Communication in Mentoring Activities Survivors of Sexual Violence in West Sumatera

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ABSTRAK

Ketidaksetaraan dalam perlakuan terhadap korban kekerasan seksual dapat terlihat pada mereka yang tidak memiliki teman untuk berbagi perasaan bingung, takut, dan kurangnya pengetahuan tentang apa yang harus dilakukan setelah mengalami tindak kekerasan seksual. Penelitian ini membahas aktivitas komunikasi para pendamping di Nurani Perempuan dengan korban kekerasan seksual di Sumatera Barat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis aktivitas komunikasi yang dilakukan oleh Nurani Perempuan Women's Crisis Center sebagai pendamping korban kekerasan seksual di Sumatera Barat. Pendekatan penelitian yang digunakan adalah studi kasus, dengan metode pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam dengan para pendamping korban kekerasan seksual di Nurani Perempuan, serta dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa komunikasi antara satu korban dengan korban lainnya sangat unik. Untuk mencapai komunikasi yang baik, pendamping harus mampu membangun kepercayaan korban agar mereka bersedia menceritakan kasus yang dialaminya. Dengan demikian, pendamping yang awalnya aktif bertanya akan beralih menjadi pendengar cerita korban hingga proses pendampingan selesai dan korban mulai pulih.

Kata Kunci: Aktivitas Komunikasi; Nurani Pendamping Perempuan; Korban Kekerasan Seksual

ABSTRACT

Inequality in the treatment of Survivors of sexual violence can be seen in those who do not have friends who talk about feelings of confusion, fear, and a lack of knowledge about what to do after an act of sexual violence occurs. This research discusses the communication activities of companions at Nurani Perempuan with Survivors of sexual violence in West Sumatra. This research aims to analyze communication activities by Nurani Perempuan *Women's Crisis Center* as a companion to Survivors of sexual violence in West Sumatra. This research uses a case study research approach with research data collection methods by conducting observations, in-depth interviews with companions of Survivors of sexual violence at Nurani Perempuan, and documentation. The research results show that communication between one Survivor and another Survivor is very unique. In order to achieve good communication, the companion must be able to build the Survivor's trust so that they want to talk about their case. So that the companion who is initially active in asking questions will become a listener to the Survivor's story until the mentoring process is complete and the Survivor begins to improve.

Keyword: Communication Activities; Conscience Companion for Women; Survivors of sexual violence

1. Introduction

The phenomenon of sexual violence is increasingly visible in everyday life and is now receiving heightened public attention. In both the resolution and prevention of sexual violence cases, communication activities are inseparable. The *Catatan Tahunan* (CATAHU) of Komnas Perempuan (2023) reported that sexual violence, based on Komnas Perempuan's 2022 Complaints data, was the most dominant form of violence against women, with 2,228 cases or 38.21 percent. Said et al. (2017:16) define sexual violence as any act or attempt to engage in sexual conduct, or other acts directed at a person's sexuality, carried out by force, without regard to the existing relationship with the survivor. Forms of coercion may include threats, intimidation, forced sexual relations, and the use of physical violence. Survivors frequently experience fear, remain silent, and carry profound trauma.

On 14 March 2022, the Mayor of Padang, Hendri Septa, declared his jurisdiction under an emergency status for sexual crimes against children, responding to the alarming rise in such cases. Although the Governor of West Sumatra had issued a Circular Letter on 24 November 2021 concerning the acceleration of prevention and response to sexual violence against children, the policy appeared to have little impact on reducing the incidence of sexual violence in a region guided by the philosophy of *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi kitabullah*. At the national level, the government, through the DPR Plenary Session, enacted the *Undang-Undang Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual* (UU TPKS) on 12 April 2022. This legislation is expected to serve as a landmark step in the prevention, handling, and recovery of survivors of sexual violence while also ensuring access to justice.

In reality, however, many survivors deliberately conceal their experiences. Feelings of confusion, fear, and uncertainty about what to do often dominate their thoughts and emotions. Acts of intimidation by perpetrators, combined with feelings of shame, frequently compel survivors to remain silent and avoid communication. Yet, in these moments of instability, there must be actors who actively engage, listen without judgment, and reassure survivors that what they experienced is not entirely their fault.

