

# The Perception of Child Sexual Abuse Parents about Child Protection Workers Services in Medan City, Sumatera Utara

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**Keyword:** Child Protection Services.

**Abstract:** This research has conducted an overview of the condition of child social services for sexual abuse victims through the perception of parent's victims. This research used a qualitative grounded theory approach with in-depth qualitative interviews on understanding the perspective of parents about child protection worker's services as a response to child sexual abuse cases that happened with their children. This research conducted face-to-face interviews of 4 parents who had received child protection services from child protection workers that called as Satuan Bakti Pekerjaan Sosial Perlindungan Anak (Sakti Peksos PA) in Medan, Sumatera Utara Province, Indonesia. The results of this study describe the child protection workers services seen through the conditions of the implementation of the stages of assistance provided. The study concludes that parents feel that the services provided by child social workers are very helpful for their problems, although some services are deemed necessary to be maximized, especially rehabilitation services. Besides, several phases of assisting are difficult to implement given the need to quickly resolve cases. The conclusion from this study needs to be improved services and more support in the service of children victims of sexual violence.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Child sexual abuse is a never-ending phenomenon in Indonesia. Every year, we still found a lot of child sexual abuse cases that reportedly happened in Indonesia. The number of child sexual abuse victim in Indonesia are also formidable. Child abuse survey conducted by Indonesian Social Ministry in 2013 indicated that each day 1 from 12 boys and 1 from 19 girls in Indonesia were sexually abused (Suharto, 2015).

However, this data could be increase according to one of protection agency in Indonesia that called Lembaga Perlindungan Saksi dan Korban (LPSK), there is a growing number of requests to protect victims of child sexual abuse from 2016 to 2019. The same increasing cases also happen in Sumatera Utara Province, Indonesia. Based on the case responding data from Satuan Bakti Pekerja Sosial (Sakti Peksos PA), the number of child sexual abuse victims in this last three years; from 2016 to 2018; are also increased from 152 in 2016 to 254 in 2018.

Even so, this number certainly cannot yet represent the real condition of sexual abuse against children because this phenomenon is similar to the iceberg phenomenon. The number of cases is only a

small portion of the visible tip in the iceberg, whereas an untreated case is an invisible iceberg that drawn under the water.

The issue of sexual violence is important for Indonesia to think about since children as a young generation are a reflection of the future sustainability of a nation. In other words, the handling of the problem of sexual violence against children will determine the quality of Indonesian generations in the future. This becomes very important considering sexual violence can certainly have an impact on children's development.

The impact of child sexual abuse may or may not be apparent in the early stage but we can state that it is positively harmful for the victims. In short term, it could cause anxiety, fear, nightmares, difficulty in understanding, and health issue and it could be worst in long term because neglected children may suffer a particular behavioral problem such as abusive behavior or phobia. In the worst case, some child sexual abuse victims may be at risk for repeating the abusive behavior when they grew up as an adult (Noviana, 2015).

In addition to the shocks caused by sexual violence, children are generally afraid to report both because of the threat posed by the perpetrators and

also the consequences that must be experienced by children after reporting such as shame and guilt. Besides, the overly legalistic approach in the juvenile justice system often fails to treat children especially for children victims of sexual violence. This certainly adds to its trauma for children victims of sexual violence. Feelings of pressure and even torture when they have to tell and testify about sexual violence they experienced will aggravate the shock experienced by children, especially when they are dealing with a justice system where victims will provide information and testimony during the judicial process.

Furthermore, Suharto (2015) notes that child victims of sexual violence are in a vulnerable condition, lack information about services, have a traumatic impact, and in general the perpetrators come from the immediate environment of the child. The impact of sexual abuse and the harm it does to children can be reduced or mitigated by special care and services from all professions that concern in child welfare. One of the profession that concern with child welfare issues and also play an important role in the child protection systems is Social Workers or also known as Child Protection Workers. Child protection workers in their practices are oriented for the best interest of children and to fulfill their rights. As a profession, child protection workers are designed to identify the condition of child sexual victims in a comprehensive view which contains psychological, legal, social and many aspects that could protect them from further victimization. A core goal for these workers is to provide protection and potential services that could reduce the abuse impact on children.

