The Social Perception of Gay Men towards Male Prostitute

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Abstract

This research was done to explore the social perception of gay men towards male prostitute. Research methodology used is qualitative approach using phenomenology case study as the research model. The objects of research were five gay men at East Java. Data was collected using unstructured qualitative interview, observation, field note, and qualitative questionnaire. Data analysis technique used is phenomenology analysis, was described by inter-subjects’ technique and between-subjects. In data validation, the researcher used member check. Research’s result shows that social perception of gay towards male prostitute that he is a man who done sexual relationship service to man and woman with orientation of money and pleasure derived from established background, hawking themselves in social media and certain places, susceptible to sexual disease.

Keywords—Gay, Male Prostitute, Social Perception

1. Introduction

In reality, there are various groups with different social background. There are many who think that society could only be divided into “black and white” society where the “white” society is formed from “good” and educated people while people who are labeled as “black” is the “scums” of society marked by violence and deflection. Yet only a few people know that there are “grey areas” in a society. They come off as “normal” and “kind” but because they are different, they are seen as deflection and eventually became social problem in a society. This marginal group has different behavior or lifestyle than the majority of the society. This can cause discrimination for the minority group if they considered as deflection and disturb the existing social life. Examples of this minority group are gay-men and male prostitutes.

The fact about a number of male in Indonesia whose sexual orientation or prefers to have sexual relations with the same gender also affect the growth of sexual industry. In some big cities of Indonesia, there are sexual services by transvestites as well as males who offer their services to other men. Based on an early interview (Ihsan, 2015) with subject N, in some big cities in Indonesia, there is an increase of male prostitute offering their services. However, gay-men or male prostitute consumer only knows those locations. Most of the prostitutes are adult-wannabe teenagers with high libido and desire to have luxurious possessions. According to Nafikadini (2013), male prostitutes are usually called escort, man whores/man sluts, rent boys, gigolo for gay (hustlers), working boys, call boys, and gigolo. Those terms are different in different countries. In Indonesia, male prostitutes who serve female customers are called gigolos, while those who serve male customer (Laki-laki suka Seks dengan Laki-laki (LSL) or male who love having sexual intercourse with guy) are called ‘kucing’ or cats. ‘Kucing’ is categorized as LSL group because they have sexual relations with men. That term comes from society and have unknown background of how it appeared. According to N, someone usually becomes a male prostitute because they are being persuaded by a close friend using luxurious things. Their life is at risk of infections and to infect disease, because they have free sexual lifestyle. It causes some of them to get infected with HIV AIDS. Those free sexual lifestyle is the point that differentiates male prostitute from gays.

Gay or homosexual orientation is a feeling, interest and sexual relations towards individuals of the same gender. Total population of homosexual will never be known precisely because some of them refuse to admit their homosexuality in interview, especially if homosexuality leads to stigma for certain group in society. When discussing homosexuality, two terms are involved, namely Gay for male and Lesbian for female. Gay is a nickname for homosexual people. However, some author mostly uses the term only to male because they use lesbian to call homosexual female (Reber & Reber, 2010).
In general, Indonesian people give negative response towards gay. According to Hanurawan (2007) attitude is a tendency to react whether to like or dislike a particular object. Some example of people’s negative attitude is discrimination, harassment or even violence.

As time goes by, tolerance demonstrated by several society group towards homosexual is better as long as their behavior is not disturbing. In general, they see homosexual with pity and pray for their family to be free from homosexuality. In big city, tolerance towards homosexuality is bigger so there is no systematic refusal in workplace.

There are many homosexuals who have permissive sexual life, frequently change partner and have sexual relation with anyone. As time goes by, these individuals even do sexual relation with price. Therefore, we can find many men sell themselves for money. The impact is about 40% AIDS patients are homosexual. One of five gay and bisexual who sexually active has been infected with AIDS virus. Nevertheless, half of them is not conscious about their infection.

Based on this phenomenon, this research want to find out about the social perception of gay towards male prostitute. Individual social perception is a process to develop knowledge and think about others in order to establish, allow foresee and be able to manage their social world (Hanurawan, 2010). Therefore, through the phenomenon of the increasing number of gay who misuses tolerance, researchers want to know further about the social perception of gay towards male prostitute.

2. Research Objective

There are theoretical and practical benefits from this research. The results of this research will add to the research reference about social psychology literature in Indonesia and enriching research reference about Gay communities.

- Add literature about social perception of Gay towards male prostitute.

Practical benefit:

- For Psychology students, to be able to serve as reference in conducting research about gay and male prostitute.

- For society, to be able to serve as reference in knowing the difference between gay and male prostitute and understand social perception of gay towards male prostitute.

3. Research Methodology

This research uses qualitative research design and used phenomenology method in form of interpretation of social perception of gay towards male prostitute. The purpose of phenomenology research model is to understand the essence of an individual’s inner world experience towards a phenomenon based on their own perception. Here, phenomenology research has interest in discovering the essence of someone’s experience about a phenomenon which involve biography and autobiography narration, reflection and observation (Bursztyn in Hanurawan, 2012).

This research is conducted in order to know deeper about social perception of gay towards male prostitute. The researcher try to understand social perception of gay towards male prostitution phenomenon.

In this research, the researcher directly met a number of individuals who identify as gay as a college student who was conducting a research as a final assignment, and the individuals have consented to participate in the research. Researcher built up a good rapport with the participant as close friend. The good rapport was built in order to adapt, to be able to get the information or data about social perception of gay towards male prostitute from the participants. Researcher took a role as observer who conducted the observation, researcher was involved in research’s target group for a long time. Researcher give provided information that his presence was to conduct research (Hanurawan, 2012).

