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FACTORS CAUSING THE INCREASE OF SUICIDE IN GUNUNGKIDUL REGENCY

(A CASE STUDY IN WONOSARI AND SEMANU SUB-DISTRICT)

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Abstract

This study aims to find the factors causing the increase of suicide in Gunungkidul Regency (case study in Wonosari Subdistrict and Semanu sub-district) and find out the efforts made by the police or local authorities in dealing with the problem of increasing suicides.

The research applied sociological juridical methods using empirical normative approach. The data were obtained through from written sources and interviews and were then analyzed using descriptive qualitative method. This research is an illustration of the increasing mortality rate in Gunungkidul Regency in an unusual way, namely suicide. Prevention and attention from the government and local authorities regarding suicides is highly expected by the community. Optimization of the efforts is necessary to decrease or eliminate the number of death rates due to suicide

It can be concluded that the dominant factors causing suicide is psychiatric problem or depression. Most of the victims were identified as suffering from chronic diseases and problems, either related to family or psychological condition. The most relevant way to prevent suicide is by improving an individual's mental health. The prevention starts from one self, family, and the closest neighbors.

Keywords: Interpretation, Blasphemy, Legal Perspective

I. Introduction

The statistics shows that at least two to three people committing suicide each day. The Central Statistic Body (BPS-Badan Pusat Statistik) reported that in 2015, suicidal case of the whole country reached more than 812 in number (https://www.cnnindonesia.com/gaya-hidup/20180830182931-255-

326289/158-persen-keluarga-hidup-dengan-penderita-gangguan-mental, accessed on September 10, 2018). In fact, the real number may be higher.

The World Health Organization, serving as the coordinating agency for international world health, has another record. In 2012, WHO estimated that the number of suicide in Indonesia reached 10.000 (http://wilayah2.ilmpi.org/2017/10/12/kalkapsi-hari-kesehatan-sedunia-2017/, accessed on October 12, 2017). The trend increased from 2010, which was only a half, or 5.000.

In global, WHO stated that 800.000 people or more in the world died of suicide each year and more people outside the number made suicidal attempt. There is an indication that more than 20 adults made suicidal attempt before they actually died of it. In addition, WHO reported that as much as 75% of the suicide case in the world occurs in the countries where the citizens are in the low and middle level of economy; Indonesia is among them (Mantiri, Kristanto dan Siwu, 2015: 258).

Dr. Jhon Campo, the head of psychiatry and health behavior of Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, stated that several people came to such a desperate feeling and deep-suffering that they believe it is better for them to end their life (http://rilis.id/Tradisi-Bunuh-Diri-Apa-Sebabnya, accessed on July 25, 2017). The thought triggers the people to commit suicide. The main factors of suicide in other countries are depression, abuse, violence, and social background. According to Dr. John Campo, as reported by Live Science, many people who want to commit suicide have actually struggled intensively against their ambivalent thought. We are required to guide and help them.

Ronny T Wirasto, a psychiatrist graduated from Medical Faculty of Universitas Gadjah Mada, in his paper entitled "Suicide Prevention in Indonesia: Providing Public Advocacy" stated that suicide case in Indonesia is mostly related to mental health problems, family problems, the use of alcohol and drugs, low faith, as well as poor social relationship (https://student.cnnindonesia.com/edukasi/20180119115128-445-

270131/kesehatan-mental-penting-untuk-semua-orang, accessed on February 9, 2018). Further, it is also caused by social and economy problems. Those who want to commit suicide think that their problems and miseries will end through the action.

One of the areas where the case has increased is Yogyakarta, particularly in Gunungkidul Regency. The number of suicide keeps increasing year by year. Based on the interview with the Head of Public Relations of the Resort Police of Gunungkidul, Iptu Anang Prastawa, it is known that the suicide case reached 31 in number in 2015 and 30 in 2016 and 2017 (interview on September 18, 2018 in the Police Resort of Gunungkidul). In July 2018, the number reached 15 spread in several sub-districts (Harian Jogja, 2018: 2). At the end of 2018, the number was still high. The police stated that 29 people have committed suicide; 26 of them died and the other 3 were saved (Harian Merapi, 2018: 3)

The society in Gunungkidul argues that suicide is an option given to human to continue their life into the happier one. They call it "Pulung Gantung," a mysterious occurrence that precedes the suicide case. It is said that a red light from the sky will fall down to a house. The "chosen" individual obtaining the light is believed to end his life by committing suicide. The word "pulung" in Indonesian Dictionary means "achieving happiness" (blessing, present, position, etc.); getting lucky, or getting a misfortune (difficulty) because of other people's deed.