In West Sumatra, one key organization focusing on the protection of women and children is the Nurani Perempuan Women's Crisis Center (NPWCC). This NGO actively provides accompaniment and recovery services for survivors of gender-based violence, while also conducting public campaigns to prevent sexual violence. NPWCC further engages in policy advocacy to advance women's rights and to challenge discriminatory regulations. Its role in assisting survivors is significant, as reflected in the number of cases handled annually. In 2022 alone, NPWCC documented 69 cases, including 30 cases of rape, 20 cases of sexual harassment, 17 cases of online gender-based violence, one case of sodomy, and one attempted rape.

Despite the strong legal framework of the UU TPKS and NPWCC's active local role, a critical research gap remains. Previous studies have tended to emphasize legal, structural, and policy dimensions of sexual violence responses, but have given limited attention to the micro-level dynamics of communication between companions and survivors. In particular, questions of how companions cultivate trust, negotiate privacy, and sustain long-term accompaniment relationships have not been sufficiently addressed. This gap is crucial, as effective interpersonal communication often determines whether survivors feel safe, supported, and empowered to pursue recovery.

The activities carried out by NPWCC are deeply embedded in communication processes, both with survivors and with their families. Communication provides the foundation for building healthy social relationships between companions and survivors. Effective communication fosters emotional bonds and trust, enabling survivors to open up and willingly engage in the accompaniment process. The success of such communication has a direct impact on the resolution of problems, the strengthening of interpersonal relationships, and survivors' access to public services, including legal aid, psychosocial support, and psychological assistance. Thus, in the context of accompaniment, communication is not merely an exchange of information but a strategic instrument to support survivors' psychological and social recovery.

As an accompaniment institution, NPWCC requires the application of thoughtful, empathetic, and sustained interpersonal communication. Given the psychological vulnerability of survivors of sexual violence, companions must possess communication skills that create a sense of safety and nurture trust. This involves formulating mutual agreements about the accompaniment process, communicating decisions, providing updates on advocacy developments, and reinforcing survivors' self-confidence. Companions are not only messengers; they also serve as active listeners, mediators, and facilitators who ensure that survivors' interests are protected. Accordingly, interpersonal communication in this context entails both ethical and practical dimensions, encompassing confidentiality, empathy, and respect for survivors' rights.

The ethical aspect of communication occupies a central place in accompaniment. NPWCC companions must guarantee that all interactions are free from stigma, discrimination, and tendencies to blame survivors. Questions and

statements must be carefully adapted to survivors' psychological conditions to prevent additional trauma or feelings of guilt. Confidentiality regarding survivors' personal data is equally essential for creating a sense of safety, allowing them to share experiences and express needs more openly. For this reason, communication ethics should be viewed not only as a moral obligation but also as a methodological prerequisite for successful accompaniment.

Given the complexity of these issues and the urgency of communication in accompaniment, research on the communicative practices of companions and survivors of sexual violence is both timely and necessary. NPWCC, as the only NGO in West Sumatra dedicated to accompaniment services for survivors of sexual violence, occupies a strategic position in offering empirical insights and critical data for analysis. This study is therefore designed to investigate how companions at NPWCC build trust, manage privacy, and sustain mentoring communication with survivors of sexual violence, as well as to identify the practices and constraints that emerge in the accompaniment process

1.1. Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study method. This approach was chosen because it is capable of uncovering complex social realities in depth, particularly regarding the communication practices of companions with survivors of sexual violence in West Sumatra. According to Creswell (2018), qualitative research focuses on exploring central issues and phenomena, which are then elaborated in greater detail. In this regard, the study not only describes observable symptoms but also seeks to understand the underlying meanings behind communication interactions between companions at the Nurani Perempuan Women's Crisis Center (NPWCC) and survivors.

One of the distinctive characteristics of qualitative research is positioning the researcher as the key instrument. This means that the researcher's presence plays a central role in the process of data collection and analysis. The researcher is directly involved in observing, listening, recording, and interpreting various types of information emerging from the field. Consequently, the quality of the research findings is largely determined by the researcher's sensitivity, skills, and ability to understand the social context as well as the dynamics of communication that occur between companions and survivors of sexual violence.

The case boundaries were set on mentoring activities for survivors of sexual violence carried out from March to May 2023, ensuring the scope of the study remained clear and measurable. The research was conducted at the NPWCC office in Padang, which serves as the center for advocacy, counseling, and assistance activities for survivors of sexual violence in West Sumatra. The informants consisted of three active companions at NPWCC who each had more than two years of experience assisting survivors. Their profiles are presented in general terms to protect their identities, using initials.

