Handling child abuse victims through individual counselling at Seruni Semarang Integrated Empowerment Service Centre

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to reveal the forms of child abuse and the individual counselling process carried out to treat child abuse victims at PPT Seruni.

Method – This study is a field research with a qualitative approach and case studies. Primary data sources include informants from counsellors, assistants, victims of child abuse, foster mothers and shelter mothers.

Result – The results of this study explain that there are various forms of child abuse among 14 child clients who are victims of violence. Five of them experienced sexual violence; four other clients were victims of psychological violence; two others experienced social violence in the form of neglect; and three others experienced physical violence. The impact of child abuse on these 14 children varied in severity, namely (1) moderate, (2) serious, and (3) fatal. To reduce these impacts, individual counselling was provided to them. This counselling was carried out in stages, including developing a relationship with the client, analysing the problem, explaining the problem, developing positive behaviour and making changes, as well as evaluation and follow-up to restore the client's condition.

Implication – The implications of this study are to provide a theoretical contribution to the implementation of individual counselling in overcoming trauma in child victims of violence and also the various forms of violence against children.

Originality/Value – This study on the handling of child abuse through individual counselling can contribute theoretically to the practice of individual counselling in handling child victims of violence at Seruni Semarang Integrated Empowerment Service Centre (PPT), as well as the various factors and forms of violence against children.

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Abstract

Tujuan – Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap bentuk-bentuk kekerasan terhadap anak dan proses konseling individu yang dilakukan untuk menangani korban kekerasan terhadap anak di PPT Seruni.

Metode – Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian lapangan dengan pendekatan kualitatif dan studi kasus. Sumber data primer meliputi informan dari konselor, asisten, korban kekerasan terhadap anak, ibu asuh, dan ibu penampungan.

Hasil – Hasil penelitian ini menjelaskan bahwa terdapat berbagai bentuk kekerasan terhadap anak di antara 14 klien anak yang menjadi korban kekerasan. Lima di antaranya mengalami kekerasan seksual; empat klien lainnya menjadi korban kekerasan psikologis; dua lainnya mengalami kekerasan sosial berupa penelantaran; dan tiga lainnya mengalami kekerasan fisik. Dampak kekerasan terhadap anak pada 14 anak ini bervariasi dalam tingkat keparahan, yaitu (1) sedang, (2) serius, dan (3) fatal. Untuk mengurangi dampak ini, konseling individu diberikan kepada mereka. Konseling ini dilakukan secara bertahap, termasuk membangun hubungan dengan klien, menganalisis masalah, menjelaskan masalah, mengembangkan perilaku positif dan melakukan perubahan, serta evaluasi dan tindak lanjut untuk memulihkan kondisi klien.

Implikasi – Implikasi dari studi ini adalah memberikan kontribusi teoretis dalam implementasi konseling individu dalam mengatasi trauma pada korban kekerasan anak dan juga berbagai bentuk kekerasan terhadap anak.

Orisinalitas/Nilai – Studi ini tentang penanganan kekerasan terhadap anak melalui konseling individu dapat memberikan kontribusi teoretis dalam praktik konseling individu dalam menangani korban kekerasan anak di PPT Seruni, serta berbagai faktor dan bentuk kekerasan terhadap anak.

Introduction

In Islam, children are a gift and blessing from Allah SWT that must be cared for as best as possible (Abdurrahman, 2018: 64). Children are a gift and trust from Allah to their parents to be educated and nurtured properly and well. Children are not a source of bad luck, let alone poverty, for their parents. Therefore, Islam prohibits Muslims from neglecting their children, let alone killing them for fear of poverty. Thus, neglecting children or similar acts are prohibited in religion.

Nevertheless, *the* phenomenon *of child abuse* is still common, especially in big cities, one of which is Semarang. Cases of child abuse in Semarang are considered an emergency, as many children in the city experience violence (Mustikasari and Rostyaningsih, 2019: 4)**.** A report by the Semarang City Child Empowerment and Protection Agency (DP3A) from January to the present states that there have been 47 cases of violence against children. The severity of these cases has increased almost daily. Therefore, initial treatment is needed to help children who are victims of violence *(child abuse),* one of which is through individual counselling.

