**SW2**

**Interviewer:** Good morning

**Interviewee:** Good morning, how are you?

**Interviewer:** I am fine and I hope you are doing well

**Interviewee:** Grace is sustaining me.

**Interviewer:** I’m one of the interviewers for impact project concerning the SOPs on Child Maintenance and Case Management and the practice research is to create a new checklist or review the current SOP’s being used by the social welfare department to know which part to improve and other add on.

**Demographics**

**Age:** 37 years

**Educational background:** I have a diploma in social work and I intend to further my studies.

**Duration of being a social worker:** 10 years

**Duration of working on child non-maintenance cases:** I have officially worked on child maintenance cases for 4 years.

**Interviewer:** You mentioned earlier of working for 10 years as a social worker, where was your first placement office when you started working?

**Interviewee:** My first placement area was Tema and then I was transferred to the Accra Metro office and then transferred back again to Tema where I’m currently at now.

**Interviewer:** I want to know your experience of using the case management SOPs.

**Interviewee:** It’s okay, easier to use and simplifies our work. Initially we used to record cases on an official sheet. We had to gather a lot of information hence writing lengthy which made it cumbersome and clumsy but with current SOPs being used have made it simple and easy to use.

**Interviewer:** How and when do you use the case management SOPs?

**Interviewee:** I use it anytime I have child maintenance cases because it’s the most cases reported to us. Hence whenever there is a case of child neglect reported us, that is any of the parents not performing their responsibilities to the child, I first of all use the SOPs involving child maintenance.

**Interviewer:** What do you think about the need to create a checklist dedicated to assessing child maintenance cases?

**Interviewee:** Though the current SOP is okay to use, there are certain gaps that needs to be filled. We are limited to the complainant’s information details, that of the care giver and the respondent which is the father. For instance, in the current SOP, it only asks of the client’s marital status but does not probe further to ask the duration they’ve been either married or separated.

**Interviewer:** I would like to know why you want the aspect of marriage duration to be included in the checklist?

**Interviewee:** As I earlier stated, during a case conference, it’s vital for us to know the background of clients’ relationship before we tackle the issue at hand. When all these information such as their type of marriage, year of marriage, duration of marriage and/or of separation is included, all we have to do is tick but as the current SOP excludes all the above-mentioned data it means we need to write this down.

**Interviewer:** What are the key issues you consider when handling child maintenance cases?

**Interviewee:** First of all, I look at income level of the respondent who is the father before any decision is made. I also find out the challenges that impedes his inability to perform his responsibilities which could be as a result of unemployment, family interference, a deliberate act, or as a cause of the woman’s attitude.

The next thing is to concentrate on the child in question. This is where I determine if the child is receiving all his/her basic needs of life such as food, clothing, shelter, good parenting, education and health care. These are the issues I tackle to make sure that children lacking any of these needs are being best provided for.

When handling maintenance cases I also look at the relationship among both parents. I encourage both parents to have a good relationship and communication with each other in order not to affect the child negatively.

**Interviewer:** How different would you want a child maintenance assessment checklist to be from the case management SOP?

**Interviewee**: I personally don’t have any problem with the two but I think the current SOP should be maintained whiles the gaps I mentioned earlier that exists needs to be filled. Detailed questions under marital status such as the type of marriage, duration, among others which is excluded in the current SOPs should be updated.

**Interviewer:** What are the challenges you encounter using the child maintenance cases?

**Interviewee:** With cases such as child abandonment, it becomes a challenge in getting necessary information form the missing child in question hence difficult to trace their homes and parents. With the current SOP forms, it includes assessment which should be done on the missing child and the only source of information is from the child who at this juncture does not have the vital information needed to even place them in shelter homes.

When it concerns child abuse, we all know the abused child in question must be in entrusted to another family member/ next of kin to cater for them but sometimes they are not willing to accept the child hence posing a challenge for us.

Also, when it comes to maintenance cases, after the ruling and decision have been made and agreed on by both parties, we have realised that, the fathers start performing their duties for about 3 months and then stops but when they are called for review, they fail to show up. Most often such cases are referred to the court but the end result is not favourable to the child in question which also becomes a challenge.

Another challenge I face is family interference. After case have been resolved amicably with both parties, they are often times influenced by family members to go against decisions and agreements that were made.

**Interviewer:** Does it mean that the women sometimes have the financial capability to take care of the child but because of the fees they wouldn’t?

**Interviewee:** Yes, there are certain instances like that where the complainants (woman) report cases with the intention of punishing the man**.** When I receive such cases, I advise the women to perform the additional responsibilities, make the necessary expenses and then send receipts to the office which would be ensured that the man repays.

**Interviewer:** What kind of information do you want to be included in the child maintenance assessment checklist?

**Interviewee:** Some of the information to include are in-depth information on marital status such as if it’s ordinance, customary, cohabitation, duration of the marriage and/separation.

**Interviewer:** This have been an insightful interview. Thank you so much for your time and God bless you.

**Interviewee:** Thank you as well and God bless us all.