



SEXUAL HARASSMENT EXPERIENCES AMONG VISUALLY IMPAIRED MALE ADULTS WORKING AS MASSEURS IN PERTUNI COMMUNITY IN SEMARANG

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ABSTRACT

Data shows that Central Java ranks 6th for the number of people with disabilities in Indonesia. The Indonesian Union for the Blind (PERTUNI) community in Semarang reported having 105 people as its members. One of the problems that occurs amongst people in PERTUNI is sexual harassment, which results in a negative impact on both their physical and psychological health. This study aimed to identify sexual harassment experiences among visually impaired (blind) adults working as masseurs in the PERTUNI community, Semarang. This research was a qualitative study with a phenomenological approach. The participants were six blind people selected using a purposive sampling technique. The results showed six themes, i.e., helplessness, the fulfilment of daily needs, harassment, the potential for abuse, disruption of psychological health and avoiding immoral acts. This study concluded that most blind people working as masseurs had experienced sexual harassment in various forms. It is recommended that PERTUNI provides sexual health education as a preventive action to avoid sexual harassment.

Keywords: Visually impaired, sexual harassment, masseurs

ABSTRAK

Penyandang disabilitas di Jawa Tengah menempati urutan ke-6 di Indonesia. Pada komunitas PERTUNI Semarang terdapat 105 anggota tunanetra. Salah satu masalah yang terjadi pada difabel di PERTUNI adalah pelecehan seksual yang memberikan dampak negatif pada fisik dan psikologi. Penanganan perlu dilakukan untuk mengatasi masalah yang terjadi. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi pengalaman pelecehan seksual pada tunanetra laki-laki usia dewasa sebagai tukang pijat di komunitas PERTUNI Semarang. Desain penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan studi fenomenologi. Jumlah partisipan sebanyak 6 orang yang dipilih dengan teknik purposive sampling. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan 6 tema yang terkait dengan ketidakberdayaan, pemenuhan kebutuhan sehari-hari, pelecehan, potensi terjadi pelecehan, terganggunya kesehatan psikis dan menghindari tindak asusila. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa sebagian besar tunanetra yang bekerja sebagai tukang pijat pernah mengalami pelecehan seksual dalam berbagai bentuk pelecehan. Disarankan agar pihak PERTUNI memberikan pendidikan kesehatan seksual sebagai bentuk pencegahan pelecehan seksual.

Kata kunci: Tunanetra, pelecehan seksual

INTRODUCTION

The number of adults with disabilities in Indonesia from 2003 to 2012 reached 2.45% of the total population (Budijanto, 2014). The number of visually impaired (blind) people over the age of 18 is 29.63% with a prevalence of 1.47% ((Budijanto, 2014) (Noor, 2014). Central Java ranks 6th in Indonesia as a province with the most significant number of people with disabilities amounting to 3.19% (Budijanto, 2014). The number of blind people in Semarang is 266 (BPS, 2015); however, of this number, only 105 are registered in PERTUNI Semarang.

The impact of the blind condition is helplessness (Streubert & Carpenter, 1999). The environmental condition of the blind person working as a masseur potentially poses a risk of abuse for the blind (Syarifah, 2016). Moreover, people of adult age are more likely to experience abuse as they are considered physically more attractive (Jalil, 2014).

Harassment may cause depression, phobias, feeling suspicious of others, nightmares, difficulties relating to others, fear (Fuadi, 2011), shame, discomfort and trauma (Noviana, 2015). Severe trauma for the victims can be a potential factor in committing suicide (Fuadi, 2011).

There has been no evidence generated from previous studies investigating sexual harassment in visually impaired people, especially men. Based on a preliminary investigation conducted by researchers, there were 25 members of PERTUNI working as masseurs who claimed to have experienced sexual abuse.

Sexual abuse of the blind at PERTUNI requires the attention of nurses. Nurses play a role in improving community welfare through health studies of the population (Swarjana, 2016). Therefore, it is necessary to conduct an assessment to identify the experience of sexual harassment among the blind in the PERTUNI community.

METHOD

This research was a qualitative study with a phenomenological approach and was conducted from February to June

2018. The participants were six blind people in the PERTUNI community in Semarang recruited using a purposive sampling technique with specific characteristics, which were the following: a visually impaired man aged 18-60 years old, working as a masseur for at least 2 years and have experienced sexual harassment during their work as a masseur. The principal ethics used in the study were: autonomy, confidentiality, anonymity, beneficence, non maleficence, justice and veracity. Data were analyzed using Colaizzi's method with the researcher as the instrument (Streubert & Carpenter, 1999). The data collection process used an in-depth interview with semi-structured interview design and observation (Rahmat, 2009). During this process the instrument used was the researcher himself. The trust worthiness of the research has been tested and met the data credibility, data transferability, data dependability and confirmability (Afiyanti, A & Rachmawati, 2014).