This is because the violence experienced by children will make them emotionally unstable and can also cause physical changes. Physical changes occur due to physical violence such as beatings and so on, which result in injuries and trauma to children. This makes it difficult for children to adapt to their environment (Ardinata, Made. 2019: 437). Psychologically, *child abuse* can affect children's emotional lives, filling them with anxiety and poor emotional control. Their social relationships are also hampered, so they tend to avoid interacting with their peers, or conversely, they prefer to associate with communities that behave badly. Children in such conditions need attention so that the impact of violent behaviour on children can be immediately avoided or at least minimised (Kurniasari, 2019:21)**.**

One way to anticipate and minimise these impacts is through individual counselling services for victims. Individual counselling is expected to help children regain their freedom and develop characteristics such as responsibility, honesty, religiosity, hard work and self-motivation to behave positively, so that children are able to interact with their social environment and be valued by their families and communities (Ulfa, 2018:63). This counselling service can raise awareness among victims and will be very useful in preparing victims when they appear in court (Muttaqin, Murtadho, and Umriana 2016). One institution that has taken on the role of protecting and assisting child victims of violence is the Seruni Semarang Integrated Empowerment Service Centre (PPT). This institution provides several services through individual counselling to restore the psychological condition of victims.

This study on the handling of child abuse through individual counselling can contribute theoretically to the practice of individual counselling in handling child victims of violence at PPT Seruni, as well as the various factors and forms of violence against children. Furthermore, individual counselling is the preferred counselling method used at PPT Seruni in handling child victims of violence, rather than group counselling or other counselling methods, as it is considered to better maintain client confidentiality. Individual counselling at PPT Seruni does not only handle cases temporarily but also provides ongoing support until the case is brought to court. After the case is brought to court, this institution also assists victims to anticipate any adverse effects on their psychological condition. Therefore, a study on this topic at PPT Seruni is interesting to conduct.

The urgency of this study stems not only from the fact that PPT Seruni is one of the active and existing institutions handling *child abuse* cases, but also because the services provided to victims of violence at PPT Seruni are quite diverse and dynamic. Theoretically, a study on the handling of child abuse through individual counselling at PPT Seruni can contribute to the theory regarding the process and implementation of individual counselling for clients and provide an explanation of the various forms of violence against children themselves. Another aspect that is no less important is that this study can provide a factual explanation of the impact or effectiveness of the application of individual counselling in such cases.

Research Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with case study analysis. Primary data sources include informants from counsellors, assistants, victims *of child abuse*, foster mothers and shelter mothers. Secondary data sources are literature related to individual counselling for victims *of child abuse*. Data collection techniques in this study include observation of the implementation of individual counselling at PPT Seruni; interviews with the five types of key informants; and documentation related to the topic of this study. Data validity in this study was checked using source triangulation to obtain more comprehensive research data through primary and secondary sources, as well as technique triangulation through interviews, observation and documentation.

Results and Discussions

Manifestations of Child Abuse

There are various forms of violence that have been handled by PPT Seruni Semarang. These forms include (1) physical violence, (2) psychological violence, (3) sexual violence, and (4) social violence in the form of neglect. The most common form of violence handled there is sexual violence. The study data shows that of the 14 children who were the subjects of this study, 5 children experienced sexual violence, 3 children experienced physical violence, 4 children experienced psychological violence, and 2 children experienced social violence in the form of neglect. Their average age was 4-14 years old.

Physical Violence

The physical violence they experienced included being beaten to the point of injury, kicked, slammed, dragged, doused with water, and even strangled. Children who are subjected to such violence will be greatly affected in terms of their intellectual development. This is especially true for children who no longer receive attention and guidance from their parents and become victims of violence. Furthermore, violence against children will greatly affect their mental state, so it is not uncommon for their performance to decline. This is evident in the following interview:

> The violence they generally experience varies; some are beaten, some are kicked, dragged, pinched, slammed, strangled, and other forms of violence that can injure these children... it just takes a keen approach to get them to talk about all the violence they have experienced. (Personal Interview, MS)

Physical violence, according to Hetherington in Liviana, is a type of physical abuse such as hitting, pinching, pulling hair, slapping, kicking, burning, biting or even pouring hot water on a

child, which can disrupt and hinder the child's mental condition and development (Livana, 2018:98). In line with Heterington's opinion, Andhini and Arifin also state that physical violence can be seen from its effects. These effects can be seen directly on the body, such as bruises, bleeding, and other more severe conditions (Andhini and Arifin, 2019:47).

