : A Scoping Review”; Daniel Z Q Gan et al., “The Implementation of Functional Family Therapy (FFT) as an Intervention for Youth Probationers in Singapore,” *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 45, no. 4 (2019), p. 684–98; Xin Ying Ngiam and Serena SW Tung, “The Acceptability of Caning Children in Singapore : The Fine Line Between Discipline and Physical Maltreatment,” *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics* 37 (2016), p. 158–163; Mee Lian Wong et al., “Randomized Controlled Trial of Abstinence and Safer Sex Intervention for Adolescents in Singapore : 6-Month Follow-Up,” *Health Education Research* 32, no. 3 (2017), p. 233–43; Gerald Zeng, Chi Meng Chu, and Yirong Lee, “Assessing Protective Factors of Youth Who Sexually Offended in Singapore : Preliminary Evidence on the Utility of the DASH-13 and the SAPROF,” *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment* 27, no. 1 (2015), p. 91–108; Dongdong Li et al., “Predictors of Re-Entry into the Child Protection System in Singapore: A Cumulative Ecological–Transactional Risk Model,” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 38, no. 11 (2014), p. 1801–12; Grace S Chng et al., “Family Profiles of Maltreated Children in Singapore: A Latent Class Analysis,” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 79 (2018), p. 465–75.

³¹ Ccredited and Sinta, “Cybercrime in ASEAN: Anti Child Pornography Legislation”; Parthiban and Hooi, “Detention of Refugee Children in Malaysia and Thailand : Are Alternatives to Detention (ATD) Workable ?”; Pamela Van Der Riet et al., “Student Nurses Experience of a ‘ Fairy Garden ’ Healing Haven Garden for Sick Children,” *Nurse Education Today* 59, no. December 2016 (2017), p. 88–93; Nuttorn Pityaratstian et al., “Randomized Controlled Trial of Group Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Children and Adolescents Exposed to Tsunami in Thailand,” *Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapy* 43 (2015), p. 549–61; Kangsadan

prevention programs to address mental health issues, Fulfillment of children's rights, Dek Thai Kam Sai Program to address malnutritio n in Thai children, social protection system, Child Protection Act and National Child and Youth Developme nt Plan, and criminal law enforcemen t	refugee services, cross-sectoral cooperation, public-private partnerships to jointly formulate policies and solutions to child and youth violence
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Chaowatthanakun, "Cognitive Synthesis of Violence in Children and Youth," *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences* 45 (2024), p.749–56; Timo T Ojanen et al., "Investigating Online Harassment and Offline Violence among Young People in Thailand : Methodological Approaches , Lessons Learned," *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 16, no. 9 (2014), p. 1097–1112; Manasigan Kanchanachitra and Gustavo Angeles, "Impact of a School-Based Nutrition Intervention in Preventing Overweight and Obesity in Children in Thailand," *Journal of School Health* 93, no. 2 (2023), p. 140–47; Abdul Basir Mohamad, Rohanee Machae, and Mutsalim Khareng, "Children 's Protection in the Issue of Hadhanah Based on Islamic Family Law and the Law of Thailand," *Asian Social Science* 12, no. 10 (2025), p. 18–26; Chonnakarn Jatchavala et al., "Child Sexual Abuse , Mental Health , and Legislation in India and Thailand : A Cross-Country Comparison," *Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine* 102 (2024), p. 102655.

Viet Nam ³²	-	Law enforcemen t	-	-
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Source: Author's Compilation

Based on table 3, it is realized that the most dominant child protection policy formulation adopted by ASEAN is Authority, which focuses on the ability of ASEAN governments to use their authority in determining policy decision options, either prohibiting an action or vice versa. The authority used in realizing a child protective environment by all ASEAN members focuses on law enforcement for perpetrators of violence, whether the perpetrators are adults or minors. Law enforcement is quite important as a medium of control over community activities that violate human rights. Not only that, law enforcement in child protection policies can also provide justice for victims and a deterrent effect for perpetrators.

On the other hand, there are also several countries (such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand) that prioritize decision-making by adopting a typology organization, such as increasing collaboration, strengthening service units, and social support. The table above also shows interesting facts, where only Indonesia adopts all four typologies in maximizing child protection in its country, while other countries only adopt 3 typologies, and there are even 2 countries that only focus on authority, namely Lao and Vietnam.