In Indonesia, one of child protection workers who give an intervention by their services for child abuse victims is Satuan Bakti Pekerja Sosial Perlindungan Anak or also known as Sakti Peksos Pa. Sakti Peksos PA is a child protection worker mandated by The Indonesian Social Ministry to responding child problem issues including child sexual abuse. However, whether the social services provided by Sakti Peksos are in accordance with the expected handling, especially in Medan city where the number of children victims of social violence continues to increase. Based on the urgency and conditions of child sexual violence that exist as well as the potential possessed by the profession of social workers in addressing these problems, the researcher is interested in raising the title of the research "Family Perceptions of Children Victims of Sexual Violence against Social Services of Medan Social Workers Social Service".

## 2 METHOD

This research used a qualitative grounded theory approach with in-depth qualitative interviews on understanding the perspective of parents about child protection workers services as a response for child sexual abuse cases that happened with their children. This research conducted face-to-face interviews of 4 parents who had received child protection services from Satuan Bakti Pekerjaan Sosial Perlindungan Anak (Sakti Peksos PA) in Medan, Sumatera Utara Province, Indonesia. Besides, this research also interviews 3 workers and 1 supervisor of Sakti Peksos PA in Medan to understanding their obstacles in giving the services for the child abuse victim. Data was collected using an interview guide and was analyzed by transcribing and coding the verbatim into themes and categories before it summarized.

## 3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Social Services for Children Sexual Abuse Victims

Social services are a set of activities that are shown to provide the ability for individuals, families, groups and community units to overcome social problems caused by conditions that are always changing. The main thoughts of the definition are (1) the existence of a set of organized activities and (2) the ability of people (individually or collectively) in overcoming problems (Wijayanti in Tamimi and Humaedi, 2017).

Viewed from the perspective of social work, the aid process or social work process is a form of social work practice. As a form of practice of social work, the social services provided will always be related to the social work process. Max Siporin (1997) in Amin, Krisnani, & Irfan (2014) explains that the process of providing services to clients is divided into several stages namely Engagement, Intake, and Contract (Social workers build trust and service contracts with clients); Assessment (Social Workers Analyze problems and potential owned by the client); Planning (Social Worker plans for services needed by the client); Intervention (Service Delivery); Evaluation and Termination (Social Worker analyzes the impact of changing clients after receiving services).

Related to the theory, here are the stages in the provision of social services for children victims of sexual violence that have been carried out by Satuan Bakti Pekerja Sosial Perlindungan Anak (Sakti Peksos PA):

#### A. Engagement, Intake, and Contract

Engagement can be interpreted as the process of building an agreement with the child (and) family to get services within the framework of case management. Whereas Intake is a process to get certainty whether a child and his family do indeed have child problems and therefore require child protection services. A Contract is an agreement between social workers and clients to solve problems in the form of a written agreement (Directorate of Social Welfare in Husna and Saleh, 2017).

In the child protection services that provided by the Satuan Bakti Pekerja Sosial Perlindungan Anak (Sakti Peksos PA), there are 3 ways of how social workers connect with clients at the engagement stage: first, the client comes with an independent awareness to get assistance; second, social workers who directly come down and screening the clients to connect with services; and lastly, by a referral system where clients are referred by relevant stakeholders to obtain services.

For client who engaged through the screening or social worker initiatives, social workers are generally respond to cases based on reports received either through public reports that directly comes, news in the mass media, or reports from Telepon Pintar Sahabat Anak (TEPSA) which is the Social Ministry's hotline to accommodate public reporting on child problems which includes child sexual abuse problem. The public report that came from TEPSA will be linked to the Social Workers Service Unit (Sakti Peksos) in each region through the Rapid Reaction Team called Tim Reaksi Cepat (TRC) to get responded as quickly as possible.

In addition to the process of how social workers connected to the client for the first time, the engagement stage also talks about how the social worker tries to gain client trust and make them feel comfortable to share their problem. In this phase, Sakti Peksos often utilizes assistive media to gain children's trust, such as playing equipment, drawing equipment or occasionally bringing food that is considered to be a child's favorite. Also, social workers often invite children to play or chat to gain trust and build communication with the children.

For the Intake phase, in obtaining certainty about problems and the need for services, Sakti Peksos will provide an explanation of the problems and functions of social services for child victims of sexual violence. Besides, social workers will also explain what services and how long the service will be received to be understood by parents regarding decision making to obtain services.

