

Sexual Harassment in Adolescent

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ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a transitional period from childhood to adulthood which is marked by changes in physical, cognitive, and psychosocial aspects. At this stage of development, adolescents often experience psychological problems such as eating disorders, anxiety, or even depression, and so forth. Various psychological problems can occur due to internal factors and external factors. One external factor that causes psychological problems in adolescents is sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a sexual act through physical or non-physical touch targeting sexual organs or sexuality. Sexual harassment can be experienced by adolescents and cause anxiety and decrease grades in school. The aims of this study to determine the description of sexual harassment experienced by adolescents in one of the state high schools in the South Tangerang area. The study was conducted by distributing a questionnaire and interviews with 10-12 high school students. Questionnaires were given to adolescents aged 13-19 years (N = 178). Based on 178 students, 123 students (69%) had experienced sexual harassment. The results showed that 66 students (54%) experienced verbal sexual harassment; 106 students (86%) experienced non-verbal sexual harassment; there were 56 students (46%) who experienced physical sexual harassment. Interviews were conducted on 3 students who had experienced sexual harassment, namely 2 women and 1 man. Interviews showed that victims of sexual harassment experienced low self-esteem, skipping school, fear of meeting the opposite sex, and experienced physical reactions such as nausea, palpitations, and dizziness. The results of this study are preliminary studies of research that are useful for the development of psychological science in the future.

Keywords: *Adolescents, Sexual Harassment*

1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is an individual transition period from childhood to adulthood. At this stage of development, adolescents begin to decide who they are with all their uniqueness and purpose in life. At this time, adolescents experience cognitive development, adolescents can already do enough mature speculation about their characteristics and can develop hypotheses in solving problems. Furthermore, socioemotional development, adolescents begin to decide their identity and purpose in life [1].

Adolescence also experiences physical development or puberty such as increasing penis size and first ejaculation in men, enlarged breast size, and first menstruation in women. In addition to physical changes, adolescents also experience increasing testosterone hormone in men and estrogen in women. Both of these hormones play a role in influencing sexual desire and activity. Physical development that shows adolescents getting older is associated with cases of sexual harassment [2].

Sexual harassment according to the UN [3] is a sexual act such as seduction or flattery, requests for sexual assistance, and sexual behavior both physically and verbally that the victim does not want. Sexual harassment is divided into 3

forms namely verbal, nonverbal, and physical. Hollaback! Jakarta, WOMEN, Indonesian Traffic Lantern, Jakarta Cross-Feminist Association (JFDG), and Change.org are five organizations in Indonesia that surveyed in 2018 on 62 thousand Indonesian people. The survey results show that 3 out of 5 women, as well as 1 in 10 men, have experienced sexual harassment in public spaces [4]. The impact of sexual harassment experienced by both men and women is, not going to school, thinking about moving schools, experiencing decreased concentration, lack of participation in class. Besides, students also experience a decrease in the quality of school work, lower grades, loss of friends, and do not want to go to school [5].

Based on various phenomena obtained about sexual harassment, the researcher wanted to find out more about how the description of sexual harassment experienced by adolescents in one of the state high schools in the South Tangerang area. The results of this study are preliminary studies of research that are useful for the further development

1.1. Related Work

According to the aim of this study, we discussed two topics related to adolescent and sexual harassment.

1.1.1. Adolescent

Adolescence is a transition period from childhood to the adult stage which is marked by major changes in physical, cognitive, and psychosocial aspects [6]. Papalia and Feldman [6] determine the age of the teenager is 11 to 21 years. In adolescence, physically men and women experience hormonal changes that bring teens to the level of puberty. In men, puberty usually starts at the age of 10 years or 13.5 years. Puberty can end as early as the age of 13 years or no later than the age of 17 years. In women, menarche usually occurs between the ages of 9 and 15 years.

Hormonal changes in adolescence affect genital growth, severe sound changes in men, and increased breast fat tissue in women. Hormones can also be influenced by adolescent behavior and mood, dietary stress, exercise, sexual activity, depression can activate or suppress some hormonal systems. Cognitively, adolescents also develop hypothetical-deductive reasoning, namely the cognitive abilities of adolescents in developing hypotheses about how to solve problems [7]. In adolescent psychosocial development according to Erikson [7], it is identity versus identity confusion, that is, adolescents must decide who they are, what things are in themselves fully, and what is their life goal.

Physical development that shows adolescents are getting older is associated with cases of sexual harassment. This is supported by research by Trickett, Noll, and Putnam [2] stating victims of sexual harassment in their research experienced earlier puberty.

1.1.2. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment according to the United Nations (UN) [3] is a sexual act such as seduction or flattery, requests for sexual assistance, and sexual behavior both physically and verbally that the victim does not want. Burn [8] defines sexual harassment as actions that occur when victims are targeted by comments, movements, or unwanted sexual acts because of their actual or perceived gender, gender expression, or sexual orientation. In detail, the UN (2019) divides acts of sexual harassment into 3 forms, namely verbal, nonverbal, and physical.

Sexual harassment is a risk factor for negative body image problems, eating disorders, emotional, mental and, physical illness related to stress. Davidson, Butchko, Robbins, Sherd, and Gervais [10] stated that victims of sexual harassment on the streets or public spaces caused the victims to experience high levels of anxiety. Sexual harassment experienced by men and women by peers can have an impact on somatic symptoms, depressive, negative affect, and anhedonia [11].