This view is reinforced by Terry E Lawson's theory in Kadir that physical violence takes the form of beating, abuse, and torture of children using certain objects. Physical abuse has consequences such as physical injuries and can even cause death in children (Kadir and Handayaningsih 2020, 137). Physical violence is a form of violence against a child's physical condition that is carried out continuously to the point of causing injury to the child, thereby affecting the child's growth and development process.

Sexual abuse

The results of a study of four informants who were victims of violence show that the sexual violence they experienced took the form of sexual harassment through direct and indirect physical contact, and even rape. This sexual violence has a very negative impact on children, both physically and psychologically, and can be ongoing and cause prolonged trauma. Therefore, it is not easy to deal with children who are victims of sexual violence. Children who do not know much about sex will not realise it at the time. However, as they grow older, they will begin to realise that they have experienced sexual violence, either directly or through audio-visual images or demonstrations.

This is in line with Ginting's statement that sexual violence against children is a form of torture that occurs against children, whereby the perpetrator obtains sexual stimulation. Forms of sexual abuse against children include forcing children to engage in sexual activities, physical contact using genitals, viewing children's genitals even without physical contact, or using children to produce pornographic images or videos (Ginting, 2019:56). Terry L. Lawson , in (Anggraini, 2022:2749) states that sexual violence can take the form of pre-contractual sexual acts committed by adults against children through touching or showing visual images. Sexual violence can be committed through coercion, threats, or bribery (Sari, Ningsih, and Hennyati 2018:57). The activities carried out do not necessarily involve direct physical contact such as molestation, sexual harassment, or rape, but can also be carried out by showing images or videos to children.

Psychological violence or verbal and emotional abuse (Verbal Abuse)

Three children aged 12, 14 and 8 years old experienced psychological violence. The form of psychological violence they experienced was in the form of hurtful words such as insults and humiliation by people close to the victims, which occurred almost every day, causing emotional pain to the children.

In line with Mahmud's opinion, psychological violence experienced by children is an act that can cause harmful emotional consequences. If children experience continuous psychological violence, it can hinder their development. In addition, children may feel excluded, unwanted, and even develop low self-esteem. This can affect other aspects of their development (Mahmud, 2019:691). According to Jaja Suteja, forms of psychological violence against children include activities such as foul language, insults and humiliation, scolding, and all forms of negative speech that can haunt a child's mind (Jaja Suteja 2019:174).

This is reinforced by Terry E Lewson's theory in (Sitti Anggraini 2022:2749) that psychological violence occurs when the perpetrator uses patterns of communication such as insults or abusive language towards the child. even to the point of committing mental abuse, cornering, labelling, or cornering the child, causing the child to become shy, fearful, or cry when approached by strangers.

Social Abuse (social abuse)

Violence in this study was experienced by two children, aged 10 and 8 years old. One of them experienced social violence in the form of abandonment by their biological mother, while the other experienced neglect by their parents. Abandonment often occurs when parents or caregivers are unable to care for and protect their children properly, fail to provide for their basic needs such as food, clothing and health, and fail to teach them age-appropriate developmental tasks, resulting in the children becoming neglected and all their needs being ignored, such as poor toilet training and an inability to perform age-appropriate developmental tasks.

Anggraini states that social violence can be perpetrated by parents or caregivers after they realise that their child is demanding attention, knowing that their child is asking for attention, and then ignoring the child (Anggraini, 2022:2749). This is reinforced by Terry's theory in Kadir (2020), which states that social violence is *social abuse* or violence in the form of child neglect, such as abandonment or neglect. Neglect can be intentional or unintentional. This violence can occur in parents or caregivers after they know that their child is demanding attention, knowing that their child is asking for attention, and then they ignore the child (Kadir and Handayaningsih 2020, 137).

Factors Contributing to Child Abuse

There are many factors that cause *child abuse*, one of which is the family environment. The lack of attention, affection and incorrect parenting patterns often result in children's rights and needs not being met. In addition, low economic factors also trigger *child abuse*. Several cases handled by PPT Seruni show that the main cause of *child abuse* stems from the family. Most cases of violence originate from family factors, although some cases originate from other sources. However, most cases of violence originate from the family, whether it be physical, psychological, sexual or social violence.