Data collection was carried out in three main stages: observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted directly at the NPWCC office during mentoring activities. Through observation, the researcher was able to monitor communication processes, record interaction dynamics, and analyze situations relevant to the research focus. This observation provided an initial picture of communication patterns as well as the strategies used by companions to build rapport with survivors.

In-depth interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide developed based on the research objectives. Each interview lasted approximately 60–90 minutes and took place in a private setting within the NPWCC counseling room. Interviews were recorded with the companions' informed consent, solely for research purposes. However, direct interviews with survivors were not conducted, following the companions' advice that miscommunication could pose significant risks, especially with survivors who are minors.

Documentation included various written records, activity reports, and archives owned by NPWCC. This documentation helped the researcher strengthen the findings from observations and interviews, while also providing additional perspectives on communication patterns and mentoring mechanisms. The data were then analyzed using thematic analysis steps, including transcription, open coding, categorization, and theme generation. Data validity was ensured through triangulation and member checking with the informants to confirm the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations.

The choice of a case study approach is based on its advantages in revealing social phenomena in a detailed, intensive, and comprehensive manner (Mulyana, 2013). A case study allows the researcher to examine in depth the communication practices implemented by NPWCC, the only non-governmental organization in West Sumatra that focuses on providing assistance services for survivors of sexual violence. In line with Yin (2015), this approach is also highly relevant for research in the fields of communication, sociology, and social psychology because it provides a rich contextual understanding. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute academically by highlighting the uniqueness of

NPWCC's mentoring practices while also strengthening the scholarly discourse on empathetic communication in addressing survivors of sexual violence.

1.2.   Results and Discussion

Nurani Perempuan Women's Crisis Center (NPWCC) is a service agency that works to assist cases of gender-based violence. In its activities, this institution carries out its mandate to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women. Forms of gender-based violence handled by Nurani Perempuan Women's Crisis Center (NPWCC) are domestic violence (KDRT), sexual exploitation, abuse, non-KTP-BG, KDP (Dating Violence) and sexual violence which includes rape, sexual harassment, KBGO 60 (Image Exploitation) and sodomy. The reality is that many Survivors of sexual violence cases do not receive support and ultimately the Survivors are afraid to tell the story. Often cases of sexual violence are only revealed when the Survivor has died, when the Survivor chooses to commit suicide or when the Survivor is battered. This is where the Nurani Perempuan Women's Crisis Center (NPWCC) is here to be a friend of women who are Survivors of violence.

Nurani Perempuan Women's Crisis Center (NPWCC) in its activities provides assistance services to Survivors of gender-based violence, one of which is handling cases of sexual violence, applying five service principles which include confidentiality, siding with Survivors, non-judgmental, non-discriminatory, empowering, and equal. Companions must work based on the principle of service to help Survivors deal with their cases. Especially when the lack of handling of sexual violence cases in favor of the Survivor even causes the Survivor to feel unsafe and not receive assistance services.

During research activities that took place from March to May 2023, researchers found as many as 10 types of sexual violence cases accompanied by companions at Nurani Perempuan. The number of Survivors was 11, whereas in one case, two Survivors experienced sexual harassment. Some cases and communication activities that occurred between Survivors and companions are as follows:

Case 1

This case concerns rape and technology-facilitated sexual violence (online image-based abuse) perpetrated by the survivor's boyfriend. The survivor is a 22-year-old woman who reported her experience to a support organization in March 2023. Initially, communication between the survivor and the companion took place via WhatsApp, through which she obtained the companion's contact information and expressed her intention to seek assistance. At this stage, the survivor shared only limited information through short messages. The limitations of mediated communication prompted the companion to take the initiative of arranging a face-to-face meeting. However, the companion sensed that the survivor was reluctant to share her story because she felt threatened. The companion recognized that a gradual communication approach was essential to building the survivor's sense of safety before moving on to in-person meetings.

In the early phase, the survivor expressed concerns about the safety of the information she shared. Questions such as, *"Is it safe for me to tell my story?"* reflected her hesitation in opening up. The companion then provided assurances of confidentiality, which became the foundation for developing trust. Even when asked which university she attended, the survivor was reluctant to respond. The companion reassured her, saying, *"Regarding your studies, we will of course maintain confidentiality. But if one day an issue arises with your university, we will support you if anything is exposed."* Only after this reassurance did the survivor disclose her university.

In her account to the companion, the survivor explained that the perpetrator used photos and video recordings as tools of coercion. Although she attempted to end the relationship, the perpetrator continued to exert psychological control, including blaming her and coercing her into fulfilling his sexual demands. His promise to delete the recordings was broken, leaving the survivor once again subjected to threats. This reflects a manipulative pattern and a recurring cycle of abuse.