After the client (through the victim's parents) understands the problem and the need for services, the client through their parents or family will decide to obtain the service or not. Their decision will be agreed in the form of a written service contract containing the client's willingness and awareness to receive the service.

#### B. Assessment

Assessment is the collection and retrieval data used in decision making for the services. Assessment is a key stage in determining each stage of intervention and program success. This stage aims to explore, identify problems, potential, and sources of solutions that exist in the family, group or peers and the community. In other words, the assessment is carried out to identify problems and the need for problem-solving by involving all potential surrounding sources including parents, family, neighbors, and children's peer group.

Social worker assessment involves a variety of procedures that starts from clinical interviews to the use of standardized assessment instruments, observation checklists, psychosocial conditions, information from important people around the client (information from significant others), and analysis of case notes (analysis of case records). Ideally, assessment is a collaboration between social workers and clients, even though the specific language usually comes from professional expertise. The assessment is a wide range and includes an assessment of the potential, needs and social networks of the client that determines the scope and severity of the problem (Ridley, Li and Hill in Husmiati, 2012).

#### C. Planning

In the world of social work and social welfare science today, planning is known as one of the important elements in developing effective services to clients or target groups. Max Siporin defined this stage as a deliberate, rational process that involves the choice of actions that are calculated to achieve specific objectives in some future times. It also is described as policy choice and programming in the light of facts. Projection and application of value (Amin, Krisnani and Irfan, 2014),

This stage is a stage to arrange and develop a comprehensive service for clients that is compatible with the results. The results of the identification of the problems obtained from the discussion, then compiled into one problem formulation and then can be determined specific problems that are used to prepare plans. To determine success, a management program needs to organized the criteria of evaluation in the planning stage.

#### D. Intervention

At this stage, the problem-solving activities are carried out. In addition, in the implementation of this intervention social workers are required to try to actively involve recipients of services in every activity they do. At this stage, the social worker cooperates with what is needed by the victims of violence. The case manager connects the victim to the appropriate source but also emphasizes the coordination between the sources used and needed by the victim by becoming a channel and the main points of integrated communication.

#### E. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Termination

According to Marzuki and Suharto (in Tamimi and Humaedi, 2017), monitoring is the ongoing monitoring of the planning process and the implementation of activities. Monitoring can be done by participating in activities or reading the results of reports from the implementing activities. Monitoring can also be said as the process of gathering information about what happened during the implementation process. The purpose of monitoring itself is to: 1. Know how input sources in the plan are used 2. How activities in implementation are carried out 3. Whether the implementation timeframe is met appropriately or not 4. Does every aspect of planning and implementation go according to which is expected?

But to facilitate our understanding of monitoring needs to be distinguished from the evaluation. Monitoring is monitoring the process and success of the group that is carried out at each stage of the phase, while evaluation can be interpreted as identifying or measuring the overall process and outcome of group activities. The monitoring phase carried out by Sakti Peksos in the service of child victims of sexual violence is a case manager who evaluates and monitors the services that have been provided to victims of violence and the suitability of the implementation of services with the stated objectives. Next is trying to find out the results that have been achieved. Monitoring and evaluation itself are carried out measurably and outlined in the form of a report to see the achievement of objectives.

At the termination stage, the social worker must make a formal termination of service along with a reference whether the child/ client will live with the family or be handed over to the child's social welfare institution (LKSA) if the condition of the child is considered irrevocable to the family for the benefit of the child. However, social workers must always monitor the child/ client through the family. Whereas for children/ clients who need a referral, the institution will make a referral letter to the relevant

institution. The termination steps are preparing a child development report during the mentoring process and preparing a termination/ referral letter to interested parties, can the family or institution that receives the referral.

### 3.2 Parents' Perceptions of Social Services in Medan

#### A. Engagement, Intake, and Contract

Based on interviews conducted with the four informants at the engagement stage, the child's parents claimed to have never heard of the Child Social Worker profession before so they did not try to obtain services independently. The four informants themselves are connected with social workers to receive services because they are referred by relevant stakeholders. Three of the 4 informants namely Mrs. Viona, Mrs. Nurhayati, and Mrs. Kartini claimed to be referred by Law Enforcement Officials namely the police and prosecutors when their child's case was in the process of law. Slightly different, one informant, Mr. Sejahtera, was referred to through the Indonesian Child Protection Commission.