Child Abuse and Neglect

The factors causing *child abuse,* in the form of torture and neglect, occurred in a 4-year-old child (K) identified at the Seruni Child Protection Centre. These factors were divorce and parental neglect, which led to the child being neglected and sexually abused. The same thing also happened in the cases of six other children (A, R, B, R, I and S). They experienced neglect and abandonment by their parents. The neglect and abuse that occurred to them was caused by conflicts between parents, divorce and family economic factors. Children in this situation are vulnerable to becoming victims of violence. As stated by Reed in Paila, there are several factors that cause *child abuse*, namely perpetrators of violence who have poor emotional control, perpetrators and victims who generally lack social support, and the existence of crises such as poverty (Palila, 2017:21).

In line with this, Andhini and Arifin also stated that the factors causing *child abuse* are economic factors such as poor families and insufficient income, as well as parental divorce. underage marriage, which prevents the establishment of mature family relationships, mental disorders in

parents, experiences suffered by parents during childhood, and poor environmental conditions (Andhini & Arifin, 2019:47; Mubarok & Karim, 2022). Djiwandono Abuse occurring within the family environment constitutes the largest proportion of child abuse cases. The types of abuse that occur include physical and emotional abuse   including verbal   and verbal   and   also   sexual violence (Djiwandono, 2005: 81).

Background of Alcoholic Families

The case of violence experienced by a child (G) was caused by the father, who was an alcoholic. Therefore, the child's father did not have mature emotions, could not take good care of him, often neglected him, and could not keep his promises, so that the child no longer trusted him and felt uncomfortable with him (counsellor interview II on 17 May 2022). This is in line with Jauhari's (2010) opinion on the importance of the *social learning* model for parents. The lack of social skills of parents towards their children, such as disliking the presence of children, demanding that children behave like adults (Jauhari, 2010:39), immature attitudes of parents and neglecting the needs of children, can certainly make children feel uncomfortable being around their own parents. As a result, children will often look for other places where they feel they can get attention.

Djiwandono also stated that alcoholic parents have immature emotional conditions, making them unable to express their emotions to their children. Most alcoholic parents lack the physical energy to perform all their duties within the family properly, with the result that children are often neglected and live in chaotic home conditions. In addition, alcoholic parents often make empty promises that they do not keep (Djiwandono, 2005:109).

Family Divorce

Many cases of violence against children occur as a result of divorce and parental conflict . This was experienced by six children (K, A, S, G, B and S). They were victims of violence due to their parents' divorce. Parental divorce causes children's need for affection to be neglected, making them vulnerable to harm due to a lack of attention from their parents. According to Andhini and Arifin, one of the factors causing *child abuse* is parental divorce. Divorce results in children no longer being able to receive love and full attention from their parents, and often their needs are neglected (Andhini and Arifin, 2019:47-48). Parental divorce is stressful for all family members, especially children. If parents have divorced, children will always feel a lack of support in their development, growth, and a deep sense of loss (Djiwandono, 2005:122).

Mixed Family

This mixed family factor is evident in the case of one child (B) who suffered physical abuse from his stepmother and neglect from his mother. This case of child neglect began with the divorce of his parents, after which he was neglected by his mother and then raised by his stepmother. However, because of the child's overly free behaviour and poor development, his stepmother felt exhausted when caring for him. This led his mother to physically abuse him, such as hitting him, making him run around the complex five times, and locking him in his room. His stepmother revealed that she was forced to resort to violence because she no longer knew how to care for him, as he already had bad habits.

This case shows that neglect by the biological mother and the lack of proper guidance and education from her caused the child to develop bad habits, such as poor *toilet training* and difficulty in controlling himself. As a result, when the child was taken care of by his stepmother, she felt overwhelmed by his behaviour. This then became the trigger for violence against the child. The factor of violence due to the child's mixed family was reinforced by Djiwandono's opinion that when parents remarry, the role of the step-parent becomes more difficult, depending on the circumstances of the divorce and remarriage (Djiwandono, 2005:133).

The above explanation shows that the factors causing *child abuse* can originate from an unfavourable family environment, such as parental divorce, parental death, alcoholic parents, and blended families. The main factors causing *child abuse*, based on the explanations of 14 *child abuse* victims, originate from the family, ranging from child abuse and neglect due to economic factors, or bad experiences experienced by parents during childhood, divorce, or conflict between parents.

