

The Role of Multicultural Counselors to Help LGBT Against Discrimination Due to Failure of Communication

Faisal Rachman

Counseling Guidance Study Program
Universitas Lambung Mangkurat
Banjarmasin, Indonesia
faisal.rachman17@yahoo.com

Rilo Adityo

Master Degree of Counseling Guidance
Universitas Negeri Semarang
Semarang, Indonesia
rilohiu@gmail.com

Abstract—During their lives, LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender) always get discrimination from the community because they are considered 'different'. The role of the counselor upholds the values of social justice, humanism, and universal goodness that can be accepted by LGBT people so that they can rise from discrimination and obtain appropriate health services. The purpose of this study is to formulate the multicultural competence of the counselor in serving LGBT clients. This article used the literature review method. The results based on the concept of multicultural counselor competence were developed to assist LGBT clients includes counselor's understanding of assumptions, biases, and cultural values; counselor awareness about the counselee's perspective; and appropriate cultural intervention strategies. Person centered therapy counseling techniques range from ways to receive statements and communication, respect for others and understand them. Some of the characteristics of counselors are as follows: acceptance, congruence, understanding, and nonjudgemental. It is concluded that values of humanism and respect for human rights are a manifestation of the character of multicultural counselors who are open to all kinds of differences, including differences in sexual orientation and gender identity. Guidance and counseling services for LGBT ideally guide and give counseling in the name of humanity.

Keywords — *LGBT, Role of Counselors, Social Justice, Multicultural Counseling*

I. INTRODUCTION

LGBT is an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender. LGBT is a part of a variety of sexual orientations and gender identities. The term LGBT is introduced by the majority of communities based on sexuality and gender identity in the United States and some Western countries. The existence of LGBT is still a social, theological, and psychological problem of gender identity and sexual orientation. Therefore, in some cases, the people with LGBT get a bad treatment [1].

Psychologically, people who get bad treatment will experience impacts on aspects of their personality and mental health. It is for instance trauma, low acceptance, feeling insecure, and anxiety in which if not handled properly will further aggravate the situation. LGBT is also inseparable from

the physical violence they experience in society, families, to the treatment of their own partners [2].

Many Indonesians think that the LGBT community is a deviant people, sinners, and even some countries forbid LGBT people by taking repressive measures that limit their rights as human beings. Indonesian society is very troubled by the development of the LGBT community lately because it is not in accordance with the norms that exist in Indonesian society, which still adheres to eastern customs [3].

LGBT cannot be accepted within the Indonesian community because according to religious, cultural, and law values in the country of Indonesia explicitly do not permit the matters related to LGBT. There is a prejudice that someday LGBT will make Indonesian children become like LGBT people and many assumptions from the public that LGBT is bad.

Some people assume that same-sex relationships are prohibited by religion and classified as major sins. Human beings are created in pairs by God, and as human beings, we should follow these rules and not act against nature. In addition, the natural disasters are increasingly occurring and are as signs of the end of the age, along with the increasing number of people who claim to be part of LGBT.

Saiful Mujani Research & Consulting (SMRC) released a national survey on people's views on the existence of LGBT groups. This survey was conducted in 2016-2017 with 1,220 respondents from various provinces in Indonesia. Overall, basically, the Indonesian people still view LGBT negatively. Even not a few of those consider LGBT as a threat in social life. What is interesting is that there are hope and optimism and positive things that can be drawn from the findings of this study.

Although it is still viewed negatively by most Indonesians, this view is not accompanied by discriminatory efforts and intentions, although not more than 50%. Evidently, of all respondents, as many as 57.7% believed that LGBT people have the same right to live in Indonesia, like the other citizens. Another finding is the fact that 50% of respondents think that

the government is obliged to protect LGBT people as well as Indonesian society in general.

We should be able to appreciate the existence of LGBT on the basis of humanity as we respect the differences around us and show support. The support does not mean to be a part of it. We can simply accept and understand the situation, do not isolate them if they do not disturb us, and appreciate them as having the same human rights. A number of religious leaders in Indonesia stated that LGBT people must be protected from discrimination by other citizens, even though LGBT is very contrary to religious teachings, but they still have to be protected and filled with rights and freedoms as citizens.

The LGBT phenomenon appears not only because of environmental influences. In the perspective of mental health science, LGBT can appear as the influenced of culture, physical, sex, psychosocial, religion, and health aspects. Many causes of the emergence of the LGBT phenomenon can be a separate study for counselors who handle the problem. The more complex the problems experienced by counselees, the more specific the diagnosis is needed on the problem [4].

Research on LGBT that focuses on counseling is in the coming-out process. Coming out is the term in LGBT when it opens itself to others about their gender identity or sexual identity. The coming-out process usually experiences obstacles due to rejection from family, peers, environment, religious leaders, doctrines, and even oneself. If counselors are aware of the factors that hinder and contribute to producing positive and empowering experiences, they are better prepared to advise, warn, and discuss with their clients about the obligations and benefits gained by those around them [5]. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to formulate multicultural competencies from counselors in serving LGBT clients.

II. METHOD

This article used a literature review method by reviewing various relevant references such as books, e-books, journals, and others.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender*

LGBT is the acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender. Lesbian is someone who is interested in the other woman; gay is a man who is interested in the other men or often used to describe homosexuals; bisexual is interested in both men and women; and transgender is people whose gender identity is not male and female or different from what doctors usually write in certificates [6].

