



Forgiveness as a Psychological Effort for Victims of Crime of Sexual Harassment

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Abstract. The purpose of this study was to determine the strengthening of understanding about forgiveness *as* an alternative approach in psychological rehabilitation efforts for victims of sexual harassment crimes given that the impact of the crime of sexual harassment on victims psychologically, victims can experience decreased self-esteem, depression, and anxiety. Worry. The type of research used by the author is normative or doctrinal legal research that is prescriptive and applied. This research approach is carried out with a *statute approach*. The results showed that providing an understanding of forgiveness in psychological rehabilitation efforts as well as support from family and the environment for victims of the crime of sexual harassment was very beneficial because of the willingness and ability of the victim to learn to forgive the perpetrator and make peace with the bad story of the victim he experienced, and the individual. Also learning to take positive action against the perpetrator will tend to make him able to achieve optimal psychological recovery.

Keywords: Forgiveness (Forgiveness) · Rehabilitation · Victims of Sexual Violence

1 Introduction

The National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) admits that the number of sexual harassment in Indonesia is still very large, for 9 years (2012–2020). CATAHU recorded that 45,069 cases of sexual violence were reported. Usually, victims do not realize that they have been victims of sexual harassment. They are also afraid to report for fear of receiving unwanted negative impacts or an ineffective protection system for victims of sexual harassment [1]. The inability to identify sexual harassment occurs due to a lack of knowledge and awareness. This becomes a fatal problem because of his inability to prevent sexual harassment and also to report it to get proper attention and response. Recent research on women victims of sexual harassment shows that most research focuses on how to punish perpetrators both in court and out of court. As a result of this behavior, they often ignore the condition of the victim, both physically and psychologically, as well as the concept of gender, which often occurs because of the strong patriarchal culture in Indonesia [2]. Sexual harassment can be in the form of refusing behavior, rubbing the perpetrator's body against the victim, and masturbating in front of the victim.

Lonsway et al. (2008) underlined that the low reporting of sexual harassment was partly due to the victim's unawareness that they had experienced sexual harassment. Reinforced by the concept of sexual harassment as an unwanted sexual connotation carried out by a person or group of people against someone has three dimensions, such as gender harassment, unwanted sexual attention, and sexual coercion [3]. Rusyidi, et al. (2019) revealed that sexual harassment in educational institutions with student victims could hinder or threaten students' academic and non-academic achievements. This can cause the victim to drop out of school. Educational institutions can also accept distrust. The next impact is the quality of human resources. For example, lecturers or leaders force students or workers to admit sexual approaches. In return, they will be given high grades or work benefits.

Sexual harassment has several categories. First, the form of lustful body language and threatening gazes, as well as gestures related to sex. Second, verbal forms such as whistles, gossip, sex jokes, and threatening statements. Third, the physical form consists of touching, pinching, patting, jerking intentionally, squeezing, and approaching without permission [4]. Sexual harassment such as rape can be said to be sexual harassment if the actions taken by the perpetrator have caused scars or wounds [5]. Sexual harassment will also cause big problems in the psychological condition of the victim. They can turn into an overwhelmed person who has various feelings, such as anger, hatred and wanting to take revenge on the perpetrators. Indecent acts can also leave a traumatic impact which is often referred to as *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder* (PTSD). As sufferers of PTSD, victims of sexual harassment tend to feel worthless compared to others, do not accept criticism from others, feel hopeless, and feel like a failure which can lead to depression.

Lack of support from family can lead them to blame themselves and judge themselves negatively. In this case, the environment is very influential. Their rejection of the victim by not giving them the opportunity can worsen the condition of the victim [6]. According to O'Donohue (Lubis, 2013), sexual harassment can affect the victim's psychological, physical, and performance. On the psychological effects, victims can experience decreased self-esteem, depression, and anxiety. In terms of physical effects, they may experience headaches, eating disorders, indigestion, weight loss, or weight gain. It is also possible that they will call for no apparent reason. On the performance effect, the quality of the victim's work can be weakened by the loss of satisfaction, morale, and self-confidence so rehabilitation is necessary.

