THE TRANSGENDER MOTIVATION TO BE AN HIV-AIDS COUNSELOR: A PHENOMENOLOGY STUDY IN RUMAH RAMPAK POLAH KUNINGAN REGENCY

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Background: One of the obstacles in HIV-AIDS patient care is stigma and discrimination, particularly in specific community such as transgender. The stigma can cause someone isolated from social environment. Unstable psychosocial condition and risk behavior related to HIV transmission are common life in transgender community. Based on the current surveillance in 2014, HIV-AIDS prevalence among transgender community was increased. They need social support and Rumah Rampak Polah is one of NGO in Kuningan Regency who always give many supports and provide many empowerment programs to promote the positive behavior among transgender community. This study attempts to explore the transgender motivation to be a HIV-AIDS counselor.

Methods: This research is qualitative which used phenomenology design and the participants were obtained by snowball technique. There were 8 participants: 3 persons transgender counselor, 2 persons counselees and 3 persons volunteers from Rumah Rampak Polah. Data is collected by in-depth interviews technique and analyzed by theme analysis.

Result: 1) Authoritarian parenting and women domination in surrounding family environment contributed to gender orientation, 2) Transgender have been getting stigma and discrimination in employment and daily-life. 3) Based on Maslow theory, the dominant motivation among transgender to be a HIV/AIDS counselor is love and belonging needs. 4) Although transgender, they could to provide counseling service effectively, more convenient, satisfied and attractive.

Conclusion: Transgender community is feasible to be HIV-AIDS counselor because love and belonging needs factor. They can be involved in HIV-AIDS promotion and prevention program.

Keywords: transgender, motivation, counselor

1. INTRODUCTION

Most transgender face many obstacles such as the rejection and alienation from community. This rejection will increase their anxiety because they are unable to take a role in accordance with their gender (Rughea, et. al. 2014). Recognition and a positive image are rarely available for the transgender. Their interactions are very limited, only with people from the same background. Transgender are afraid to access information and health service facilities (Ekasari 2011). The last studies explained that the counseling which done by a transgender to another transgender is very effective to increase knowledge about HIV-AIDS (Puspiritasi 2011). The counseling conducted by transgender himself is effective, because psychologically people prefer to join a group who can fulfill their psychological needs (Buchbinder 2014).

Since 2013, in Kuningan district there is “Rumah Rampak Polah”, a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) who has the mission to advocate HIV-AIDS patients. Rumah Rampak Polah
organized by many volunteers who have concern and competency to prevent HIV-AIDS incidence and promote the positive behavior in Kuningan district. Rumah Rampak Polah have been empowering all of members include the transgender to be educator, motivator, facilitator, and counselor.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used qualitative method with phenomenology design. Participants are obtained by snowball technique. The participants consisted 3 (three) transgender-counselors, 3 (three) volunteers of Rumah Rampak Polah and 2 (two) transgender-counselees. Data is collected by in-depth interview technique with all participants from July to August 2015. Data is analyzed by theme analysis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1. Participant Characteristics

The participants in this study consist of 3 (three) transgender-counselors who are the members of Rumah Rampak Polah, 3 (three) volunteers of Rumah Rampak Polah, and 2 (two) transgender-counselees.

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<th>Initial</th>
<th>Age (yo)</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>HIV and IDU status</th>
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<td>Personal Trainer</td>
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3.2. Transgender Motivation to be HIV-AIDS Counselor

3.2.1. Personal History of Transgender

Someone who decided to be a transgender is driven by psychological and sociological factors. These factors interact and influence each other in a long period, from childhood to adolescence. Family, playmate, and economic condition contribute to influence the psychological and sociological circumstances.

3.2.1.1. Biological Factors

“Physically is normal, but just a bit limber.” (Source: P1)
“I usually have wet dream with boy but I never do such things for sure, that’s not common like other boys, often dream about having sex with boy usually with my fantasy guy, more often. I’ve never have wet dream with girl.” (Source: P2)

Biologically, a transgender has same physical characteristic as men in common. They had the primary and secondary reproductive signs in puberty phase. Their reproductive organs grow, develop, and work normally. They did not have genetic abnormalities because none in their family who have same characteristic with them. Their medical histories showed that they did not have a neurological disease such as brain tumor or the endocrine system disorders such as hormone abnormality, etc. Thus, in this case the transgender is not caused by the biological factors.

3.2.1.2. Psychological Factors

“Since childhood, I have 5 younger siblings, almost every day my parents went to rice field. Sometimes I went to school with them to take care of. So that I feel like I am a mother.” (Source: P1)

“Then my father worked out of town and I was used to play with my female siblings.” (Source: P2)

In psychology perspective, transgender is considered a mental disorder only if it causes disability or distress. Generally, many transgender can live normally without distress and have many disabilities. The solve to discrimination are need the medical therapy and social support. Some transgender feelings gender dysphoria, the incongruent of gender identity between the true birth sex organs and gender role with that sex (Susan, C 1990).