A lecturer of the Faculty of Cultural Sciences of Universitas Gadjah Mada, I Wayan Suwena, explained in his dissertation that the phenomenon of *pulung gantung* is understood as a symbol of communication (Suwena, 2016:

3). The person committing suicide is attempting to communicate with other people to solve his problems, but he cannot find a way to express it.

Along with the advance of the era and the increasing awareness of the people, the myth of *pulung gantung* is no longer seen as the main cause of suicide. A survivor of suicide attempt, Sugeng Riyanto, admitted that economic problems and sufferings made him commit suicide. It has no relation with the myth (in Swara Gunungkidul, 2017: 2). This 23-year-old man worked as shopkeeper in a stationery store after graduating from Vocational School in Wonosari Gunungkidul. He quitted the job after a year because it was not relevant to his educational background and he was having an illness.

Iptu Ngadino, the operational department of the Public Relation of the Resort Police, explained that the main cause of suicide is depression due to stressed life, such as chronic disease, shame, or unfulfilled desire (in Sindo daily newspaper, 2015: 1). Ngadino stated that in 2018, suicide was not committed not only through hanging, but also through plunging into a well or a *luweng* (vertical cave). The increasing cases of suicide have encouraged the police to guide the society, preventing them from committing suicide. They have assigned non-commissioned officers in fostering the security and public order (Babinkamtibnas-Bintara Pembina keamanan dan ketertiban masyarakat) and also psychiatrists for the program.

Head of the Suicide Prevention Team, Agus Prihastoro, stated that from year to year, the number of suicide case is increasing (Kompas, 2017: 2). The case has made the local government establish A Decree of the Regent Number 121/KPTS/Tim in 2017 on the Establishment of Suicide Prevention Team (in Republika newspaper, 2017: 3).

Wonosari sub-district ranked the first in the number of suicidal attempt and death due to suicide (http://www.gunungkidulkab.go.id/D-88a0baef8aff3b0bd65e40c34ee7e294-NW-

e62771bfc0ea0bb14a2feeb41dad4770-0.html, accessed on November 9, 2017), with at least 12 of the total number. The next position is placed by Semanu and Playen, which were 10 and 9, respectively. The data and facts were obtained

during the extended Focus Group Discussion (FGD) on suicide prevention by the Gunungkidul government (Handayani newspaper, 2017: 1). For this, the three sub-districts were prioritized for the socialization program.

Responding to the phenomena, a psychiatrist of Wonosari hospital, Ida Rochmawaty, stated that suicide is caused by several factors; one of them is depression (Tribun Jogja, 2018:2). Depression is a mood disorder characterized by gloomy feeling, exhaustion, and lost of interest. During this period, the person loses serotonin substance. Psychologically, those people committing suicide are those who are introverted and sensitive. Under the condition, the sufferer needs attention from the social environment. Isolation or ignorance will trigger the occurrence of depression, leading the person to commit suicide.

II. Discussion

A. The Factors Causing the Increase of Suicide Case

1. The Causing Factors of Suicide

Suicide is prohibited by the religion; all religion respects the values of life. The Almighty God has blessed us with life and we have to be grateful, instead of ending it by taking tragic action.

Human are born to live together, socialize, and respect each other. Sometimes, conflicts may arise, particularly conflict of interests among the society members. The inevitable problem may harm the relevant people. Those having no power to solve the problem and getting frustrated by the condition or humiliated may be triggered to commit suicide. It is because of their low faith and heightened emotions, of which they cannot express.

Emile Durkheim (in Muhammad Anas) suggested for causes of suicide. First is egoistic suicide, which is caused by personal problems. Second is altruistic suicide, which is committed to fight for others. Third is fatalistic suicide that is caused by strict regulation. The last, anomic suicide is caused by loose regulation (Anas, 2015: 167). Durkheim emphasized that suicide may be caused by social facts, those are integration and regulation. Other factors, according to Muhammad Adam Hussein, include depression, mental pressure, discouragement to face the

real life, poverty, low educational background, low faith, and drug abuse (Hussein, 2015: 17).

2. Factors Causing the Increase of Suicide Case in Gunungkidul Regency

Suicide case in several areas in Indonesia is caused by several factors. From all of them, Gunungkidul is observed to be the highest in number. More people ended their life by committing suicide and the number keeps increasing. It is necessary to conduct an immediate observation and prevention in a more concrete context to solve the problem.

