

NETWORK OF ACTORS IN THE CONTEXT OF SPECIAL PROTECTION FOR CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

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This research aims to explore the role of various actors involved in specific protection efforts for children. Special protection of children is becoming increasingly important in the changing global social and political context. With a focus on the child protection framework, this research analyzes the contribution of various actors such as government, non-governmental organizations, communities and families in efforts to protect children from various forms of exploitation, violence and neglect. The research method used in this research involves a comprehensive literature survey and qualitative analysis of child protection policies and programs that have been implemented in Indonesia. The research results show that the active involvement of various actors, including the government, universities, school agencies, hospitals, police and courts, has an important role in implementing special child protection policies in Indonesia. The involvement of universities and school agencies in educational outreach activities provides significant education regarding child protection issues to students and teachers. Apart from that, the role of hospitals in providing comprehensive medical services, as well as the role of the Police and Courts in ensuring legal protection for victims of violence, has also proven important in handling cases of violence against children. Collaboration and solid coordination between all these actors proves that building an integrated network is essential in efforts to realize overall child protection policy goals.

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INTRODUCTION

Child is a term that refers to humans who are not yet legally adults or have not yet reached the age of majority. The age limit for being categorized as a child can vary depending on the country and the laws that apply in each region (Perbadi, 2018). In general, a child is an individual who has not reached the age of 18, although some jurisdictions may set higher or lower age limits (Maula, 2019).

Children are generally considered as individuals who require special care and protection because they are vulnerable to various different risks and challenges, both physically and psychologically (Indirati, 2014). Child protection involves efforts to ensure that children's basic needs and rights are met, such as the right to education, health, nutrition, a safe and healthy environment, as well as protection from exploitation, violence and neglect (Rusmiyati & Hikmawati, 2018).

The importance of special protection for children emphasizes the need to adopt policies and practices that promote the holistic well-being and development of children. This includes implementing an inclusive education system, protection from various forms of

violence, and empowering children to participate in the social, economic and political life of society (Suharto, 2015). Thus, understanding the concept of children does not only include the age dimension, but also involves aspects of rights, welfare and participation in a broader social context (Kresnawati & Imelda, 2020).

The government has issued a child protection policy through Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection which was later amended to become Law Number 35 of 2014, child protection is a step forward to harmonize all forms of regulations that are not in accordance with the principle of fulfilling children's rights. Law Number 11 of 2009 concerning social welfare, is a directed and sustainable effort carried out by the government to meet the basic needs of every citizen (Wahyudi & Kushartono, 2020).

The government's commitment to increasing special protection for children is reflected in the issuance of Government Regulation (PP) Number 78 of 2021 concerning Special Protection for Children. This step shows the government's seriousness in presenting a clear and measurable legal basis to protect children's rights (Pratiwi, 2022). This PP is an important milestone that indicates awareness of the need for comprehensive and integrated protection efforts for children in Indonesia. By implementing this PP, the government emphasizes that special protection for children is not only a secondary issue, but is a main priority that must be realized through cooperation between sectors and related agencies (Siagian et al, 2022). In its implementation, it is important for the government to monitor and ensure that the interests of children are always the main focus, without prioritizing sectoral ego interests which might ignore the protection and welfare of children (Agustin, 2021).

The principle of continuity and involvement of all relevant parties is also upheld in government efforts. This emphasizes the importance of collaboration between government, non-governmental organizations, communities and families in ensuring special protection for children. The active role of all parties is the main key in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of child protection policies (Hasan et al, 2023). In this context, the government also needs to adopt a holistic and integrated approach in ensuring that children's rights are not only formally recognized in regulations, but also realized in daily practice through strengthening education, health and social empowerment systems (Siskasari et al, 2020). Thus, it is hoped that the implementation of PP Number 78 of 2021 can become a strong foundation for maintaining and improving special protection for children in Indonesia, as well as encouraging the creation of an environment that is safe, inclusive, and supports optimal growth and development of children.