2 Research Methods

The type of research used by the author is normative or doctrinal legal research that is prescriptive and applied. This research approach is carried out with a *statute approach*. The legal materials used are primary legal materials and secondary legal materials. Primary legal materials consist of statutory regulations and secondary legal materials consist of literature study materials. The data analysis technique uses deductive logic.

3 Discussion

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) defines sexual harassment as “unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature.” However, this must be proven before taking any action that could lead to improper performance. From one’s job and create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment [7]. while *the European Parliament* (2002) describes sex-related sexual harassment, in which unwanted behavior related to one’s gender occurs with the intention or purpose of as a result of violating a person’s dignity and creating an environment that is intimidating, hostile, demeaning, insulting or offensive, and in which any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical behavior of a sexual nature occurs with the aim or effect of violating a person’s dignity.

In Article 1 point 1 of Law Number 12 of 2022, the crime of sexual violence is defined as any act that fulfills the elements of a criminal act as regulated in this law and other acts of sexual violence as regulated in the law as long as it is stipulated in this law. In short, sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, such as requests for sex, and other behaviors that verbally or physically refer to sexual acts.

The forms of criminal acts of sexual violence are contained in Article 4 paragraph (1) of Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning the types of criminal acts of sexual violence as follows:

- a. Non-physical sexual harassment;
- b. Physical sexual harassment;
- c. Forced contraception;
- d. Forced sterilization;
- e. Forced marriage;
- f. Sexual torture;
- g. Sexual exploitation;
- h. Sexual slavery; and
- i. Electronic-based sexual violence.

Another regulation, the Ministry of Education and Culture Policy on the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence Cases at the Ministry of Education and Research and Technology issued Permendikbud-ristek No. 30/2021 on 31–8-2021 to create a campus that is safe from sexual violence.

The crime of sexual violence, especially sexual harassment, certainly cannot be separated from the victim, while the word victim is generally defined as those who individually or collectively suffered harm, including physical or mental, emotional, economic, or substantial harm to their basic rights through actions. or commissions that violate individual country laws, including abuse of power. Several studies are currently examining the sexual harassment of female victims in Indonesia. However, the results are not comprehensive because they ignore female victims as the majority of the higher education population in Indonesia. Efforts to recover victims are part of the basic rights of all victims of sexual harassment. However, with the development of technology, these efforts can not only be done by relying completely on the authorities. Technology can

influence the formation of laws to encourage synergies between victims' needs for protection and also the conditions of an increasingly modern society. Efforts to recover victims are no longer 'old fashioned' which is understood as a way for the state to be responsible to the perpetrators, but also the victims. Thus, the ratio of victims' needs must be met so that the victim's recovery process can run effectively.

Sexual harassment is classified as a crime that degrades human dignity, so the state must play an effective role, not only as a regulator but also as a person in charge of the survival of its people within the framework of a welfare state. Handling sexual harassment through the use of court instruments does not necessarily end the case. The main problem is how victims can obtain justice by guaranteeing the rights of victims, especially those related to victims' recovery. Recovery efforts for victims are very important because sexual harassment has a systemic impact on the victim's physiology and psychology so if not handled optimally it can reduce or even endanger the victim's efforts to survive. Lopez (2012) revealed that it is generally known that physiological trauma affects a person's health, well-being, and quality of life. Recovery from this kind of trauma may be a long-term, possibly lifelong process. A patient suffering from this trauma may experience changes in their daily activities. This trauma can also affect their overall body function and life.

Problems like this as a whole will make the situation worse for the victims. For this reason, individuals who want to live a better life than before must be able to come to terms with the story, one of which is by building the concept of forgiveness for the perpetrators of the crime of sexual harassment.