The data taken from Gunungkidul government in 2014 revealed 21 cases of suicide. It increased in 2015 into 33 cases. The number was similar in 2016 and 22 more people were reported died of suicide in 2017 (Kompas, 2017: 2). In January to September 2017, 29 people were reported to commit suicide in Gunungkidul. According to the Central Statistic Body, it is included in high category. In 2017, 35 people committed suicide. Meanwhile, from January to November 1, 2018, 23 cases were recorded in this regency (Kompas, 2018: 1).

A suicide case, indeed, occurred on Monday, September 10th, 2017, which is a commemoration of "World Suicide Prevention Day" proclaimed by IASP (International Association for Suicide Prevention). Similarly, WHO declared the prevention program in Stockholm on September 10, 2003 (Kedaulatan Rakyat, 2017: 1). Waspodo (50-year-old) was the person committing suicide that day. He lived in Girimulyo village, Panggang sub-district, Gunungkidul Regency. His body was found by the neighbor who happened to pass his house. He had hanged himself using plastic rope. The information gathered from the neighbours showed that the victim was having a problem related to a business he was running. Before, on Saturday July 2, 1017, a villager named "T" (63 years old) of Bleberan village, Playen sub-district, also committed suicide at home (Kompas, 2017: 2).

In addition, suicide occurred in 2018 on Sunday February 25th and Monday February 26th. The victims were Painem (65 years old) and Komyani (27 years old). Both committed suicide in their bedroom. According to the sector Police of Paliyan, Catur Widodo, they were depressed of chronic disease and mental pressure (Kedaulatan Rakyat, 2018: 18).

According to Darmaningtyas, suicide case in gunungkidul is caused by deep and acute depression (Darmaningtyas, 2002: 7). It is also related to the geographical condition (dry and barren) and poverty. The data obtained by Iptu Ngadino shows that the victims are dominated by those aged 50-80 years (Kedaulatan Rakyat, 2017: 1) and the youngest was 27 years old.

An NGO volunteer of Imaji (Inti Mata Jiwa), Sigit Wage Dhaksinarga, analyzed the data obtained in 2017. He found that the victims are no longer dominated by elderly. Instead, most of them were in their productive age, 25-50 years old. Depression was the main cause. Sigit also found a data from 2010, indicating that the causes were not related to economy condition or religion. Sigit reported that in Gunungkidul, around 2.200 people were mentally ill and had the potentials to commit suicide. It is further necessary to follow up the problems because Gunungkidul does not have a mental health hospital and the number of psychiatrists is inadequate. Moreover, some of the sufferers do not hold an Identity Card, preventing them from having health insurance. In fact, depression needs medication on regular basis.

The data obtained from the police investigation and medical examination gathered by Imaji show that the cause was mostly depression, reaching 43%. Other causes include chronic disease (26%), mental disorder (6%), economic difficulties (5%), family issues (4%), and unclear reason (16%) (https://geotimes.co.id/opini/menanyakan-kembali-fenomena-gantung-diri-digunungkidul/, accessed on July 5, 2018).

Suicide case in Gunungkidul in 2018 is the highest in the last two decades. The police recorded that in eight months, there has been 26 cases of suicide. Within the same period of the previous year, in 2016, there were only 19 cases. The total number of the suicide victims, since 2009-2017, was 200 with approximate number of 25-30 victims each year, or 2 each month (Kedaulatan Rakyat, 2018: 3). Sub-districts with the highest number are the ones being the business center of Gunungkidul, such as Wonosari, Semanu, and Karangmojo. Ngadino also explained that the local police have made several efforts to prevent suicide.

B. The Efforts Taken by the Government and Local Police in Handling Suicide Case

The increasing number of suicide case from year to year has encouraged the government, particularly Gunungkidul regency, to take some actions. The mortality rate, as well as the cause, can no longer be tolerated. The society expects that government will be able to decrease or stop the case.

The government of Gunungkidul regency in cooperation with the local police and the society has made several efforts to stop the occurrence of suicide; among them is through the establishment of "Satuan Tugas Berani Hidup (Dareto-live Task Force)". The unit is assigned to carry out a socialization for and cooperation with the society to prevent suicide. The Government issued A Decree of the Regency Number 121/KPTS/Tim 2017 on The Establishment of Suicide Prevention Team. The decree is expected to become the legal basis to encounter the case and involve all relevant parties (Kompas, 2017: 2). The unit involved the government, police, Ministry of Religion, Health Agency, Forum for Religious Harmony, art observers, and other. The Head of the Suicide Prevention Team, Agus Prihastoro, have divided the team into three work unit, each of which the tasks are mapping the case as well as taking preventive, promotive, curative, and rehabilitative efforts to encounter the case.