1.1.2.1. Acts of Verbal sexual harassment

Acts of verbal harassment in the form of (a) calling someone a 'girl', 'honey' or 'babe' (b) whistling, making kissing sounds, howling, smacking lips (c) talking about another person's body with sexual content, (d) asking about sexual fantasies, as well as other people's sexual lives, (e) making sexual jokes or sexual stories, (f) catcalling [3]. Catcalling is a form of unwanted sexual harassment to strangers that can be accompanied by whistling or touching [9].

1.1.2.2. Acts of nonverbal sexual harassment

Harassment in the form of nonverbal namely (a) seeing others from top to bottom, (b) following others, (c) showing gestures or sexual acts, (d) facial expressions such as kissing, winking, and licking lips, (e) blocking a person's path, (f) making sexual gestures with hands or through body movement.

1.1.2.3. Acts of physical sexual harassment

Acts of physical sexual harassment are (a) touching another person's body, (b) hugging, (c) kissing, (d) stroking, (e) patting someone else's body, (f) touching or rubbing themselves sexually around someone others, and (g) standing near or touching someone with a passing glance at another person [3].

1.2. Our Contribution

This research method was conducted by giving a random questionnaire to teenagers in one school in the South Tangerang area. Participants are students in grades 10-12 in high school, aged 13-19 years, and are not limited to gender or socioeconomic status. The distribution of the questionnaire aimed to find a picture of sexual harassment experienced by students at SMAN A in South Tangerang. The questionnaire contained several questions regarding students' experiences regarding the forms of sexual harassment that they had experienced. After completing the questionnaire, the next step was interviewing three students. The interview was conducted to find out more about the impact of sexual harassment on the daily lives of the participants.

1.3. Paper Structure

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 1 introduces the preliminaries used in this paper, which include theories and previous research about adolescent and sexual harassment. Section 2 presents the result of this study. Finally, section 3 concludes the paper.

2. RESULT

Based on the results of research on sexual harassment from 178 students there were 123 students (69%) had experienced sexual harassment, 55 students (31%) had never experienced sexual harassment. Based on 123 students who had experienced sexual harassment, 84 students (68%) were female, and 39 students (32%) were male. The results showed there were 66 students (54%) experiencing verbal sexual harassment, 106 students (86%) experienced nonverbal sexual harassment, 56 students (46%) experienced physical sexual harassment.

Interviews were also conducted by researchers on X, Y, and Z on August 16, September 13 and, September 17, 2019. X is a woman who suffered physical sexual harassment when she was 16 years old. Y female experienced physical sexual harassment when she was 14 years old. Z male, verbal and, non-verbal sexual harassment at the age of 15 years. Sexual harassment experienced by X caused him to feel afraid, lack self-esteem, and low self-esteem (personal communication, August 16, 2019). The impact of sexual harassment experienced by Y is not attending school, often not attending lessons, and having a fear of the opposite sex (personal communication, September 13, 2019). After experiencing sexual harassment the impact on Z is feeling uncomfortable, feeling humiliated, afraid and, not going to school for one day (personal communication, September 17, 2019). Furthermore, X, Y, and Z also felt anxious for fear of recurrence, palpitations, and sweating after experiencing sexual harassment. These physical reactions continue to be felt by X and Y when remembering the incident or when accidentally meeting with the perpetrators of sexual harassment.

3. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research on sexual harassment from 178 students there were 123 students (69%) had experienced sexual harassment, 55 students (31%) had never experienced sexual harassment. 84 students (68%) were female, and 39 students (32%) were male. The results showed there were 66 students (54%) experiencing verbal sexual harassment, 106 students (86%) experienced nonverbal sexual harassment, 56 students (46%) experienced physical sexual harassment. Based on the results of interviews, victims of sexual harassment experience several impacts. Impacts such as not attending school, often not attending lessons, and having fear of the opposite sex, low self-esteem, and anxiety. This study also shows that the family also plays a role in the impact of sexual harassment on participants. Victims who get family support are known to feel calmer and can socialize and study at school

Based on interview results it is known that the family also plays a role in the impact of sexual harassment on participants. X told his sexual harassment to mothers. After telling her mother, X got advice and encouragement from her mother. Although until now X still feels palpitations, dizziness and, nausea when remembering events, the support of the mother makes X can still learn in school and socialize well (personal communication, August 16, 2019). Then Z also told his sexual harassment incident to his father. Father calms Z and decides to take and pick Z up to school until now (personal communication, September 17, 2019). Father's actions make Z not afraid and feel calm. At this time Z also stated that he did not experience any physical reaction or fear when remembering events (personal communication, September 17, 2019). Y did not tell parents and did not get support from the environment. Y is still experiencing anxiety, palpitations, sweating, and, fear of the opposite sex. This impact interferes with Y's daily activities especially in school (personal communication, August 16, 2019).

Based on the results of the questionnaire and the results of the interviews, it can be concluded that sexual harassment has many negative impacts on the victim. The perceived impact of sexual harassment in this study is low self-esteem not attending school, often not attending lessons, and having fear with the opposite sex, feeling humiliated and anxious. The physical reactions experienced when remembering events are palpitations, dizziness, nausea, and sweating. Also, families who provide support can play a role in the impact of sexual harassment experienced by victims.

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