There are many factors that affect the human mental development. Psychologically, a transgender feels that he is female, has women’s feeling, and acts like women in common. The parenting style, neighborhood environment, and particular incident experiences are the most common triggers that cause gender identity disorientation. Psychological abnormalities cannot be detected earlier because the parents split focus. Economic problem faced by the family is one of cause that parents cannot fully control their children’s growth personality.

According to the diagnostic standards of American Psychiatry, Gender Identity Disorder are can diagnose for people who experience intense and persistent gender dysphoria. However this diagnose is controversial, because some contend it is inappropriately pathologies gender variance and other argue is need to retain the diagnose to ensure access to care.

3.2.1.3. Sociological Factor

“Since childhood, I have 5 younger siblings, almost every day my parents went to rice field. Sometimes I went to school with them to take care of. So that I feel like I am a mother.” (Source: P1)

“Then because I was used to play with boys so that I feel like I want boys to protect and love me, I want to be the most beautiful girl.” (Source: P2)

“Yes, my father has grand-parent who is transgender too.” (Source: P3)

Sociological factor are influenced by the amount of interaction with girls and the compulsion to play a role as girl. Playing with boys in a longtime can lead you to love men and feel comfortable being loved by men. Interaction with transgender since childhood leads to mimic conditions and appropriate status as a transgender.
Daily interaction with girls makes a transgender proficient and accustomed to woman’s lifestyle. This condition can form an identity as adult. Otherwise, interaction with boys in a longtime brings out comfortable feeling to be protected and prioritized. Transgender do not take this as reflection of them, but makes this condition as a person desired. An interaction with a transgender since childhood and an assumption that transgender live an interesting life make the character that you want to emulate.

Almost of all transgender being transsexual because of coercive parenting role. Domination of mother parenting role and permissive parenting pattern are the other factors contribute to being a transgender (Rokhmah, 2015).

3.2.2. Problems Experienced by Transgender along with Stigma and Discrimination

“Yes, every night I cried, I cried when I saw other friends that are normal but why I was like this. I just cried every night, I ever try to suicide but I was not ready yet.” (Source: P1)

“There was a conflict. I had to be man, normal man, but then I just let it flow. It did not start from childhood. Never once in my mind, it happened when I was in adolescence.” (Source: P2)

The biggest problem experienced by transgender comes from the acceptance by society and the self-conflict. Stigma cause labeling/stereotyping and rule which show the powerful side and the powerless side in decision making process (Yuliani 2015). Gender dichotomy makes a real divider between transgender, and man and woman. There are no equal rights for transgender in any fields. Transgender is always identic with deviation and disobedience, separating transgender with statehood, social, and religious. There are no rules made for citizens with transgender status. The way to restore the transgender stigmatization in community, some transgender empower themselves in many social and health programs (Mukarromah, 2013).

The family educated that the human created by the God in clear separation, there are only a male or female. However, the desire to follow the instinct becoming a transgender obscures it. Sacrificing normal life is the serious consequence for the choice to be the transgender. Transgender feels better to accept the stigma and discrimination than to curb the instinct.

Scheme 1. Conflict experienced by transgender

3.2.3. Transgender Motivation to Become a Counselor

According to Maslow’s need hierarchy, motivations caused transgender becoming a HIV-AIDS counselor are as stated in intersection of set below:

Remove the desire to be transgender  Living normal life as male  Becoming transgender  Accept stigma and discrimination consequences

Scheme 1. Conflict experienced by transgender
3.2.4. The Effectivity of Transgender Counselor

“For example, I consult to that I am a transgender, and consult again to a normal counselor. I did not feel comfortable. If I consult with transgender-counselor, he must know exactly how I feel because he also is a transgender. I feel more comfortable.” (Source: K1)

“People said that it is better, it is more comfortable comparing we as males or other female friends.” (Source: R1)

“Yes, it is attractive program, if it is not like that, it is colorless, if it comes from public health officer, and people will be lazy. Then when it comes to a transgender, they want to know how it feels having consultation with transgender.” (Source: R3)

“It has an impact. I went to my campus “Kuningan University”, I wore casual outfits but they did not hear me. Then when I went to campus wearing business outfits, and wearing high heels, they were enthusiastic.” (Source: P2)

Two roles of peer group are as conformity and references (Nurhayati 2008). Transgender as a peer group is important point to make the counseling effectiveness. The transgender counselor makes counseling more effective. Transgender counselee feels much better after having a counseling with transgender-counselor. There are many behavior changes among the transgender-counselee, such as: having sex with mono-partner, having sex safer through always use condom, and share information to other transgender. The transgender-counselors are very attractive when they perform health campaign to public. Many people give appreciation, recognize and accept their activity. They are being more productive because they are more recognized by others. They can increase their self-confidence and more accepted in many level of society.
4. CONCLUSIONS

The transgender motivation to be a HIV-AIDS counselor is affected by many factors. Lack of respect and love at the past time cause they have a high-motivation to proof that they can be useful and valuable person for the others. Many stigma and discrimination what they accepted is a motivation for them to fulfill their desire. They have the dominant motivation to become a HIV-AIDS counselor, need to respect of others and by others. The transgender who become a HIV-AIDS counselor can attract counseling effectively and perform health campaign attractively.

REFERENCES