Individual Counselling for Victims of Child Abuse at PPT Seruni, Semarang City

Based on data from interviews and observations, it can be stated that the counselling process for child abuse victims at PPT Seruni has almost the same stages as counselling for adults, except that counselling for children must use supporting media that has been adapted to the conditions and needs of children to support the smooth running of the counselling process. This is in line with Djiwandono's view that the stages of counselling for children are divided into five phases, namely 1) developing a relationship with the client, 2) analysing the problem, 3) developing and implementing a formula for change, 5) explaining the problem, and 5) therapy (Djiwandono, 2004: 235).

When counselling children who are victims *of child abuse*, counsellors need to involve the child's parents. This is because parents have a significant influence on the child's future development, so it is not enough to only provide counselling to the child . According to Astutik (2018), the stages of counselling for children are divided into several parts, namely the input stage in the form of child *assessment*, setting goals, making agreements with the child's immediate environment, especially the parents, choosing the appropriate media, approaching the child, helping the child to think and behave in a way that makes it easier for them to adapt, and conducting a final assessment and evaluation that also involves the parents and the child's closest relatives (Astutik, 2018:61).

The stages involved in the individual counselling process for handling child abuse victims at PPT Seruni are as follows. First, the initial *assessment* stage. At this stage, the counsellor collects important points regarding the problems experienced by the client. The results of this *assessment* are very helpful and form the basis for the counsellor to choose the appropriate media and strategies to use in the counselling process. This assessment is in line with Astutik's (2018) opinion, which emphasises that conducting *an* initial *assessment* is important by collecting data on everything related to the child and the problems experienced by the child, so that the counsellor can determine the appropriate media or strategies to use in the counselling process (Astuti, 2018:61).

Second, the stage of setting major goals. At this stage, the counsellor will set the main goals to be achieved by the child in the counselling process. Next, the counsellor makes an agreement with the child's immediate environment, especially the parents. At this stage, the counsellor will explore the understanding of those closest to the child, especially the parents, regarding the problem and how they respond to the child. After that, the counsellor will choose the appropriate media for

optimal results in the child counselling process based on age, gender, personal characteristics and type of problem. Once the appropriate medium has been determined, the next stage is to approach the child so that they are able to think clearly and then talk about and express what they are experiencing. The counsellor will then provide individual counselling services. These counselling services are based on the results of interviews and observations and are carried out in five phases.

The first phase is developing a relationship with the client (*rapport*), in which counsellors at PPT Seruni will approach children through predetermined media based on *assessment* results, making it easier for counsellors to become more familiar with the children (counsellor interview I on 16 March 2022). In this phase, the counsellor can build a good relationship with the child (*rapport),* so that the child will feel comfortable and participate fully in the counselling process.

Willis (2017) also stated that counsellors can create meaningful relationships with clients, clarify and define problems, make assessments and negotiate contracts. Success in the initial stage is characterised by openness between the counsellor and the client. In addition, the counsellor can also clarify and describe the problem, make assessments, and negotiate contracts (Willis, 2017: 52-53). Yusuf (2016) also expressed a similar opinion, stating that in the initial stage of counselling, counsellors need to be able to establish a good relationship or *rapport* with clients. (Yusuf, 2016:58).

In this initial phase, counsellors must also be able to build a good relationship with clients, especially those who are victims *of child abuse.* This is so that children are able to express what they are experiencing and feeling. If this initial stage does not go well, then the next stages will also not proceed as they should, so counsellors need to be skilled at building good relationships with children. Counsellors at PPT Seruni apply this principle, so that when a client arrives, the counsellor immediately conducts *an assessment,* then introduces themselves to the client and tries to build a good relationship with the child. In building this relationship, counsellors need a medium, and one of the media often used by counsellors at PPT Seruni is *play therapy.* Djiwandono (2004) also shares a similar opinion, that building a good relationship with children in the counselling process is an important step for counsellors, so that they will be able to encourage children to understand their problems and express their feelings to counsellors and parents (Djiwondono, 2004:235).

The second phase is analysing the problem. In this second phase, children will be encouraged to explore the events that continue to haunt them. Counsellors are required to have the skills of a counsellor, namely the ability to listen, try to understand the child's problems and communicate this understanding back to the child. Through this problem analysis stage, counsellors can identify the problems faced by children (interviews and observations with counsellors at PPT Seruni). Once counsellors have successfully established a good relationship with their clients, they will then analyse and explore the client's problems in greater depth, so that they can encourage children to talk about and express what is inside them.

