



Building peer social support as a mental disorder solution for the blind

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Abstract

Blind people are people with disabilities due to the dysfunction of the sense of vision, this condition triggers the birth of various mental disorders. This qualitative study tries to examine the mental problems of blind vision disorders in the Sahabat Mata Semarang Community and the solutions the management is trying to overcome. The results of the study show that mental disorders with visual impairments include difficulties in adapting to the environment, anxiety about the future of a career and soul mate, prolonged stress due to dependence on others and no economic independence, and do not yet have self-acceptance. One of the efforts undertaken by the management of this community is to build peer social support, namely support provided by fellow blind people in the form of emotional support, appreciation support, structural support, information support, and real assistance. The various supports are built by holding regular recitals, monthly community meetings, and building good interpersonal relationships. Such peer social support, felt blind can provide alternative solutions and a variety of mental disorder problems they experience.

Keywords: peer social support; mental disorder; blind

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Abstrak

Tunanetra merupakan penyandang disabilitas akibat ketidakberfungsian indera penglihatan keadaan inilah yang memicu lahirnya berbagai gangguan mental. Penelitian kualitatif ini mencoba mengkaji problem mental disorder tunanetra di Komunitas Sahabat Mata Semarang dan solusi yang diupayakan pengelola untuk mengatasinya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan problem mental disorder tunanetra di sana antara lain seperti kesulitan beradaptasi dengan lingkungan, cemas terhadap masa depan baik karir dan jodoh, stres berkepanjangan akibat bergantung kepada orang lain dan tidak memiliki kemandirian ekonomi, dan belum memiliki penerimaan diri. Salah satu upaya yang dilakukan pengelola komunitas ini adalah membangun dukungan sosial sebaya yaitu dengan memberikan dukungan emosional, penghargaan, instrumental, informasi dan dukungan secara nyata. Berbagai dukungan tersebut dibangun dengan mengadakan pengajian rutin, pertemuan bulanan komunitas, dan membangun hubungan interpersonal yang baik. Dukungan sosial sebaya yang demikian, dirasakan tunanetra mampu memberikan alternatif solusi dan beragam problem mental disorder yang mereka alami.

Kata kunci: dukungan sosial sebaya; mental disorder; tunanetra

Introduction

Individuals have the desire to be born normally like individuals in general. Novita & Resnia (2017) state that some individuals born in this world are normal and the others are abnormal. Normal states are complete limbs and can function normally. Parts of body in individuals will make them easier to live their lives (Virlia & Wijaya, 2015). Individuals born abnormal with physical disabilities since birth may be caused by genes, maternal psychology, drug poisoning, and lack of nutrition during conception. One form of physical disability is the eyes that do not function normally or is often referred to as blind (Soemantri, 2007). The sense of sight is intact and functioning properly. The role and function of the eyes that support human life cannot be felt by blind people (Aqila & Rose, 2014).

Blindness is a state of malfunction that exists in individuals (Lusli, 2009). Blind people see themselves as individuals with no power so that the feelings of anxiety and depression will always envelop their lives (Nawawi et al, 2010). This will result in losing the sense of self-worth because the blind thinks that physical disability will thwart the desired ideals so that the individuals will become discouraged (Amalia, 2015). People with disabilities have several problems in living their lives.

Indrakentjana (2013) explains that the problem that often occurs in people with disabilities is the fulfillment of needs in living everyday life. The fulfillments are the fulfillments of affection, support, motivation and attention from other individuals. Then, when people with disabilities cannot meet their needs, it will affect their behavior.

Daily individual behavior can be influenced by their personal and psychological states (Feist & Feist, 2008). Mubasyaroh (2013) explains that the psychological factor that can affect the life of a blind person is a blind's mental state. A mental state or mental disorder is a disorder that attacks the blind mentally. The mental disorder felt by blind people is a form of mental expression that is pathological to the stimulus he receives (Aisy & Anisa, 2029). The mental disorders felt by blind people add to the problems in living everyday life. Therefore, it takes *coping* for the blind to anticipate and as an encouragement in living his life. One of the factors that can encourage blind people to live their lives is social support. Sarason and Sarason (Smet, 1994) explain that social support is a support obtained from people around their lives such as family, friends or public.

Social support is very important for a blind's life. Rahmi (2015) explains that social support can make blind people more confident. With social support, it will make blind people feel that their presence is warmly accepted by someone around their life. In addition, Novita & Resnia (2013) explains that social support received by blind people adds support in living their lives. Based on the explanation above, the researchers observed *mental problems with* visual impairment in the Sahabat Mata Semarang Community and social support as a solution to overcome them.