The phenomenon of child abuse in ASEAN countries, especially in developing nations, highlights the urgency of robust child protection policies. Although various forms of abuse are prevalent, existing responses tend to be reactive, focusing on interventions after the fact rather than prioritizing preventive measures. In this context, the principles of Islamic Law offer a comprehensive ethical and legal framework³³. This framework spans prenatal child protection, childcare, and

³² Hoang Nguyen Huy and Luot Van Nguyen, "Short Report : Mental Health Problems among Left- behind Children in Vietnam : Prevalence and an Examination of Social Support and Parent-Child Communication as Protective Factors," *Psychology, Health & Medicine* 28, no. 4 (2024), p. 876–83; Le Thi Nga, "Rights of Child Victims and Child Witnesses in Criminal Justice in VietNam," *Asia-Pacific Journal on Human Rights and the Law* 17 (2016), p. 88–101; Prakash Paudel et al., "Effect of School Eye Health Promotion on Children ' s Eye Health Literacy in Vietnam," *Health Promotion International* 34, no. 1 (2017), p. 113–22; Nhu K Tran et al., "Changes in the Prevalence of Child Maltreatment in Vietnam over 10 Years," *Child Abuse & Neglect* 80 (2018), p. 172–82.

³³ Shella Oetharry Gunawan and Syamsul Bahri, "Impacts of Early Childhood Marriage in Indonesia Viewed from Child Protection Laws Perspectives," *El-Usrah* 6, no. 2 (2023); Ogie Ardiansyah and Masrokhin Masrokhin, "The Tradition of Tepuk Tepung Tawar in Malay Weddings from the Perspective of Islamic Law: A Case Study at Tanjungpinang, Riau Islands," *El-Usrah* 6, no. 2 (2023); Mochammad Rizky Eka Aditya et al., "The Problem of Interfaith Marriage in Indonesia: A Juridical-Normative Approach," *El-Usrah* 6, no. 2 (2023); M, "Protection of Women and Children in the Perspective of Legal Pluralism: A Study in Aceh and West Nusa Tenggara"; Ani Mardiantari and

education, aligning with the objectives of *maqashid syariah*³⁴ and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Integrating these values can strengthen policies and create a holistic approach that not only addresses victims but also proactively prevents violence and ensures the well-being of children as vital national assets.

Child Protection Policies in ASEAN

Violence against children is a crucial issue that ASEAN countries are dealing with. Child abuse threatens a child's basic right to grow up in a safe and secure environment. With the diversity of cultures and legal systems in the ASEAN region, cooperation among ASEAN countries is crucial to effectively address this challenge. ASEAN countries have committed to protecting children's rights through various initiatives, such as the adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Children. This declaration emphasizes the importance of holistic policies that include strengthening legislation, raising public awareness, and developing support services for victims. Not only that, ASEAN's commitment can also be seen in the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Children which was published in February 2016.

In addition, education and strengthening the role of local communities are key in preventing violence against children. Programs involving families, schools and communities aim to build collective awareness and strengthen child protection values. By utilizing technology and cross-sector cooperation, ASEAN can expand the reach of educational campaigns and create a more inclusive and accessible violence reporting system. These collective efforts not only ensure child protection, but also contribute to the creation of future generations capable of contributing positively to regional development. Here are some of the National strategy policies implemented in ASEAN countries.

Table 4. National Strategy Policy Implemented in ASEAN Countries

Negara	Sasaran	National Strategy Policy
Indonesia	Juvenile Justice, Children involved in	1. Guidelines for marriage dispensation decisions
	underage marriage, Service providers, neglected children,	2. Improved service delivery and deinstitutionalization of the referral process

Ita Dwilestari, "Children's Right to Get Exclusive Breastfeeding in the Islamic Law Perspective," *Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam Dan Kemanusiaan* 21, no. 2 (2021), p. 231–46.

³⁴ Satria Juanda, Burhanuddin Abdul Gani, and Syarifah Rahmatillah, "The P2TP2A's Effort to Cope with the Intensification of Sexual Abuse of Children in Perspective of the Islamic Family Law (A Case Study at the City of Banda Aceh)," *El-Usrah* 6, no. 1 (2023); Sulastris and Sovi Septania, "Protection Of Children Victims Of Violence In The Family Perspective Of Islamic Family Law And Positive Law (Study at the Lampung Province Child Protection Institute, the Damar Lampung Child Advocacy Institute and the Regional Technical Implementation Uni," *International Journal of Social Science* 2, no. 2 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.53625/ijss.v2i2.3079>.