Based on the researcher's interview with the companion, the survivor appeared insecure and ashamed when she first arrived at Nurani Perempuan. For example, when asked, *"May we see what the video looks like?"* she initially refused to share it. The companion did not force her. After two weeks of getting to know each other and engaging in several conversations, the survivor eventually agreed to show the video, as she had come to see the companion as trustworthy. As the companion explained, *"It took almost a month before the survivor was truly willing to open up"* (Obs1). This highlights the importance of time and an empathetic approach in building trust.

During the first direct meeting with the companion, the survivor cried, though not for long. However, when recounting that she had been forced by the perpetrator, she broke down in tears, feeling extremely pressured.

Remembering the events was emotionally overwhelming, as she experienced them as deeply humiliating, even blaming herself for being "so foolish as a woman." To this day, communication between the survivor and the companion remains ongoing, and the perpetrator no longer harasses her. The companion continues to remind her: *"If he threatens you, never comply. Whatever his threats are, do not give in and do not give him the opportunity."* Through consistent communication, the survivor has begun to feel less isolated. Her psychological condition is now relatively more stable, as she has both companionship and a safe space to express her traumatic experiences.

Case 2

This case involved a rape involving a 16-year-old girl. The incident occurred in March 2023. According to the survivor, the perpetrator was her uncle. Sexual violence often occurs in close interpersonal relationships, where emotional closeness or family ties can be factors that make survivors vulnerable to the perpetrator. When the survivor first arrived at the Nurani Perempuan office, she was accompanied by her older brother. The companion introduced Nurani Perempuan, her younger sister, and the survivor to each other. Then, her older brother recounted the incident. Initially, her brother also stated that the police were having problems with the case. The companion then asked when the case was reported and what happened to the survivor.

The companion, who had obtained information from the survivor's older sibling, then asked, "Can we talk to the survivor alone?" She agreed, and the survivor's older sibling left. The child then spoke with her companion, during which the survivor revealed that she occasionally stayed overnight at her aunt's house. However, while the survivor was asleep, the perpetrator physically abused her by touching her body, causing her to wake up. The same incident repeated itself the next day. This continued until one day, her uncle raped her. When the rape occurred, the survivor finally reported it to her mother.

The survivor's deteriorating mental health, as identified through the assessment by the counselor, prompted the family to arrange a referral, as she needed medication due to her emotional outbursts. She was also taken to a psychiatrist and received treatment. Her condition gradually improved, and she became relatively calm, and she has even returned to being active in her school organization. This change in her condition is inseparable from the survivor's own desire to seek treatment, as she felt different.

The communication between the counselor and the survivor revealed that the child was easy to communicate with and willing to open up from the beginning. In fact, the survivor's psychological condition has improved and she is no longer taking medication. Sexual violence has a serious impact on survivors' mental health, which can lead to emotional disturbances that require medical intervention. This underscores the importance of an integrated approach between psychosocial support and clinical management for the ongoing recovery of survivors' psychological well-being.

Case 3

This case of sexual violence in the form of rape involved a 15-year-old girl. In assisting with this case, Nurani Perempuan went directly to the survivor's residence because her family was relatively poor and had difficulty accessing support services. Initially, Nurani Perempuan obtained information about the case from the village secretary. There, the advocate met with the survivor's family and the survivor. As usual, the advocate introduced the Nurani Perempuan institution and its principles. However, by that time, the case had already been settled by the police. The advocate then wanted to know why the case was settled by the police and what was gained from the settlement process, considering that the rape survivor was a child who was raped by four perpetrators at night.

In short, the chronology of this case began with the economic situation of the survivor's family, which was quite poor. The survivor once told her mother that there were outstanding payments at school for books requested by the teacher. However, her mother replied that she did not have the money. Then, the survivor heard that there was an event near her house, so she took the initiative to go to the venue that night and ask for work from a single organ repairman at the event location. However, the survivor did not find work and eventually returned home. On the way home, the survivor met several teenagers who knew that the survivor was in need of work and money. One of the perpetrators then said, "Need a job? If you want to work here, I'll show you. Come with me." The perpetrator then took the survivor on a motorbike to a house, where she was raped.