In addition to how social workers can gain client trust, the four informants claimed that social workers often invited their children to communicate and play. Not all children can mingle with social workers, some require time and a special approach to adjust to social workers. As with Alya Putri from informant Ibu Viona, social workers must make several visits and special techniques in gaining the trust of children. Not only the client's trust, the trust of parents or family is also built through social worker's awareness of the problem situation and support or reinforcement in problem-solving. Besides, parents also added that social workers have never committed acts of blaming that they often receive from other parties such as the blame of the Law Enforcement Officials felt by Ms. Kartini or the blame from the family received by Ms. Nurhayati and Mrs. Viona.

For the intake itself, the four informants claimed to get an explanation of their problems and what services were provided by social workers to resolve their problems. The four informants also explained that social workers also held discussions about the hopes for problem-solving and the importance of family participation in problem-solving. Regarding the explanation of how long the service will be provided, the four informants claimed that the social worker did not give a specific explanation about the service length. After explaining, the social worker then asks the parents' willingness to accept social worker services verbally. But this was not made in the

form of a written contract stating the willingness of parents to consciously accept services for their children.

#### B. Assessment

In the self-assessment stage, the four informants who were the Parents of Children Victims of Sexual Violence admitted that the term was still very common for them. However, the four informants claimed that social workers had explained to them about the assessment and benefits of the assessment, especially related to the mandate of the Criminal Justice System which requires the Social Report to be attached to the child's case file as a pre-requisite so that the case could be legally processed. The social report itself is the result of the assessment carried out by the social worker. The social report will be used by the Judge for consideration in decision making.

Social Worker Visits in the context of conducting an assessment according to three out of four informants were carried out more than 3 times and one informant, namely Kartini, said that social workers only visited their children once in relation to the assessment. Even so, the four informants added that outside of the visit in order to conduct an assessment, the social worker actually continued to carry out a question and answer process about the condition and development of her child until the end of the mentoring. He added that Ms. Kartini also said that although social workers only make one official visit related to the assessment, social workers routinely monitor the development of their children via telephone and text and continue to provide reinforcement to their children.

The Social Workers' Assessment itself is carried out privately with Children Victims of Sexual Violence in which the child's parents may not accompany the child in order to obtain the correct information. Furthermore, the four informants claimed not to know the specifics of the conversation between the social worker and her child. However, when asked about what activities are generally carried out by Social Workers and children during the assessment process the four informants answered that at every meeting Social Workers would invite children to play while being seen interviewing children and observing children. In addition to the assessment of children, social workers also interviewed the four informants who were the parents of the children related to differences in the behavior of their children on a daily basis after the events experienced by their children and the parents' and family's hopes of solving their children's problems.

Regarding the results of the assessment, the four informants said that social workers inform them

verbally about the results of their children's assessment at each meeting. Even so, the four informants claimed not to be re-informed of the results of the Assessment as a whole so that the Parents did not know the analysis of the problems assessed by Social Workers occurring on their children as well as the service plan that would be provided by social workers in solving their children's problems. The four informants also claimed to have never been shown the results of the assessment report in written form by social workers.

#### C. Planning

Although at the stage of the assessment Social Workers ask parents' expectations regarding the resolution of their child's problems, in the formulation of an action plan this is not done. During the planning stage, the four informants claimed that the Social Workers did not discuss the planned intervention with the Victim's Parent's Child. In addition, the four informants also added that no case conferences were carried out to their knowledge. Interventions are generally given after social workers coordinate verbally with the parents.

#### D. Intervention

During the intervention phase, all informants received assistance services during the legal process. This legal assistance is very helpful considering the legal procedures that often make families feel depressed. Like the informant Ms. Kartini, who felt the conditions of the trial were tense. Kartini's mother said that in the case of her child, there were a lot of media who tried to report during the trial process. In addition, the perpetrators' families also often put pressure to make the children feel scared. This is what makes him feel this service is very helpful for his family where Social Workers always accompany them during the Legal Process and continue to provide encouragement and calm to their children. Social workers also always ensure the condition of their children is somewhat undressed when undergoing legal proceedings. The same was felt by the other three informants who said that with the assistance of social workers, they felt stronger and were confident that their children would get justice.