	child victims of sexual abuse, child victims of domestic violence, children in conflict with the law, child sexual abusers, child labor, child victims of pedophilia, child victims of bullying, children after parental divorce, elementary school children, children and adolescents in general, children in foster care, children of school age.	3. Funding 4. Community education 5. Strengthening legal instruments 6. Special unit for children and women in the police force 7. Complaint services 8. Social rehabilitation services 9. Spiritual guidance services 10. Legal aid services 11. Repatriation services 12. Social reintegration services 13. Customary law enforcement 14. Juvenile criminal justice system and implementation of diversion and restorative justice for children in conflict with the law 15. Education services 16. Public awareness raising 17. Fulfillment of children's rights 18. Enforcement of Islamic law 19. Cross-sector collaboration 20. Strengthening child protection institutions or communities 21. Implementation of E-MOSI CAPER application 22. One Stop Crisis Center
Singapore	Juvenile delinquents, abused children, heterosexual youth aged 16-19 years old who were sexually active, child protection cases closed between 2002 and 2009, children who experienced maltreatment	1. Legal protection 2. Fulfillment of children's rights 3. Community education 4. Social support 5. Providing criminal law for perpetrators of child pornography and child victims of cybercrime
Thailand	Primary school children, child victims of domestic violence, child victims of violence at school and in the	1. School-based anxiety prevention program to address mental health issues 2. Child rights fulfillment 3. Collaboration between Jesuit and UNHCR refugee services 4.

	community, refugee children, obese children, child rights after divorce, child victims of sexual violence	4. Dek Thai Kam Sai program to address malnutrition in Thai children through school farming, student cooperatives, food provision and management, and health education 5. Social protection system 6. Cross-sectoral cooperation 7. Child Protection Act and National Child and Youth Development Plan 8. Public-private partnership to jointly formulate policies and solutions for child and youth violence 9. Providing criminal law for perpetrators of child pornography and child victims of cyber violence
Vietnam	Rural disadvantaged children, children victims of crime, children in general.	1. Law enforcement 2. Vietnam is not child-friendly
Malaysia	Children (4-17 years old), and children in conflict with the law	1. Law enforcement 2. Fulfillment of children's rights 3. Integrated multi-agency services 4. Child-friendly school 5. Protection of children working in the entertainment industry 6. Informed consent, and prevention of screen dependence.
Cambodia	Children living with HIV, and school-age children	1. Providing criminal law for perpetrators of child pornography and child victims of cybercrime 2. One Stop Crisis Center 3. Childcare institution 4. Access to Health Care
Philippines	Children, and school-age children	5. Providing criminal law for perpetrators of child pornography and child victims of cybercrime 6. One Stop Crisis Centre

Myanmar	Underage marriage, and children of school age	1. Providing criminal law for perpetrators of child pornography and child victims of cybercrime 2. Enhancing the role of judges in cases of underage marriage
Lao	Children of school age	3. One Stop Crisis Centre

Source: Created by author's based on 60 selected literature

Table 4 demonstrates the variety of child protection measures in place, but it also shows that the targets of the policies are also different, with no one-size-fits-all solution to children's issues in ASEAN countries. Interestingly, ASEAN focuses more on addressing child abuse. This can be seen in the government's efforts to choose the nodality option in dealing with the problems faced by children, even the regulations used are almost similar, focusing on law enforcement, fulfilling children's rights, and cross-sector collaboration.

The targets of child protection policies in ASEAN are also varied and dominated by children who are already victims or perpetrators, such as children with HIV, children in conflict with the law, underage married children, child victims of domestic violence, child victims of violence in schools and in the community, refugee children, obese children, post-divorce children's rights, child victims of sexual violence, delinquent youth, abused children, heterosexual youth, neglected children, gadget-addicted school children, child victims of sexual abuse, abandoned children, child laborers, and child victims of pedophilia.

ASEAN should take preventive steps to break the chain of violence against children in schools, families, communities and even in public spaces. ASEAN needs to create public spaces that are safe and comfortable for children. Not only that, ASEAN also needs to decide on the latest cases of child abuse and disclose old cases of child abuse to facilitate governments in their respective countries in carrying out rehabilitative treatment and social reintegration for victims.