Subject of this research are individuals who identify as gay and suit the participant characteristic, which is living in East Java (Malang, Blitar, Surabaya and Sumenep district). There were 5 gay-men chosen by considering data saturation principle. There is no age restriction on this research. The participant need to suit the condition which are living in East Java, have known about male prostitution, have good communication ability and able to give information needed by researcher. Data collection is done using unstructured qualitative interview, observation, field note, and qualitative questionnaire.

In-depth interview with unstructured qualitative interview is used in this research. Instrument used is interview manual. Beside other interview manual, the researcher also uses other instruments such as voice recorder and field note. The researchers done the observation by observing the participant in the interview session and not in their daily life. The researchers observed participants’ behavior not only by directly seeing the participant behavior but also listening to whatever is heard from the participant. Questionnaire in this research comes in the form of open questions to discover subjective means from participant.

Technique used in data analysis is phenomenology analysis technique. In this context, the researcher reduces some statements into main themes from in-depth interview data to show the essence of experience of participant towards a phenomenon. During data analysis, the researcher conducted searches concerning significant statements about a phenomenon. Those significant statements can be found in word, sentence, or some sentences in order to develop certain meaning about a phenomenon according to Johnson and Christensen (in Hanurawan, 2012). After constructing those question list,
the researcher made descriptions about participant, a practice that is usually referred to as inter-subject’s analysis and between-subject’s analysis (Santoso and Royanto, 2009).

4. Findings/ Results

A. Social Perception of Gay towards Male Prostitute from Self-Concept Dimension

Based on self-concept dimension, the participants gave similar opinion about male prostitute’s self-concept, which is that they are individuals who have high confidence. They are proud of their occupation that seek pleasure only. According to P1, male prostitute is proud of their occupation which only focuses on giving pleasure. If they meet with interesting male, they will hit on them and continue to reveal their sexuality. P2 knows that male prostitute seems happy with their occupation because they only seek for pleasure from sexual encounters and money rather than good relationship. P3 states that male prostitute love their occupation because they earn money without concerning about feeling and stable relationship. P4 believes that most of male prostitute live in luxury and seek for pleasure only. P5 understand that male prostitute is happy to earn money. Those five comprehension from the participants is in line with Hanurawan’s (2010) statement about individual social perception and that it is a process to develop knowledge and think about others in order to establish, allow, foresee, and be able to manage their social world.

B. Social Perception of Gay towards Male Prostitute from Social Dimension

Based on social dimension, the participant give various understanding about social interaction of male prostitute. P1 knows from his social media that male prostitute is a guy who frequently engages in sexual relation with another guy, who use particular language or sign in communicating and are more open when talking about sexual matters. P2 knows from social media and his friend that male prostitute is a guy with sex and money orientation those who served female are called gigolo while those who served male are called “kucing”. P3 knows from his friend who is a male prostitute and from social media, that male prostitute is a guy who sells himself to another guy, and that he has a pimp who hawks him in certain social media for gay. P4 knows from his friend and social media for gay, that male prostitute is a guy who serves another guy, which is called “kucing”. ”Kucing” is divided into two class, namely high class who hawks themselves in social media and have a pimp while the low class hawk themselves on the street and have low price. P5 knows from his friend, that guy who sells his body to another guy is called “kucing”. Those participants’ understanding is in accordance with statement by Hanurawan (2010) about individual social perception, that it is a process to develop knowledge and think about others in order to establish, allow, foresee, and be able to manage their social world.

C. Social Perception of Gay towards Male Prostitute from economic dimension

Based on economic dimension, there are various comprehensions from the participants. P1 knows that male prostitute has stable economy background. Some male prostitute he knows mostly seek pleasure not money. P2 said that his friend who becomes male prostitute comes from stable economic background and not considered as low-middle economy society. P2 knows that their reason to be male prostitute is because of the lifestyle to have money not because they actually need it. According to P3, male prostitute’s reason to sell themselves is because they come from low economic background so they do it to fulfill their daily needs. But there are a number of male prostitutes who come from stable economic background and they sell themselves to live their luxurious lifestyle. Most of them are far from their parents’ guidance. According to P4, most of male prostitute come from medium-low economy society who have luxurious lifestyle. P5 said that male prostitute comes from low and high economic background or some are wealthy while others are not.

D. Social Perception of Gay towards Male Prostitute from Health Dimension

Based on health dimension, gay’s comprehension about male prostitute’s health, tend to be various. P1 state that male prostitute’s health is susceptible to disease caused by free sexual life and night lifestyle such as smoking and drinking alcohol. P2 state that male prostitute should think of his own safety while having sexual intercourse. P3 state that male prostitute has unhealthy skin and loose skin. Most of them have limp skin unlike those who rarely have sexual intercourse. P3 adds that he knows that many male prostitutes are infected with severe disease like HIV and mostly syphilis. P4 state that male prostitute has low health and as equally exposed to risk of sexually transmitted diseases as their female counterparts. P5 states that when having sexual intercourse, there are a number of male prostitute who use condom while others who do not use condoms are infected with sexual disease. Those five comprehensions from the participants is the same with Hanurawan’s (2010) statement that individual social perception is a process to develop knowledge and think about others in order to establish, allow, foresee, and be able to manage their social world.

5. Conclusions

The Research finding shows that the participants who are gay perceive male prostitute as a man who provides sexual service to man and woman with orientation of money and pleasure derived from established background, hawk themselves in social media and certain places, and are susceptible to sexual diseases.
References

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