This research was conducted in response to the complexity of problems related to child protection, including but not limited to a lack of coordination between various relevant actors, a lack of understanding of the importance of special protection for children, as well as challenges in implementing child protection policies effectively at local and global levels. By highlighting the role of various actors, including government, non-governmental organizations, communities, and families, the aim of this research is to understand the roles played by various actors, including governments, non-governmental organizations, communities, and families, in specific protection efforts for children.

The benefit of this research is that it can provide in-depth insight into the dynamics involved in child-specific protection efforts. Thus, this research can become a basis for

developing more holistic and effective policies in efforts to specifically protect children at the local and global levels. In addition, it is hoped that the results of this research can provide important contributions to practitioners, policy makers and other related parties in improving special protection for children and supporting their optimal growth and development.

Literature Review

Actor network theory (ANT) is an approach in social theory and research that views objects as an inseparable part of social networks. John Law (2008) developed this theory with the view that society not only consists of individuals and the norms that regulate their lives, but also functions as a network in which scientific discoveries emerge from the relationship between humans as subjects and objects, which may even be inanimate objects. The concept of 'networks' itself has two meanings, namely first as an effort to establish connections to obtain certain benefits, and second, refers to the relationship between computers that are connected to each other. Callon & Blackwell (2007) see 'networks' as a system, implying a totality of units connected through certain relations. Thus, the term network is used to describe patterns of relationships between individuals, groups and organizations, both in formal and informal forms, in various local areas, across regions, as well as in the context of business relationships or between sectors.

Actor-Network Theory (ANT) has had a significant influence on the study of science and technology (STS). Through this perspective, society is understood not only as a collection of individuals and the normative rules that govern their lives, but also as a complex network in which scientific discoveries emerge through interactions between humans as actors and objects, which may exist as non-living entities. The use of the term 'networks' in this theory refers to efforts to establish connections to obtain certain benefits, as well as marking the relationship between computers that are connected to each other. In this context, Crawford (2020) sees 'networks' as systems that describe entire units connected through certain relationships. Thus, the network concept is used to analyze patterns of relationships between individuals, groups and organizations, both in formal and informal contexts, both on a local and cross-regional scale, as well as in the context of business relationships or between sectors.

METHOD

The approach in this research is a qualitative approach, this approach places more emphasis on revealing the meaning and processes of the various factors studied. Qualitative research is also intended to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects holistically, by means of descriptions in the form of words and language in a special natural context and by utilizing various natural methods (Moleong, 2014: 6). In qualitative research, the main instrument is the researcher himself or members of the research team, however, after the focus of the research is clear, it is possible that a simple research instrument will be developed which is hoped to be able to complete the data and compare it with data that has been found during observations and interviews (Sugiono, 2011).

This research uses an interactive data analysis model (interactive model of analysis) including; (1) Data collection is an activity to obtain data that is accurate and relevant to the

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research problem. (2) Data condensation, refers to the process of selecting, simplifying, focusing, abstracting and/or changing data that appears in the full corpus (body) of notes written in the field, interview transcripts, documents and other empirical material. (3) Data presentation, is a collection of information that provides the possibility of drawing conclusions and taking action by looking at the data presentation. (4) Drawing conclusions or verification, in this stage the researcher begins to look for the meaning of things, noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, cause and effect lines and prepositions (Miles et al, 1994).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In implementing child protection policies in Indonesia, the Ministry of Social Affairs plays an important role in formulating social protection policies and programs which aim to provide protection and assistance to children who are neglected, orphaned, or negatively impacted by various social problems. The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection is responsible for enforcing laws related to child protection, handling cases of violence against children, and providing protection and assistance for children who are victims of exploitation, abuse or human trafficking.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Health has a leading role in ensuring adequate access to health for children, including through the provision of safe and affordable preschool health services, immunizations and reproductive health services. The Ministry of Education focuses on providing inclusive and quality education for children, including children with special needs or from vulnerable economic backgrounds. Through integrated education programs, the Ministry of Education strives to provide equal access to education for all children in Indonesia.