ASEAN also should take action against countries that have not maximized their authority in providing maximum child protection, such as Vietnam, which is known as a country that is not friendly to children. Not only that. Thailand also needs to review the value of freedom that is developing in the country, and its decision on marriage equality laws in legalizing same-sex relationships. This decision greatly impacts the normalization of grey gender roles. With many boys playing the role of women by wearing makeup, this will create ambiguity in the future and lead to a decline in the Thai population. Not only that, the "human rights and gender equality" that became the basis for Thailand to legalize same-sex relationships is also not in accordance with the concept of gender itself. Gender theory was advocated by

feminists to demand justice for women, especially for victims of violence against women that was rampant at that time.

The legalization of same-sex relationships can create confusion for the next generation regarding their gender identity and also create new gender violence. Another major impact is on children who will experience fatherless or motherless. To establish preventive measures against cyber violence (e.g. bullying and sexual exploitation) and ensure that these measures are implemented in all environments, including homes, schools, communities and the business sector.

In Muslim-majority ASEAN countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei Darussalam, the application of Islamic Law in child protection policies demonstrates evolving diversity and integration efforts. While all ASEAN member states have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and are committed to regional initiatives such as the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence Against Children (RPA on EVAC), implementation often adapts to local legal and cultural contexts, including Islamic values.

Scholarly publications of ³⁵ indicate that integrating Islamic perspectives on child protection can significantly strengthen policies and practices across ASEAN. This involves developing more comprehensive mechanisms for prevention, early intervention, and child support, crucially involving the roles of families, communities, and religious institutions. Therefore, the application of Islamic Law not only provides cultural and religious legitimacy but also serves as a robust foundation for ensuring the holistic rights and well-being of children throughout the region

Children in ASEAN Member States are active users of the Internet. This development of globalization will also create new violence and problems for children. According to the Digital 2023 Global Overview Report, active social media users for children are 5.8%, then the total population of internet users in ASEAN is 75.6%. It can be understood that out of 75.6% there are 5.8% of children using the internet in running social media. The internet provides significant opportunities for children to access information and entertainment as well as to learn, communicate. These online activities pose unique threats to their safety and well-being, including

³⁵ Ardiansyah and Masrokhin, "The Tradition of Tepuk Tepung Tawar in Malay Weddings from the Perspective of Islamic Law: A Case Study at Tanjungpinang, Riau Islands"; Juanda, Gani, and Rahmatillah, "The P2TP2A's Effort to Cope with the Intensification of Sexual Abuse of Children in Perspective of the Islamic Family Law (A Case Study at the City of Banda Aceh)"; Dewi Magfiroatul Akbar, "Physical Neglect and Mental Violence Towards Children by Parents: An Analysis of Criminal Law," *Rechtenstudent* 3, no. 3 (2023); Moh. Wahyu Al Waris and Ahmad Junaidi, "Perlindungan Hukum Anak Dalam Kandungan Hasil Zina Perspektif Hukum Positif Dan Hukum Islam," *Rechtenstudent* 4, no. 1 (2023); S Septania, "Protection of Children Victims of Violence in the Family Perspective of Islamic Family Law and Positive Law," *International Journal of Social Science*, 2022.

sexual abuse and exploitation, bullying, and invasion of privacy. Not only that, the widespread presence of mobile devices makes online access for children less supervised and often blurs the line between a child's online and offline worlds.

Developing a national action plan to eliminate all forms of violence against children can be done by increasing the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including children, at all stages of the process and ensuring coordination mechanisms for its implementation.

Conclusion

Analysis of 60 articles on child protection policies for the past 7 years in the ASEAN region highlights both the intricate nature of child violence and the multifaceted efforts to mitigate it. Some forms of violence against children that are pervasive in ASEAN include sexual violence, domestic abuse, cyberbullying, exploitation, and neglect. The prevailing approach to policy making is probably best described as a copernican model dominated by nodal governance centered on enforcement sympathetic to legal compliance and children's rights amidst shallow political window dressing. There is an unfortunate lack of investment aimed at proactive case handling strategies in these policies more sophisticated than bare bones post-victimization approaches. Most notably, while conventional policies often focus on postnatal children's rights, there is a striking absence of cross-disciplinary frameworks emerging from Islamic scholarship that proactively encompass holistic regulations for child welfare starting well before birth spanning pre-marital counseling alongside pregnancy planning persisting to responsive parenting focused decisively on character building morally and spiritually rigorous across stages of children's education formal and informal schooling enduring throughout life shaping. Hence this study calls for policy makers in ASEAN countries to rethink their strategies towards protecting children by refraining from centering solely focusing on vulnerable groups but rather inviting multiple advocates into the design process. Further research is needed to understand the factors that influence successful policy implementation and the long-term impact of various interventions.

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