This is in line with Sofyan's (2017) opinion that this second phase has entered the middle or working stage, where the counsellor focuses more on exploring the problems faced by the client and providing assistance based on a reassessment of the counselee's problems. The aim is to explore and investigate the counselee's problems and concerns in greater depth, maintaining the relationship between counsellor and counselee so that the counselling process can proceed in accordance with the contract (Willis, 2017: 52-53).

Yusuf (2016) emphasises that in this phase, the counsellor will explore the client's problems in three ways, namely listening, understanding, and responding by asking questions, providing information, encouraging, and confronting problem solving (Yusuf, 2016:58). In addition, Djiwandono (2004) reinforces that in this middle stage, the counsellor will analyse the client's problems through encouragement given to the child so that the child can express their problems and the counsellor can explore the child's problems more deeply (Djiwandono, 2004:235).

The third phase is explaining the problem. In this third phase, the counsellor will help the child understand their problem and reduce the confusion in their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour that has been haunting them all this time (interview and observation with counsellors at PPT Seruni). At this stage, children often do not yet fully understand their problems, so the counsellor will help them understand their problems and reduce the fears that continue to haunt their minds. The counsellor will also provide support and motivation to the children so that they can feel calmer.

In the opinions of both Yusuf and Willis, this third phase belongs to the second or middle stage, in which the counsellor attempts to explore the client's problems through three methods, namely listening, understanding, and responding, such as asking questions, providing information, encouraging and confronting problem solving (Yusuf, 2016:58). Meanwhile, according to Willis, this stage is the middle stage, where the counsellor will focus more on exploring the problems faced by the client and providing assistance based on a reassessment of the counselee's problems (Willis, 2017:52). This is in line with what Djiwandono (2004) stated, namely that the third phase explains the problem, where the counsellor tries to help the child understand and reduce the chaos in their thoughts, feelings and behaviour, compare conflicting ideas, work through self-defence and resistance, and understand their actions (Djiwandono, 2004:235). Additionally, in this stage, there are also efforts to help the child identify and understand the hidden meaning of the child, so that the counsellor can interpret the child's symbolic verbal and non-verbal communication.

The fourth phase is developing and implementing formulas for change. During this phase, children will gain new understanding and learn to do things through *internalisation* (taking other people's ideas and applying them to themselves). The counsellor will provide motivational encouragement, *a support system*, and support to the child so that they are able to develop more positive behaviour in their daily life. "...I provide support, motivation, reinforcement for themselves, and *a support system..."* (interview with counsellor II on 11 April 2022).

This is in line with Yusuf's opinion that in the third stage, the counsellor will summarise and assess the results achieved by the client (Yusuf, 2016:58), so that the client has a formula for change that is encouraged by the counsellor through motivation and *a support system*. In line with Yusuf's opinion, Willis (2017) states that this final stage is characterised by a decrease in the counselee's anxiety, a change in the counselee's attitude for the better, becoming healthier and more dynamic, the counselee having a goal for their future through a better and clearer programme, and a change in behaviour for the better compared to before (Willis, 2017:53).

The counsellor will assist clients in developing positive behaviours and making changes. During this phase, children will gain new insights and learn to act through a process *of internalisation*, which is the adoption of ideas from others and applying them to oneself (Djiwandono, 2004:235).

The fifth phase is *follow-up,* where the child is already able to make important changes in their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour. These changes are the result of the child's efforts to translate new

skills and learn how to behave. However, if the child is unable to show any changes in problem solving or if their trauma, fear or anxiety returns after the child has been to court, the counsellor will conduct a review and then provide further counselling. At this *follow-up* stage, the counsellor will monitor the client's condition again by telephone or in person. If the victim or client is still unable to overcome their problems and has not been able to create or implement changes from the previously agreed solution, the counsellor will conduct another counselling session as a way of restoring the client's condition.

According to Astutik, the final stage in counselling children is evaluation and assessment, which is carried out together with the victim's parents (clients) or with people close to the client to find solutions to the problem. If the victim is able to be involved in discussions to resolve the problem, the decision to find a solution will be left to the victim, assisted by the counsellor (Astutik, 2018:61). After all counselling processes are complete, the counsellor will *follow up* on the victim's progress, their behaviour, and how they are implementing the solution to overcome their problem.