That night, the survivor disappeared. Her mother searched diligently but could not find her. Her mother then reported the case to the hamlet authorities, and the survivor was eventually found in another hamlet in a weak condition. The case was initially handled fairly quickly and reported to the police, resulting in the arrest of two perpetrators. However, the perpetrators attempted to reach a peaceful settlement, while the other two managed to escape. The police

cited the survivor's illiterate parents as an excuse for the legal process due to the family's limited literacy and formal language skills.

The case was later resolved by paying Rp 20 million to the survivor and her family. This demonstrates how the family's limited literacy was used as an excuse by the police to halt the legal process, resulting in a settlement based on financial compensation. This situation illustrates the weakness of legal protection and reinforces the concept of boundary turbulence in Communication Privacy Management (CPM) theory, which refers to when the boundaries of privacy and the rights of survivors are violated by authorities.

A survivor who had not yet received any healing process from any party was then invited to share her story by a counselor. However, after efforts, the survivor found it difficult to talk and was only willing to share a few things. Observations noted that "during the first meeting, the survivor was mostly silent and only shared a few things. I couldn't force her, just walked with her home" (Obs1). The communication strategy used focused on creating a safe space, validation, and acceptance, rather than forcing the survivor to talk. This aligns with the principles of trauma-informed communication.

The counselor learned that the survivor was often bullied by her peers, not only because of her experience but also because of her family's poverty. This made the survivor feel inferior in front of her peers. Afterward, the counselor and the survivor exchanged WhatsApp contacts. The initial meeting with the counselor did not force the survivor to share much. The meeting was not held at the survivor's home, and the counselor then walked the survivor home with her. The counselor realized that the survivor felt inferior due to her modest home. At the end of the meeting, the companion said that if the survivor needed anything, he could contact him.

The survivor's home, located approximately six hours from Padang City, severely limited direct communication. The last communication occurred when the survivor asked for assistance with her school needs. She wanted to enter high school, but her academic report had been lost. After coordinating with the local government, she finally, received assistance, and successfully enrolled in a public school. At the first meeting, the survivor shared her experience, but it was very difficult to get her to talk more because she was often silent. For communication via WhatsApp, the survivor contacted the advocate first. Due to distance, the advocate and survivor only meet once. Communication in supporting survivors of sexual violence serves not only as a means of sharing stories but also as a strategy for building trust, managing privacy, and supporting recovery through empowerment.

Table 1.1 Summary Table of Cases and Findings

Case Code	Survivor's Age	Key Findings Focus	Illustrative Quotes
Case 1	22 years old	Trust dynamics in assistance communication: the importance of time and empathetic approaches in fostering survivor disclosure regarding technology-facilitated sexual violence.	"It took almost a month before the survivor was truly willing to open up" (Obs1). "Is it safe for me to tell my story?"
Case 2	16 years old	Sexual violence within family relations; family support and medical referral improved the survivor's psychological condition; integration of psychosocial and clinical support is crucial for recovery.	"Can we talk to the survivor alone?" "Her condition gradually improved … and she even returned to being active in her school organization."
Case 3	15 years old	Economic hardship and limited legal literacy intensified vulnerability; financial compensation settlement reflects weak legal protection; trauma-informed communication was necessary to build a sense of safety.	"During the first meeting, the survivor was mostly silent and only shared a few things. I couldn't force her, just walked with her home" (Obs1). "The case was later resolved by paying Rp 20 million to the survivor and her family."

Source: Compiled by the Researcher, 2025

1. **Women's Crisis Center (NPWCC) Women's Companions Listen to Stories of Survivors of Sexual Violence**

Liliweri (2017:37) states that listening skills involve several elements, such as hearing with the ears, paying attention, understanding, responding, and remembering. A person needs to eliminate distractions, ask clarifying questions to the speaker, and avoid prejudice when listening. Good listening skills are indicated by the ability to maintain eye contact and display body language that conveys enthusiasm toward what the interlocutor is saying. Attention is focused

on the words and sentences being spoken. Communication is not merely about speaking, but also about knowing when to become a listener to understand another person's perspective.

One of the main problems faced by Survivors of sexual violence is the absence of friends to confide in and the lack of someone willing to listen. In accompanying Survivors of sexual violence, the companion's attention and focus are entirely directed toward the Survivor, as a form of readiness to welcome the Survivor and to listen to their story. As the companion explained, when the Survivor speaks, the companion needs to listen while also analyzing and understanding the message being conveyed. Listening with full concentration helps the companion obtain crucial information from the Survivor. If the Survivor feels ignored, there is a high possibility that they will withdraw again, preventing the companion from receiving important information. In this process, the companion also gradually provides information to demonstrate their seriousness in assisting the Survivor. This illustrates how the principles of ownership and control in Communication Privacy Management (CPM) operate, where the Survivor retains full rights over their private information, while the companion plays the role of maintaining the balance of privacy boundaries established by the Survivor (Petronio, 2002; Afifi et al., 2020).