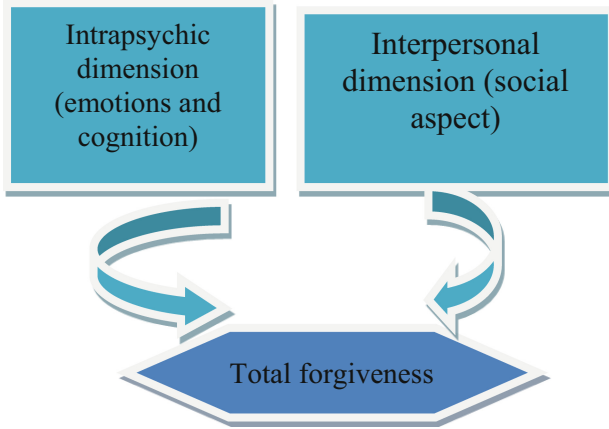
Forgiveness or what is commonly called *forgiveness* is a psychological encouragement related to cognitive, affective, and psychomotor in individuals who feel they have been treated poorly which hurts every aspect of life, to provide forgiveness for any mistakes made by others to them [8].

According to Feeney (2011), an individual who can get out of hurt feelings and painful events makes him a person who has new hope to be able to recover, because he learns to let go and get rid of all the hatred and heartache that has been buried. The high value of forgiveness formed by individuals leads to the ability to survive to face difficulties or life problems so that they can achieve creativity and self-intelligence [9]. However, please note that the formation of forgiveness is different from some other cases, where the individual requires time and a deep gradual process.

In efforts to form and develop forgiveness from the experienced KSDB, the individual needs several components that can be used as self-strength [8]. The first component, namely *avoidance motivations*, is where the individual maintains a relationship with the perpetrator but reduces the intensity of direct contact. Second, namely *revenge motivations*, in which the individual learns to affectionately get rid of the hatred and desire for revenge against the perpetrator. Third, namely *benevolence motivations*, where individuals continue to do good for their concern for the perpetrator.

According to Baumeister, Exline & Sommer (in Worthington, 1998) forgiveness is something that is understood as something that happens to a person when he feels like a victim of a painful event and a form of relationship between the person who has been hurt and the person who has hurt. So, Baumeister, Exline & Sommer (in Worthington, 1998) categorize forgiveness can occur because of the two dimensions that are formed,

namely intrapsychic and interpersonal [10]. The intrapsychic dimension involves the conditions and processes that occur within the person who is emotionally hurt as well as the thoughts and behaviors that accompany it, while the interpersonal dimension sees forgiveness of others as a social act between human beings. That is, here is a step towards restoring the relationship to its original state before the painful event occurred. According to Baumeister et al. (1998), the dimensions of forgiveness can be formed as a diagram as follows.



Several things affect the forgiveness factor:

1. Empathy and perspective-taking (Helping someone behave prosocially)
2. Contemplation and suppression (Suppress feelings of excessive hurt and resentment)
3. Level of closeness and commitment (People tend to easily forgive those closest to them and who have a bond of commitment)
4. Apology (Humans tend to forgive people who dare to apologize for their behavior).

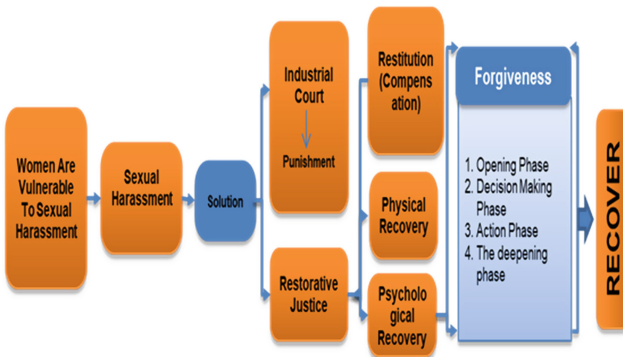


Fig. 1. New Model Psychological Recovery

Therefore, to get up and recover from the bad story, the individual needs to have and form a good personality so that it leads to the application of full forgiveness to the perpetrator and makes his life more meaningful. To feel calm, safe, and comfortable, the individual can learn to forgive and make peace with the bad story of the victim he experienced, and the individual also learns to take positive action against the perpetrator. This allows him to achieve optimal psychological recovery.

4 Conclusion

From the explanation in Fig. 1, the researcher can conclude that forgiveness is a difficult process, especially for victims of sexual harassment. However, it is very useful for the psychological recovery of the victim. Forgiving others means training victims to be able to rise from adversity caused by their environment. Victims as humans have an inner core to choose to rise and make peace with unpleasant circumstances.

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