RESULT

This study revealed six themes, i.e., (1) helplessness due to having a low level of physical support and being in a less supportive environment,

"Yes, this is not a choice, indeed a situation that can be done for the visually impaired (P2)"

"Yes, so I chose the massage profession, first because I'm blind (P6)"

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(2) the fulfilment of daily needs in terms of social needs, economical and spiritual,

"Well, we become more brothers, close with patients (P2)"

"Give more money (P6)"

(3) harassment in terms of sexual abuse and psychological abuse,

"If you don't know, yo, he will hold the most, his butt, its uncomfortable sis (while rubbing the buttocks) (P3)"

"My hand was pulled on his genitals (P6) "

"Ask me about porn. Ask how I play, how much strength, how many times a day (P6)"

- (4) potential for harassment from the customers and masseurs,
"Yes, they are sick, miss (sexual disorder) (P1)"
"The girl maybe she doesn't pay attention (P3)"
"Where can we go Ms., for example, we are not led to someone's house, it's a hassle, can't be (blind) (P5) "
"Because of my weakness, I am blind. Blind (P6) "
(5) disruption of psychological health in terms of anxiety and
"I'm afraid if you meet on the street ... I'm afraid if you rough it (P2) "
"I'm afraid if, for my own position at home (P2) "
"Yes, the problem is it's already stored in our memory (always remember) (P3)"
"At that time, I was traumatized (P5)"
(6) avoidance of immoral acts in terms of rejection with words and rejection with actions.
"Bro, I can't serve like this, it's better if you want to do it, yeah, just go to the others who want it (P5) "
"Please come out don't disturb me at work (P2) "

DISCUSSION

The helplessness theme is developed from three categories, i.e., less supportive physical condition, less supportive environment and minimal government support. Blind people are less able to control certain events or situations that affect their lives (Streubert & Carpenter, 1999). Participants consider themselves weak and helpless as they are visually impaired. Such a condition caused the participants to lose hope for their aspirations and future work. Many providers of employment or companies consider blind people unable to be productive and that they inhibit the production process (Muzaki, 2015).

Participants stated that a masseur is a type of employment, which is suitable for visually impaired people and is very applicable to their environment. The work of blind people as masseurs is supported by the government's social rehabilitation agency (Pravitasari, 2014). Some rehabilitation foundations for blind people

also provide financial assistance.

The theme of fulfillment of basic needs is developed from three categories, i.e., social needs, economic needs and spiritual needs. Social support is needed by the blind to fulfil their psychosocial needs (Tarsidi, 2012), which can be achieved by having good social relations. Being a masseur as a profession facilitates visually impaired people to improve their abilities in social relationships.

Empowerment of the blind is needed to help the blind meet their economic needs (Noor, 2014). Blind people are empowered to become a masseur so that they can earn enough money to meet their daily economic needs. Providing a massage is also a means to help other people (Muhammad, 2015). People who help others will feel rewarded to fulfil their own spiritual needs.

The theme of harassment is formed from two categories, i.e., sexual harassment and psychological harassment. Sexual harassment, based on this level, includes sexual words or comments, sexual attitudes, sexual touch and relational pressure (Dwiyanti, 2014). In this study, sexual harassment that occurred amongst the participants came from the customers. The type experienced included verbal abuse and physical abuse. Meanwhile, sexual comments that the participants received were in the form of jokes and seduction with sexual content. The participants were kissed, tapped on the back, buttock and even genitals. Sexual harassment not only injures the victim physically but also psychologically (Noviana, 2015).

The potential harassment theme was formed from two categories, i.e., customer factors and massaging factors. Blind people experience helplessness due to their physical limitations so that they have the potential to become victims of abuse (Syarifah, 2016). The factor of age of the adult participants is also a potential cause of the possibility of sexual abuse as they are considered to be more physically attractive. The reason for sexual harassment is influenced by many things such as the environment, life history and sexual health conditions.

The theme of disruption of psychological health is formed from two categories, i.e., anxiety and trauma. Disruption of psychological health is an indication of a state of unhealthy mental state (Dewi, 2012). Sexual harassment is one of the stressors that strongly influences the mental health of participants. Participants who experience anxiety disorders have difficulty controlling their worries.

The impacts of sexual abuse on participants include depression, phobias, suspicion of others in the long term, nightmares, difficulties relating to others, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress and fear. Participants experienced basic anxiety, which occurred due to unforgettable bad experiences in the past. The level of anxiety varies depending on how bad the experience was for participants. In addition, participants also experienced some disorders such as anxiety, feelings of discomfort and insecurity. They also feel the trauma of similar harassment in the past. Sexual harassment also causes powerlessness in the victims and feeling low and tormented when recalling the incident (Noviana, 2015). Blind people who experience the bad impact of sexual harassment should receive the rehabilitation intervention to handle the impact so it does not get any worse. This experience may build resilience amongst the participants so they can anticipate how to avoid any sexual harassment next time (Shean, 2015).

The theme of avoiding immoral acts was formed from two categories, i.e., rejecting words and rejecting actions, the masseur refused with firm words directed at the customer not to do anything unpleasant. Participants performed rejection with words due to a limited ability to control the environment. Some participants did the rejection by giving blankets for customers to keep the privacy of customers. Rejecting an unpleasant action is one of the assertive actions, based on Novani's research in 2018, the asification has proven successful in preventing harassment from occurring.

Blind people have difficulty in finding a job because of their condition and are considered as unproductive

employees. The government provides a fully funded massage school for blind people to help blind people to achieve their potential.

Working as masseur with visual limitations, makes blind people vulnerable to sexual harassment. Blind people are also included in the group of sexual harassment protected by the Law in Indonesia.

Sexual harassment that is often received by the visually impaired is physical abuse and verbal abuse. Harassment becomes an unpleasant experience for the blind and has an impact on the psychological health of the blind.

Each of the themes that resulted from this study showed the visually impaired experience in more detail in dealing with sexual harassment.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study showed the evidence of sexual harassment in visually impaired adult males working as masseurs. Sexual harassment identified in this study can be the basis for further research on the sexual harassment of blind people in Semarang especially amongst men. Due to there being still little research on the sexual harassment of men further research is needed to obtain more diverse data and immediately provide appropriate interventions.

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