The theory of Communication Privacy Management (CPM) explains how individuals make decisions and establish rules about what to disclose to others and what to conceal to protect privacy, taking into account criteria such as gender, culture, and context. CPM assumes that disclosure is not merely about personal matters but forms part of the communication process. The first principle of the theory is that individuals own information about themselves and can manage it according to their will. Second, private boundaries exist, which define the extent to which information is kept to oneself or shared with others. Third, information is concealed or disclosed based on a system of rules involving cultural, gender, contextual, motivational, and risk–benefit criteria. Fourth, collective ownership occurs when an individual's private information becomes shared property based on relational rules and ownership. Fifth, turbulence arises when established privacy rules are violated (Wood, 2013:212). In this case, turbulence often occurs when the perpetrator's family intervenes, threatening the Survivor's privacy boundaries and influencing the legal process.

The sense of comfort that develops allows Survivors to begin expressing their feelings, such as complaints or even statements like "I don't know what else to do." When hearing such statements, companions do not pressure Survivors to immediately escape their situation. Instead, companions reassure them that they are not alone and that they have someone to share their story with. This approach aligns with the principles of trauma-informed communication, which emphasize safety, emotional support, and validation of the Survivor's experiences to prevent retraumatization (Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, State of Victoria, 2022). In some situations, Survivors of sexual violence also express suicidal thoughts out of frustration with bearing the burden alone. However, companions emphasize that problems and stigma will not disappear even if the Survivor ends their life, highlighting instead the importance of facing the challenges together with the companion. The confidentiality entrusted to the companion serves as evidence that the companion has become a haven for the Survivor because of their willingness to listen.

Communication with Survivors of sexual violence, based on interviews with companions at Nurani Perempuan, has distinctive characteristics. The communication process differs from one Survivor to another. In some cases, Survivors hold back information, which is consistent with CPM theory that individuals manage personal messages by deciding what to disclose and what to withhold. When this occurs, companions usually ask, "What's going on? We need you to be honest so the handling strategy is not mistaken." On the other hand, companions also perceive that such hesitation often results from interference by perpetrators of sexual violence. This phenomenon can also be interpreted through uncertainty management theory, whereby Survivors must balance the need to protect themselves with the need to reduce uncertainty through disclosure (Afifi & Afifi, 2010).

New challenges arise after perpetrators are arrested by the police. Often, the perpetrators' families approach the Survivors as if they too are Survivors of the incident, for instance, by crying, expressing grief, and asking the Survivor to withdraw the case. If such efforts fail, they may escalate to threats, with statements like, "I have family in the police, I have this and that. I can report you back for defamation." In such situations, companions need to inform the Survivor: "You need to know this," as it is highly likely to occur. To prevent the Survivor from being influenced by the perpetrators' families, companions actively monitor by asking, "Did the perpetrator come or not?" This is important because Survivors who have been manipulated may conceal information, which in turn affects the legal process. Lies from the Survivor may also be triggered by weaknesses that perpetrators exploit. It is common for perpetrators to deliberately give money or goods to Survivors, especially children, under the condition that the Survivor must not tell anyone about what happened.

Supportive communication thus becomes crucial in this context, where companions provide not only emotional support but also informational and instrumental support to ensure that Survivors remain consistent in pursuing the legal process.

2. Interpersonal Communication Characteristics of Women's Crisis Center (NPWCC) Conscience Companions with Survivors of Sexual Violence

Unique Interpersonal Communication. Understanding who one's interlocutor is serves as a reference point in determining how to communicate so that the message and its meaning are conveyed effectively. The same applies when Nurani Perempuan companions communicate with survivors of sexual violence. Character is the complexity of a person's traits and ethics that determine the quality of behavior and relatively stable characteristics, shaped by daily life—for example, how an individual responds to others (Liliweri, 2017:114). Although service standards exist, accompaniment remains the basic benchmark for communication and relationship-building with survivors. In practice, however, many other factors influence the course of communication, making each survivor, type of case, family character, and the perpetrator's power render every accompaniment process unique, or in other words, possessing its own characteristics. Therefore, in interpersonal relationships, it is important for one to understand personality, empathize, collaborate, instill honesty, and remain open when interacting and communicating (Rahmi, 2021:186). From the perspective of Communication Privacy Management (CPM), this uniqueness is reflected in how survivors negotiate their privacy boundaries. Each survivor has different rules regarding what information they wish to share with companions and what to keep private, thus shaping distinctive "privacy boundaries."