Counselling provided to parents has the same stages as counselling for adults, but what is emphasised in counselling with parents is the provision of guidance related to parenting styles that are tailored to the child's condition, so that the agreed solution can be implemented well by the parents and the child can make better changes in the future. However, if the parents do not receive counselling, it is possible that the child's poor condition may return. As stated by Astuti (2018), at this final stage, the counsellor will conduct a final assessment and evaluation, which is done by monitoring the child's development through the parents (Astutik, 2018:61).

According to Djiwandono (2004), at this stage, the child has made significant changes in their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour. These changes are the result of the child's efforts to translate new skills and learn how to behave. Through this internalisation process, the child will gain new strength and be able to solve certain problems and accept others, so that parents, children and counsellors hope that the child can integrate healthy changes during counselling and in daily life (Djiwandono, 2004:235).

The following table relates to the stages of individual counselling:

Stage	Treatment	Initial behaviour	Change
I	Developing a relationship with the client	The child is withdrawn and does not yet feel comfortable with other people	The child will feel comfortable and will participate fully in the counselling process.
II	Analysing the problem	The child is withdrawn and keeps what they are experiencing to themselves.	The child is willing to talk about and express their inner feelings.
III	Explaining the problem	The child does not understand their own problem, feeling afraid and anxious.	The child needs to understand the problem and reduce the fear that continues to haunt their mind.
IV	Developing and implementing a formula for change	The child still feels excessive fear and anxiety.	A decrease in the counselee's anxiety, an improvement in the counselee's attitude, becoming healthier and more dynamic, and the counselee having a clear and better

| | | | future goal through the programme. |
| V | *Follow-up* or follow-through | Trauma, fear, or anxiety | The child is now able to make significant changes in their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour. |

Handling Child Abuse Victims; The Relevance of Individual Counselling and Islamic Guidance

Individual counselling is very important in handling child abuse victims, because through individual counselling, children are able to understand the problems they are facing, find solutions to their problems, and reduce the risk of future problems. Thus, the implementation of individual counselling in handling child abuse victims is very necessary. From the results of interviews with counsellors I and II, it can be seen that individual counselling is very important because counselling can help restore the child's condition if the child experiences obstacles or difficulties in expressing their feelings and reduce the risk of negative consequences in the future (interviews on 11 April and 30 May 2022).

The importance of individual counselling for victims of child abuse at PPT Seruni is: (1) to assist in recovery if there are wounds that make the counselee feel uncomfortable, stressed and disturbed; and (2) to reduce the risk of future problems, because child victims of violence will experience negative impacts, raising concerns that the violence they have experienced may cause them to commit other negative acts. This is in line with what Thompson & Rudolph stated in Sukamto, that counsellors help victims to develop a positive view of themselves. In addition, counsellors can also help victims to recognise, express, and understand the level of their feelings towards the perpetrator of violence. Parents are required to attend counselling aimed at improving their self-concept and social skills (Sukamto, 2019:274).

Individual counselling is essential to help victims recognise, express, and understand their feelings towards the perpetrator of violence and to help clients find solutions to their problems. This counselling process involves several elements, namely the counsellor, the client, the material, the method, and the media. In Islamic counselling, the counsellor is called a mursyid (guide) and the client is called a mursyad bih, the message conveyed or material is called maudhu, the method is called ushlub, and the media used is called washilah (Zaenal and Satriah 2018:101).

Counsellors at PPT Seruni do not directly force clients to behave well, but rather provide guidance to victims regarding all forms of deviant behaviour. Counsellors not only provide guidance so that clients do not engage in deviant behaviour, but also try to make clients aware of their wrongdoings, accompanied by motivational support and encouragement. This is in line with what Lahmuddin Lubis stated in Tarmizi (2016) that Islamic guidance is a process of providing assistance from a mentor or counsellor to a counselee, and in practice, a counsellor should not impose their will and require the counselee to follow all of the counsellor's advice, but rather the counsellor should only provide guidance, direction and assistance (Tarmizi, 2016:28).

Individual counselling is essential to help victims recognise, express, and understand their feelings towards the perpetrator of violence and to help clients find solutions to their problems. This is in line with Tarmizi's (2016) opinion that Islamic counselling guidance can help clients solve problems or find solutions through Islamic values to awaken their spirituality, so that they gain encouragement and are able to overcome the problems they face and obtain a life that is in harmony

with Allah's provisions and guidance to achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter (Tarmizi, 2016:33; Komarudin et al, 2022).