Apart from government involvement, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) act as important partners in implementing special child protection programs. NGOs often provide direct support in the form of social assistance, developing informal education programs, and community empowerment in order to increase awareness of the importance of child protection. In addition, civil society also plays a role in providing moral, social and emotional support to children, as well as in promoting a safe and supportive environment for their growth and development. The overall roles of these various actors are interrelated and support efforts to create a safe and supportive environment for children in Indonesia.

The Child Protection Policy in Indonesia is a concrete manifestation of the government's commitment to handling children's welfare holistically. This policy is supported by various stakeholders, including local governments, non-governmental organizations, international organizations, and civil society, who are actively involved in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of child protection programs. With the involvement of various stakeholders, it is hoped that the management of development and provision of services related to child welfare can be carried out in a more comprehensive and integrated manner.

Stakeholders related to child protection policies work together to support the fulfillment of children's rights, including the rights to education, health, protection from violence, and access to a safe and supportive environment. Through collaboration between various parties, including government and non-government institutions, it is hoped that

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child protection efforts will become more effective and integrated, and able to overcome the complex challenges faced by children in Indonesia. In addition, active participation from civil society also plays an important role in ensuring that children's voices and interests are heard and taken into account in every policy and program related to their welfare. In this way, it is hoped that collaborative efforts between various stakeholders can create a safer, more inclusive and supportive environment for the growth and development of children in Indonesia.

Community support through Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community Organizations (Ormas) makes an important contribution in strengthening the completeness of services related to child protection. NGOs and mass organizations that focus on fulfilling children's rights and developing community-based forums or coordination, play a role in ensuring that children's needs and rights are met adequately and fairly. This support helps expand the reach of child protection services, both through providing direct assistance, education, training and advocacy for the benefit of vulnerable and marginalized children.

In addition, it is important to optimize all existing networks at the regional level to ensure the provision of comprehensive and integrated services for children. Cooperation and coordination between various government institutions, NGOs, mass organizations and civil society will enable effective synergy in providing access to education, health, protection and social assistance services for children in need. By strengthening this collaboration, it is hoped that the services provided to children can become more responsive to their needs and rights, and can provide more effective protection against the various risks and challenges they face in everyday life. It is hoped that all of these efforts can create a supportive environment for the holistic growth and development of children in Indonesia.

Other actors who have a significant role in special child protection policies in Indonesia are universities and school institutions. Through outreach activities, universities and schools contribute to providing education to students and teachers regarding issues such as bullying, harassment, how to prevent them, as well as reporting procedures if such incidents occur. Research conducted by Boyko, Wathen, and Kothari (2017) shows that educational approaches must be supported by strong evidence, dialogue with relevant stakeholders, and proactive media strategies to ensure the effectiveness of disseminating information and public awareness regarding child protection issues.

In addition, in handling cases of violence, hospitals play an important role in providing medical services for victims. With the support of comprehensive medical services, hospitals can provide necessary care and psychological support for victims of violence. Apart from that, an active role from the Police and Courts is also needed in providing legal protection and guarantees for victims of violence. Effective and fair law enforcement actions will provide legal certainty for victims, as well as provide a clear signal for preventing and dealing with acts of violence against children.

In the context of policy implementation, the views of Van Meter and Horn in (Bryson, 2004) emphasize the importance of building solid and integrated networks to realize public policy goals. This involves coordination between various government agencies and other relevant parties in an effort to harmonize and integrate various activities related to child

protection. Close collaboration between universities, school agencies, hospitals, police, courts and other related institutions is expected to provide more holistic protection and services for children who are vulnerable and affected by acts of violence.

CONCLUSION

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the involvement of various actors, including the government, universities, school agencies, hospitals, police and courts, is very important in implementing special child protection policies in Indonesia. Through their respective roles, they actively support efforts to prevent and overcome acts of violence and fulfill children's rights. The involvement of universities and school agencies in educational outreach activities provides important knowledge to students and teachers regarding child protection issues. In addition, hospitals provide comprehensive medical services, while the Police and Courts guarantee legal protection for victims of violence. Collaboration and coordination between all these actors is essential in building a solid network to realize comprehensive child protection policy goals. In this way, it is hoped that the role of various actors and integrated networks can create a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for the growth and development of children in Indonesia.

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