Interdependence. The interpersonal relationship between a companion and a survivor of sexual violence reflects mutual dependence on the attitudes and actions of both parties. Meetings with companions occur not just once but several times, depending on the survivor's needs and willingness to discuss their problems. As cases develop, survivors often contact companions either to share updates or to seek their opinions. Likewise, from the companion's side, whenever a solution is offered, interaction and communication take place, since companions cannot act without the consent of the survivor or their family. Within the CPM framework, this interdependence demonstrates the existence of "co-ownership" of information, where the survivor's secrets are no longer entirely private but are jointly owned with the companion. This aligns with the concept of supportive communication, which, according to Burleson, B. R., & MacGeorge, E. L. (2014), enables individuals to feel more emotionally connected when the burden of information is shared with a trusted party.

Self-Disclosure. According to Adler et al. (2018:22), self-disclosure is essential for two people communicating, as it allows the exchange of thoughts and feelings, serving as evidence of comfort and trust between them. Self-disclosure is also understood as an individual's conscious act of revealing themselves to others. In the context of communication between companions and survivors of sexual violence, this occurs when the survivor feels safe and trusts the companion. From a CPM perspective, self-disclosure reflects a shift of privacy boundaries toward openness. However, trauma-informed communication literature emphasizes that disclosure must be guided by safety, empathy, and validation to avoid retraumatization. Therefore, companions must adjust the intensity of questions and responses to match the survivor's readiness.

Intrinsic Rewards and Interaction. Shared intrinsic values between Nurani Perempuan companions and survivors shape an ongoing relationship. Collaborative efforts to advocate for survivors' rights and ensure perpetrators are held accountable serve as the foundation of this relationship. Interaction emerges through social contact and communication. These processes require both survivors and companions to prepare themselves by managing various external influences so that their shared goals can be achieved. Within the CPM framework, this dynamic has the potential to create "privacy turbulence" when third parties, such as perpetrators' families, attempt to influence survivors into withdrawing their reports. Such turbulence can heighten the uncertainty survivors experience. Uncertainty Management Theory (Afifi et al., 2021) helps explain how survivors choose strategies of avoidance, information-seeking, or postponement regarding the legal process to reduce psychological pressure stemming from stigma and social threats.

Limitations. A limitation of this study is that it has not yet explored in depth the variation of survivors' responses across age, gender, and cultural perspectives. Furthermore, this study has not fully integrated trauma-informed communication approaches and uncertainty management theory into the interpretation of communication dynamics in each case. Future research is expected to expand the scope by comparing accompaniment practices across different

organizations while also assessing the effectiveness of supportive communication in fostering survivors' long-term recovery.

3. The Importance of Trust in Communication Between Women's Conscience Companions at the Women's Crisis Center (NPWCC) and Survivors of Sexual Violence

Trust in general can be seen as a subjective possibility so that someone believes in a subject or object with certain characteristics (Sihabudin, 2013:39). Feelings of doubt and disbelief are basically normal things when communicating with people you have met and communicated with for the first time. However, the continuity of interpersonal communication is also based on a sense of trust between the two communicating parties, namely between the Survivor of sexual violence and the Conscience Woman companion. Trust is not only given by the Survivor to the companion, but also how the companion gives trust to the Survivor, so that a sense of mutual understanding is created, open to one another, able to provide responses and take action towards people they trust.

Trust will also build harmony in the Survivor's relationship with the companion. This harmonization also contributes to achieving goals between the two parties who have agreed to communicate and establish relationships. As explained by the preparatory companion, language style, atmosphere and tone of speech are the basic components when first meeting the Survivor to build the Survivor's sense of trust in the companion. The companion also provides attention by asking the Survivor to rest, asking how he is and feeling, and focusing only on the Survivor while the meeting is in progress. On the other hand, the companion also told the Survivor to honestly convey everything the Survivor knew about this case as it was. If this trust has grown then this will be good for the continuity of mentoring. Considering that the more central the position of trust in a system, it will make it more difficult to make that trust change, but the greater the impact on the system if existing trust changes (Morissan, 2013: 104).