Additionally, during the counselling process, the counsellor will follow up on the client's progress, including how they are resolving their problems, their attitude towards their problems, how they are implementing the solutions agreed upon during the counselling process, and whether the client's behaviour shows improvement or not (counsellor interview II on 11 April 2022). If the client experiences obstacles in carrying out all of this, then this is where the counsellor's role comes in to provide motivational support and a support system to the client, making the client aware so that they do not quickly make decisions and take actions that could harm them in the future.

The importance of counselling is also explained by Moenada, who states that the role of the counsellor is needed to help clients engage in activities that improve their physical, mental and social health, and to keep children away from destructive behaviour in the future (Moenada 2011:62). This is similar to the story experienced by the Prophet Muhammad when he preached to his people. He always acted wisely even when faced with people who hated him. The Prophet Muhammad was always gentle in giving advice and guidance, making him a figure who was respected by many people, not only his followers but also his enemies.

In line with this description, Astutik explains in her research that the stages of counselling are divided into an input stage, which involves assessing the child by collecting data prior to the counselling process and conducting interviews with the child's parents. However, her research also includes evaluation and follow-up efforts for victims of violence. Even if the follow-up reveals that the child's condition has not improved and they are unable to make positive changes, the counselling process will be repeated using a play to assist the child in solve their problems (Astutik, 2018:61).

In addition, another study (Muttaqin et al., 2016) also emphasises that the role of counsellors in such situations is essential. Counselling services are not only used for temporary therapy, but also on an ongoing basis to raise awareness among victims who are in critical condition. Success in this counselling process will be very useful in preparing victims when they appear in court. If there is no counselling process and victims of violence are taken directly to court, this can have a negative impact on their psychological condition, thereby hindering the legal process (Muttaqin et al., 2016). Other studies also state that individual counselling services for children can make them calmer, more sociable and communicative (Aisyah & Prameswarie. 2020:133).

Conclusion

Based on the above study, several conclusions can be drawn. First, there are various forms of *child abuse* identified at PPT Seruni Semarang, namely sexual abuse, physical abuse, psychological abuse, and social abuse in the form of neglect. Second, the impact of *child abuse* on victims at PPT Seruni can be classified into three types of impact, namely moderate impact, serious impact, and fatal impact. The moderate impact of *child abuse* includes local infections, emotional disorders, decreased intelligence, social disorders, aggressive behaviour, social disconnection, and traumatic conditions.

Serious impacts include emotional behaviour, traumatic conditions, anxiety, excessive fear, decreased intelligence and a diminished sense of self, trauma and emotions such as feeling very

fearful and even hostile towards the father. Meanwhile, the fatal impacts of violence include prolonged trauma, poor social relationships and death.

Individual counselling in handling victims *of child abuse* at PPT Seruni in Semarang City is carried out by counsellors through approaches tailored to the conditions and needs of the client. In this study, it was found that counsellors used play media in counselling children, such as emotion cards, hand puppets, sand media, and other children's games. There are five stages in the implementation of individual counselling ( ), namely developing a relationship with the client, analysing the problem, explaining the problem, developing and implementing a formula for change, and the final stage, which is *follow-up* evaluation or follow-up in improving the client's condition.

Follow-up is conducted after the counselling process is complete. Counsellors will monitor the child's progress either through direct meetings or via media.

telephone or direct observation of changes in the client's behaviour in dealing with their problems after a solution was found in the previous counselling process, or through questions asked by the counsellor to the client regarding their current behavioural development. If the *follow-up* results are unsatisfactory, meaning that the client is still having difficulty dealing with their problems, the counsellor will reschedule the counselling session and place greater emphasis on providing support and *a support system* to the client so that they can recover and escape from the problems that continue to haunt them.

Additionally, in this counselling stage, the counsellor will involve the victim's parents to ensure the counselling process runs smoothly. Counselling with the parents is carried out by assessing the parents and providing guidance to them regarding the problems their child is facing, so that the results of the counselling obtained from the parents and the child can be synchronised, thereby finding a solution that does not harm either party. In addition, the counsellor will also provide guidance on appropriate *parenting* styles to be applied, tailored to the child's condition.

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