One of the members of Satgas Berani Hidup dr. Ida Rochmawari SpKJ, explained that the cause of suicide is depression. In the most severe condition, an individual may be triggered to commit suicide. Responding to that, the Vice Regent of Gunungkidul, Immawan Wahyudi, along with the taskforce, carried out a meeting discussing the need of mental health service at the level of puskesmas (health center) by assigning a psychologist. The psychologist will serve as an early warning to supervise those having the potentials of committing suicide.

The government's concern in helping the society is by providing an access to health consultation at the health center. The mental health service is opened in several health centers to ease the implementation of physical and mental examination to the society. Among the areas providing the service are Paliyan,

Ponjong, and Wonosari sub-districts. The people, especially those with the potential of committing suicide, need massive assistance. Thus, a psychiatrist is assigned at least in one sub-district. Besides, the health care workers in the health center also assist the people who are at risk of having mental health disorder.

The government also pays attention to the people's religious aspect. Through the Head of the Department of Religious Affair of Gunungkidul, Mukotip, the government optimizes the instructor in the field. They are expected to give immediate help to the people through appropriate *dakwah* in order to prevent the suicide attempt. Religious counseling in the villages helps the people to understand and strengthen their faith. The religious leaders play important roles in overcoming the problems. One of the ways is by improving the people's awareness of the harm of suicide, in that it is not accepted by the humanity values. They are also expected to urge the people to fight against suicide.

The Resort Police of Gunungkidul Regency has carried out intensive socialization to prevent suicide in the area. The approach was made by 144 members of Bhayangkara Pembina Keamanan dan Ketertiban (Officer for Fostering Security and Public Order) placed in 144 villages. According to the head of the unit, Iptu Surahyo, the personnel will visit and approach the potential society. The Police will not only provide help, but also monitor the people's condition, particularly those requiring assistance in terms of economy and social problems as well as chronic disease. Elderly is not the exception. The Police will have face-to-face consultation session with the people, giving them attention. As an indication, suicide case is caused by the lack of attention, either from the family member or surrounding community.

The Vice Regent of Gunungkidul explained that procedural response can be taken by synergizing several parties to make the movement. Among the parties are Health Agency, Social Agency, and Department of People Welfare and the Local Secretary of Gunungkidul (Kabar Handayani, 2017: 1). The government should protect the society and make them understand that suicide is a form of mental health disorder. Therefore, the public figures, the pople, traditional leaders, and religious leaders serve to build the people's awareness on the case.

Imaji also helps the government to focus on the preventive and promotive efforts for improving the mental health of the people and for preventing the suicide attempts. It is recognized that people have not known that mental health can be taken care of through medical treatment. Moreover, people hold the stigma and tend to discriminate those with mental health disorder.

The government and the local police have consistently made the efforts to prevent suicide. However, they are limited by numbers, preventing them from monitoring every activities conducted by the society. It is evident in the high number of suicide case in 2018. Early prevention and the best effort to take is by encouraging the family members to concern the mental health of the potential individuals. Each member of the family should tell each other's problem and monitor each other, thereby allowing them to provide immediate help and prevent the individual from committing suicide.

III. Conclusion

A. Conclusion

As part of civilized community, suicide case is categorized as universal tragedy in humanity. It is certainly not caused by pulung gantung. The government and the people need to make some efforts to prevent it.

Every year, mortality rate, particularly by committing suicide, is increasing in Gunungkidul regency, in spite of the efforts taken by the government and the local police. The dominant factors are mental disorders or depression. It requires more attention to prevent people from committing suicide. Anticipation is a never-ending process of the government and other relevant parties.

Problems of mental health service in Gunungkidul need to be solved to prevent suicide. One of the efforts is by identifying those having the potentials of committing suicide, such as those with chronic disase, who are old, who live alone, and who have economic problems. Most victims are those with chronic disease, followed by those with economic and family problems, and then mental disorders.

The most logical way to prevent suicide is by maintaining an individual's mental health. As it is known, an individual decided to commit suicide through a series of process and consideration, instead of through reflex response. The way of thinking, talking, behaving, and feeling are the functions of an individual's mental health. The efforts to prevent suicide can begin from one self, family, and the closest neighbor.

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