Survivors of sexual violence who have entrusted the mentoring process to companions have dismissed negative prejudices against companion figures. Trust from Survivors and companions will encourage caring activities. For example, the companion will periodically ask the Survivor how things are going and also what obstacles the Survivor feels when facing the legal process. Likewise, the Survivor's sense of trust will be seen when they contact the companion first when they feel they are experiencing difficulties or get information about the progress of the case, for example the process that has been completed or just to tell stories and consult with the companion. With trust, there is a deeper recognition between the two and can even foster a positive impression that supports harmony in life over a long period of time (Hanani, 2017: 55).

To strengthen the analysis, trust in the mentoring relationship can also be interpreted through the Communication Privacy Management (CPM) framework. CPM explains how individuals manage boundaries of private information and decide what to disclose or conceal (Petronio, 2006). In this context, Survivors negotiate their boundaries with companions, and trust becomes a key factor in determining whether disclosure occurs safely. The dynamics of boundary coordination and turbulence—when disclosed information is at risk-become particularly relevant in cases of sexual violence.

Furthermore, trauma-informed communication provides an essential perspective. Companions need to ensure safety, trustworthiness, empowerment, and collaboration when building trust with Survivors (SAMHSA, 2020). This approach aligns with supportive communication practices that emphasize empathy, validation, and emotional support (Merrill & Afifi, 2022). At the same time, uncertainty and stigma management theory explains how Survivors navigate fears of judgment or disbelief, and how companions can reduce these by affirming the Survivor's narrative (Earnshaw et al., 2019).

Based on the explanation above, it generally illustrates how Survivors and companions negotiate privacy rules, as well as how potential turbulence arises when these boundaries are violated.

First, listening to the Survivor's story reflects the principle of ownership of personal information. The Survivor holds full control over the information they wish to disclose, while the companion becomes the co-owner of that information. Turbulence emerges when external parties, such as the perpetrator's family, attempt to intervene or threaten the Survivor. From a trauma-informed communication perspective, companions must emphasize safety and trust to create a secure space, reduce retraumatization, and provide emotional validation.

Second, the characteristics of interpersonal communication affirm that each Survivor has different privacy rules. Cultural factors, traumatic experiences, and power relations influence what Survivors choose to share or withhold. CPM helps explain that turbulence may occur when these rules are not respected, whether by the companion or external actors.

Trauma-informed communication principles highlight choice and collaboration, allowing Survivors to determine the degree of openness they are comfortable with, while enabling companions to support them consistently.

Third, trust functions as the core of privacy boundary coordination. Trust allows Survivors to feel safe in sharing, while breaches of privacy may lead to resistance or withdrawal. Within the CPM framework, this dynamic reflects boundary coordination and turbulence when trust is disrupted. From a trauma-informed perspective, empowerment is key to ensuring that Survivors continue to feel a sense of control over their information and decision-making in the accompaniment process.

As an organization, *Nurani Perempuan* already has operational service standards. These include guidelines, procedures, and shelter management that support all processes of accompanying survivors of sexual violence. The integration of rules and turbulence in CPM with the five pillars of trauma-informed communication—safety, trust, choice, collaboration, and empowerment—strengthens the effectiveness of accompaniment and helps maintain a balance between privacy protection and the psychosocial recovery of Survivors.

1.3.   Conclusion

These findings indicate that communication in the accompaniment of sexual violence Survivors by Nurani Perempuan cannot rely on a standardized approach. Instead, communication must be adapted to each Survivor's background, lived experiences, and psychological condition. Such diversity highlights that the accompaniment process is inherently complex, requiring individualized strategies that acknowledge the uniqueness of every Survivor's situation.

This underscores a crucial implication for practice: effective communication in Survivor accompaniment require a flexible and trauma-informed framework. Within this framework, principles such as trust, safety, and ethical sensitivity become fundamental elements. Companions must recognize that without these foundations, Survivors are less likely to feel secure enough to disclose their experiences, which can hinder both recovery and legal processes.

In practice, this means that companions are expected to go beyond technical procedures. They must actively integrate empathy, maintain confidentiality, and demonstrate adaptability in every interaction. By fostering a supportive environment, companions can reduce the risk of retraumatization and provide Survivors with the psychological space necessary to regain a sense of control over their lives.

Ultimately, communication in this context functions not merely as an exchange of information but also as a therapeutic tool. It supports Survivors' recovery, promotes empowerment, and strengthens resilience. When applied systematically, trauma-informed communication can transform the accompaniment process into a space of healing, ensuring that Survivors are not only heard but also empowered to rebuild their lives with dignity.

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