Research Method

The research method used qualitative research method. Qualitative research is a research method that explores and analyzes the meaning of behavior applied by individuals and the data analysis used does not use statistical analysis. In addition, qualitative research is a research that performs data collection, data analysis and comprehensive interpretation of data on visual data to gain understanding and insight into interesting and observed phenomena (Creswell, 2015). Qualitative research can also be used as an observation of life, history,

behavior, social problems, phenomena and concepts. The researchers used qualitative methods because the researchers hoped to find and understand the occurring phenomena more deeply and invisible matters in these phenomena. Then, the qualitative research was descriptive qualitative. Descriptive qualitative methodology is a research design that produces both written and oral data from research subjects and observed subject's behavior (primary and secondary data) (Moleong, 2002).

Primary data sources are the data sources obtained directly from research subjects. In this case, they are individuals with visual impairments (Sugiyono, 2012). The primary data source in this study was to collect the data related to the provision of social support by the Sahabat Mata Semarang Community. The secondary data was research power that supports primary data. The secondary data were obtained from other sources such as the documents on the activities of the Sahabat Mata Community and the management of the Semarang Sahabat Mata Community.

Interview, documentation and observation techniques are the techniques that will be used in data collection (Sugiyono, 2016). Triangulation is used to check the validity of the data obtained. (Moleong 2007). Triangulation was carried out by the researchers through interviews, direct or indirect observations. Indirect observation is the observation of researcher on several phenomena or behavior and events, and then the observation results of made can be taken of the similarities that can strengthen the primary data.

Results and Discussion

The existence of persons with disabilities is an interesting phenomenon to study. Limitations of visual or vision functions increasingly prevent persons with disabilities from fulfilling their developmental tasks in life. Moreover, they are the social pressure he experiences, limited adaptation to the environment, anxiety about her future, prolonged stress due to dependence on other people, and not having a good self-acceptance. The situation that occurred has worsened the mental state of persons with disabilities who are in the Foundation of the Sahabat Mata Community Mijen, Semarang city.

The problem that is often experienced by the blind is the fulfillment of their needs, such as problems of a social nature (family and community support). This social support can cause blind mental conditions not to develop optimally (Indrakentjana, 2015). In addition, the visually impaired people in the foundation of the Sahabat Mata community mijen in Semarang are increasingly having a bad mental condition due to poor labeling from the community. The labeling given by the community makes blind people increasingly depressed in living their lives.

Blind people always get unpleasant behavior from society, such as ridicule related to their physical condition. Tarsidi (2012) states that the main problem experienced by blind people is the attitude of society towards their blindness. The pressure that the blind gets will cause it to be psychological. These factors make blind people unable to develop optimally and be less productive. As a result, blind people become discouraged, anxious, have low self-esteem, isolate themselves, and are easily confused. Based on the results of an interview with Amin, a blind person from the Sahabat Mata Community Foundation on March 02, 2020:

"In communicating with other people I have never been invited to play by friends. Then, in socializing I have never been invited to play with my friends, sis. Maybe they thought I was troublesome. Then, if there were reunions like that, I was never invited, sis. Even if a friend is married, I also don't get an invitation. Sometimes I felt sad, how come my friends are like that to me. Even though I never made a mistake with them. "

The opinion above represents a little of the lives of blind people who are far from surviving even in limitations. Total social support is in the form of social support. In fact, social support is actually needed by blind people so that they can continue to support emotional, rewarding, instrumental and informational ones (Taylor, 2004). Various Social support has benefits for forming self-concept, self-confidence, responsibility and optimistic attitude experienced by blind people. Jenaabadi (2013) explains that social support has several benefits; first, it can enable blind people to manage stress, increase blind *psychological well-being*, improve self-adjustment, increase self-confidence, and become motivation to live every day. In line with Rochayati, Jenaabadi (2013) explains that the benefits of social support are to increase self-confidence. Meanwhile, according to Tentama

(2014), the impacts felt by individuals after receiving social support is feeling loved, feeling cared for, having trust, and feeling recognized by people in their environment. The results of the research conducted by Nurwati (2009) state that social support received by individuals will enable individuals to develop their talents. The following is a summary of the visually impaired social support of six blind people at the Sahabat Mata Community Foundation Semarang

The same thing was felt by blind people Sopyan, following Sopyan's narrative to the researchers of 05 Meret 2020:

1. Emotional Support

Emotional support has the benefit of providing a sense of peace, comfort, and can manage the pressure that is present in visually impaired persons. This social support is shown among blind people. There was an attention among the blind people while staying at the Sahabat Mata Foundation Semarang. For example, Andhi is a blind person who initially was blind due to an accident. At first, Andhi was devastated by the situation that had happened to him. This situation made Andhi a pessimist in living his life. However, after meeting Mr. Basuki at an event, Andhi got to know Mr. Basuki personally and there were changes in him. The following is what Andhi delivered to the researchers on March 5, 2020:

"Before joining the Sahabat Mata Community Foundation, I knew the Sahabat Mata Community Foundation from getting to know Mr. Basuki personally. I felt I was useless, I could not do my daily activities. Then, I met Mr. Bas, what I felt was different, Mr. Bas was full of optimism. That's where I started to think that Mr. Bas can be optimistic, so it means that I also have to be optimistic. "

The same thing was also felt by the blind person, Sopyan, and the following is Sopyan's narrative to the researchers on March 05, 2020:

"Before I was at the Sahabat Mata Community Foundation, I was actually curious about my potential, due to my soul, I am an active person, while people only know that blind people are passive. The emotional support that I feel here comes from Pak Bas and his friends who give me support when I need motivation."

The emotional support given such as caring, expressions of empathy from others, and attention given by others, as Vivi said, March 7, 2020:

"From friends with visual impairments and those who are normal, they really care for me, especially from Pak Basuki. It was them and him who always motivated me to show empathy to me through his attention by making me become independent, to be more confident, and to make me an independent blind person."

2. Appreciation Support

Appreciation support may occur through positive expressions of respect (appreciation) given by others. As explained by Dhani, a blind person who resides in the Sahabat Mata community foundation, as follows:

"Being accepted here, being able to stay here, being invited to broadcast with friends on SAMA FM radio for me are tributes to me and it means a lot to me. Because before I joined the Sahabat Mata Community Foundation, I had no friends, felt alone and isolated. I felt different from other people so I felt inferior if I wanted to hang out with other people (Interview, March 5, 2020)."

Appreciative support from family, friends, and the environment is an important factor for blind people. With the appreciation support that blind people get, blind people are more optimistic in carrying out their lives and are also able to accept the blind situation experienced. As Andhi feels, his family is very supportive as long as he wants to progress and wants to be independent by providing education up to the S1 level and all the facilities needed to support his studies and his daily life. He told the researchers:

"The support from family is very supportive. Whatever is given to me as long as I want to progress and want to be independent. I was given an allowance for my education, I bought a cellphone and laptop to support my education, it was the support from my family. Apart from that, from the organization, I was entrusted with the committee, and it is an award" (Interview, March 6, 2020).

The social support received by blind people can be in the forms of attention, affection, motivation, which make the disabled have good psychological conditions and a positive outlook. Lakey & Cohen (2000) explain that individuals who get social support can make individuals positive in living their lives, have high self-esteem, and have an optimistic nature.

3. Instrumental Support

Instrumental support is a support provided in the form of direct assistance. The direct assistance is in the form of giving practices that can develop the talents of

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the blind, provide facilities, a sense of care, and physical presence to provide comfort to the blind. The blind people at the Sahabat Mata Community Foundation have all received instrumental support from the foundation. Apart from the foundation, fellow blind people and also friends who are normal also provide direct assistance. As Sopyan said:

"The direct assistance I got was directly from Pak Bas as well as friends here. For example, when I wanted to go to college, Pak Bas helped me by giving me money for college. That's for me a very meaningful help because thanks to the money that Mr. Bas gave me, I can continue my dream (interview, March 06, 2020)."

The same thing was also expressed by Irma:

"There are many direct supports, for example, when my laptop had an error, it was corrected by a friend who can work on the laptop. When I had no money, it was borrowed from Ms. Dhani (Interview, March 06, 2020)."

Instrumental assistance is the concern of others in the form of actions that can help blind people develop their responsibilities and talents. Vivi, one of the blind people, at the Sahabat Mata Community foundation, also feels the instrumental support. The following is his narrative:

"I felt that the direct support was given by Pak Bass to become a broadcaster on SAMA FM radio. This direct assistance that was given by Pak Bass is a place to channel my talents"(interview 07 March 2020).

4. Information Support

Information support is a support in the form of providing useful information to solve the problems experienced by blind people. This information support can take the forms of advice, guidance, and input given by others so that blind people can behave properly and adequately to live their lives. It was felt by Amin, a blind person who is currently pursuing his undergraduate education in Semarang. The following is his explanation to the researcher:

"The information support I got was from Mr. Bas and also friends here. I'm lazy, right? So every morning I was advised by Mr. Bas to get up early to continue exercising for my health. I am obese, sis, so Mr. Bas and friends always advise to exercise, diet, eat in balance (Interview, March 6, 2020)."