For physical health assistance, three informants claimed to access this assistance independently because they only met with social workers after the legal process was running. Physical health itself was a service that was carried out at the beginning when our first problem arose where this service included post mortem, ob-gyn examination and examination other forms of violence. Informants Ibu Kartini and Ibu Nurhayati said that in accessing health services they were assisted by superiors or bosses in their

respective places of work. As for the informant, Ibu Viona accessed health independently. The only informant who received assistance services for physical health was Mr. Sejahtera this was due to the assistance of Social Workers from the beginning. Mr. prosperous said that to access his daughter's health services free of charge accompanied by Social Workers.

Furthermore, for mental or psychological health services, two informants, namely Mrs. Nurhayati and Ms. Kartini, did not seem to have an interest in this service. When asked about psychic services they both claimed not to access these services and focused more on the legal process. Both of them even looked confused about psychological and mental health services. Furthermore, Kartini, whose daughter is a teenager, added that at that time what she emphasized was how to prevent her daughter from becoming pregnant. After meeting with Social Workers, both of them also claimed that their child did not get access to this service. Efforts are made to minimize the impact on the psychological health of their children through the reinforcement provided by Social Workers to their children.

Slightly different, Ibu Viona claimed to have access to services from the police, despite that psychologist services were only given once and were considered insufficient. According to him even though he was given tips and things to do to minimize trauma. their children need expert assistance more intensively in order to eliminate the impact of sexual violence on their children. Ibu Viona considered that the impact of sexual violence faced by her child was not only limited to trauma. Alya is losing faith in other people besides that he is also found several times rubbing his cock on hard objects when not noticed. Furthermore, Ms. Viona hopes that this service can be maximized considering that parental assistance is often not enough to overcome the impact on children due to sexual violence.

The only informant who received mental and psychological health services was the daughter of Mr. Sejahtera. Social Workers help him access psychiatric services ranging from post-traumatic mental health checks to helping them access the costs of treating his daughter's psychiatrist. Mr. Sejahtera admitted that he was very helpful for this service, even though he said that the impact of sexual violence on his daughter continued to this day and made his daughter always have to take medication given by a psychiatrist to calm the effects of trauma experienced by children.

#### E. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Termination

The four informants claimed that they were not invited to discuss and evaluate services or

interventions provided by Social Workers. In addition, the four informants said that social workers had never formally assessed the success of achieving targets. After the case has been accompanied, the Social Worker has never officially conducted a Termination and only reduced the intensity of meetings with clients. The evaluation will conclude whether the intervention needs to be continued, referred to or terminated. After the service is complete, the client can be terminated. Some reasons for termination are 1. The child decides on the intervention process for a clear reason and is known by the parent/guardian. 2. The service process has ended, where the child returns to his/her parents/guardian, obtains adoptive parents or substitute families, and or is referred to other service institutions. 3. Termination process through case conference.

## 4 CONCLUSION

The conclusions of this study are:

1. Parents of child victims of sexual violence assume that the services provided by social workers are very helpful to them especially in providing reinforcement to their families and children.
2. Legal assistance that is one of the services provided by social workers is also considered by the victim's parents to help reduce the pressure faced by the victim during the legal process, especially when the child has to deal with the perpetrator and the perpetrator's family.
3. Victim rehabilitation services are considered by parents to be very lacking and have not been felt by all clients. Though this service is considered to be very necessary to restore the condition of their children as before.
4. Some stages of assistance or service delivery are not carried out by social workers such as official service contracts, re-socializing the results of social worker assessments, involving parents in service planning, and evaluating and terminating services.

## 5 SUGGESTION

The suggestions in this study are:

1. It is hoped that the services of child victims of sexual violence can be improved, especially related to the rehabilitation of victims through the provision of referral services for medical and

- psychological health that can be freely accessed by children victims of sexual violence.
2. Provision of positive therapeutic activities that are carried out continuously to provide positive activities that can divert children from the traumatic conditions they face. A standard procedure is established for social workers to provide services to children who are victims of sexual violence.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the LEMBAGA PENELITIAN UNIVERSITAS SUMATERA UTARA who have provided research funding so that this research can be carried out well. This research was funded by contract number: 4167 / UN5.1.R / PPM / 2019 dated April 1, 2019 in the scheme PENELITIAN DOSEN MUDA in 2019 which has provided research funding so that this research can be conducted and published.

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