In addition to Amin, Irma also received information support from Mr. Bas and his friends. The following is her explanation to the researcher:

"Yes, I got information support from Mr. Bas. Mr. Bas always shares in the wa group, social media or directly about anything that is related to us such as trainings and seminars to develop my potential and my friends here (Interview, 09 March 2020). "

Information support is the provision of information related to the current reality, such as giving advice, and other information that makes blind people stronger and able to solve existing problems. It was felt by Amin, a blind person who is currently pursuing his undergraduate education in Semarang. The following is his explanation to the researcher:

"The information support I got was from Mr. Bas and also friends here. I'm lazy, right? So every morning I was advised by Pak Bas to get up early to continue exercising for my health (Interview, 09 March 2020)

Apart from Amin, Irma also received information support from Mr Bas and his friends. The following is his explanation to the researcher:

"Yes, I got information support from Mr. Bas. Mr Bas always shares in the wa group, social media or directly about anything that is related to us such as trainings and seminars to develop my potential and my friends here. "

The Sahabat Mata Community Foundation has regular studies / recitation. In this activity, advice is given, and suggestions are also input for blind people. How to be grateful for existing limitations and develop the potential and gifts that Allah SWT has given to blind people.

Relevance Forming Tunatentra Social Support as A Disorder Mental Solution with Islamic Guidance and Counseling

People with visual impairments are just like individuals in general who have potential abilities in their lives. Every individual also has problems in his life; psychological, social and economic. Individuals who have problems need someone to help solve the problem. Moreover, a blind person who have limited ability to see must have more pressure than someone who is normal. Their limitations create a psychological stressful situation that makes blind people need someone to always

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support them and motivate them to think that their limitations are not an obstacle to exploring the potential that Allah SWT has given.

The description above shows that people with visual impairments need help and social support from others. One alternative that can be implemented is through Islamic guidance and counseling services. Mubarok (2002) explains that Islamic counseling guidance is a communication process that aims to provide assistance to individuals who have problems both physically and mentally in order to understand their potential in order to find solutions to the problems they are facing by developing potential in individuals. Basically, individuals have the potential that can be used to solve the problems being faced, but this potential is covered by a negative meaning to the existing problem (Faqih, 2000).

Such Islamic guidance and counseling is able to help blind people solve mental problems faced by helping to convince individuals to see other potentials they have, not focus on their own shortcomings. The contribution of Islamic guidance and counseling for blind people above is in line with the function of Islamic guidance and counseling as an effort to help individuals learn to develop fitrah and / or return to fitrah, by empowering faith, reason, and abilities gifted by Allah SWT (Hidayanti, et al, 2016). In this context, Islamic counseling is of course directed at helping blind people to maximize the potential of their faith in order to respond positively to the various limitations they have according to Islamic teachings (Hidayanti, et al, 2016) so that mental disorders can be minimized.

On the other hand, Islamic guidance and counseling is a source or means of fostering the social support needed by people with visual impairments. Social support is intended to come from counselors or peer counselors. Peer social support will be more effective because they have the same fate, so they can learn from each other to face difficulties in life due to limited senses. Peer Social support can be applied using *peer counseling*. Peer counseling is a counseling assistance service provided by peers (usually the age / level of education is almost the same) that have already given training to be a peer counselor and is expected to provide assistance either individually or in groups to friends who have problems or experience various obstacles in their personality development (Erhamwilda, 2005). Another important thing is that this counseling model is beneficial for blind people

because in this model it encourages all clients to have the opportunity to become counselors for their own friends. Clients who become co-counselors can provide advice by transferring experiences that have been done (Hidayanti, 2019). Thus, it is known that regular Islamic guidance and counseling is an important means for blind people to be able to deal with mental disorders independently, and at the same time to form peer social support which has important benefits as a solution to dealing with mental problems.

Conclusion

The results of this study explain that social support is needed by blind people in dealing with various psychological problems such as difficulty getting along with other people, feeling inferior, shy, dependent on others, and feeling that life is not worthwhile. Social support is provided by the Sahabat Mata Community Foundation, Mijen, Semarang City as an effort to develop the potential of blind people. Social support in the form of emotional, reward support, instrumental support, and information support is proven to be able to change negative self-esteem into positive self-esteem so that the mentor is more optimistic in living his life every day.

Based on the above findings, it is important to continue to develop social support for people with social welfare problems, both from others and from people in their environment. One of the ways that can be used to build the social support needed by blind people is Islamic guidance and counseling services. This service can help blind people solve their social problems. In addition, it can be used as a means to build social support from both others and the environment. Given the contribution of such guidance and counseling services, it is important to develop the existence of this service in various foundations or communities of people with visual impairments or other disabilities.

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