Of the LGBT, there are of course the underlying causes, such as:

- First, family Factors are very influential, including parents curb their children too much, lack of religious education since childhood, and abusive treatment from parents or siblings.

- The second is genetic Factors. These genetic factors usually come from the offspring of parents who have LGBT so that they will be infected with their children.
- The third is environmental and social factors. These environmental and social factors are very influential, including bad relationships that are lived by someone who can plunge someone into bad behavior and the entry of western cultures that change people's mindset. Like foreign cultures that allow free sex, people who change their mindset will take part in free sex which will certainly make the person fall into things that are not good and can make people become LGBT.
- The last is educational factors. Education is very important because people will be taught to see good and bad things. The more the level of education, the more knowledge is gained.

From LGBT, this will certainly cause some negative impacts both within the community and for those with LGBT, including:

- Social impact. The social impact that will be felt by people with LGBT such as the bad stigma from the community to LGBT people by excluding the LGBT people. Whereas the social impact felt by the surrounding community will certainly disrupt community life because of LGBT because LGBT is not a good habit or culture in community life in Indonesia.
- Cause a lot of diseases. Many diseases arise because of LGBT, such as anal cancer, oral cancer, HIV/ AIDS, etc. These diseases arise due to LGBT free sex. Like anal cancer, this is usually due to gay couples having sex. Then oral cancer, this occurs because of oral sex behavior carried out by men or women with changing partners in having sex. And for HIV / AIDS occurs because of unhealthy sexual behavior and very easily contracted with frequent sexual partners.

Young person's expectation for rejection based on their sexual/gender identity is more likely that they need to report symptoms of anxiety, depression, and suicide ideation [7]. These findings are consistent with the findings of Lewis that perceived stigma is positively associated with symptoms of depression among gay men and lesbians [3]. Experiences of prejudice and discrimination may reinforce expectations for rejection that the young person may develop as a result of heterosexism. The young person may feel the need to conceal their identity to avoid negative sanctions and to remain constantly alert. It may result in considerable distress.

Considering the present era of discrimination still occurs, counselors need to improve concepts, tests, methods, and results to create a good culture without discrimination. In the counseling process, there is already a multicultural element such as counselors' beliefs or culture with different counselee beliefs or cultures. So, the counselor should not force the counselor to believe but must show his professionalism and to be able to adjust the condition of the counselee.

B. *Spiral of Silence*

Spiral of Silence is a communication theory from Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann that is used to explain the growth and spread of public opinion [8]. Another definition of Spiral of Silence is communication that pays attention to the views of the majority which suppress the views of minorities [9].

The increasing pressure felt by minorities made them harbor their views and opinions and chose to tend to trust and follow the majority's view to avoid problems that might arise [6]. Those in the minority tend to be less assertive in expressing their views. Spiral of Silence is built with four basic elements, namely:

- Mass Media
- Inter-personal communication and social interaction networks
- Individual statements about something
- Other people's perceptions/opinions about an issue raised.

Reference [10] as the inventor of this theory, explains three assumptions as the basis of this theory. The three assumptions of the Spiral of Silence Theory are as follows:

- The majority of people threaten deviant individuals with isolation; thus, minority groups will be overwhelmed with fear of the isolation of those in power.
- Fear of isolation makes individuals try to assess the climate of opinion at all times.
- An assessment of public opinion influences public behavior.

Most of the LGBT people fear that they might not be able to get good medical services because of the pressure of the majority community. It prevents some LGBT people from seeking medical services when they need it. And it prevents them from being honest about their sexual orientation to doctors or other medical staff because of community discrimination against LGBT so that LGBT will return to the Spiral of Silence pattern and choose to hide their sexual identity.

C. *Person-Centered Counseling Theory*

The counselee has good character and tends to act constructively. All of that will eventually emerge by itself and bring the counselee to the solution of a problem that is beneficial for himself and others. To facilitate and expedite the process that takes place in the counselee, the counselor creates several favorable conditions. If all certain conditions are met, there will be a process in the counselee that will produce changes in self-concept and behavior.

On the counselor's condition, the conditions are: showing unconditional positive regard, understanding of what is expressed by the counselee in accordance with the counselee's terms of reference, as if the counselor is wearing an empathic understanding, and showing acceptance, appreciation, and understanding that can be communicated to the counselee in an atmosphere of deep personal interaction. It will make the

counselee feels all that exists; honesty, sincerity, and openness about what is lived by the counselor himself about counselor congruence [11].

In Rogers's view, these conditions are necessary and at the same time sufficient to guarantee the success of the counseling process. Therefore, the interpersonal relationship between counselors and counsees who communicate with each other is the key to success or failure of the process and counseling interviews. If the term counseling technique is used, this is the technique applied by the counselor, which is to create an atmosphere of interpersonal communication that realizes all the conditions mentioned above.

To be a patient who is patient and sensitive assures the counselee that he is accepted, and understood by the counselor allows the counselee to express all his feelings honestly, better understand himself and develop a goal of change in himself and his behavior. It is clear that the role of the counselor is not a passive pattern, but a very active role, even though the counselor does not provide guidance as in other counseling approaches.

Emphasis on personal centered therapy is philosophical and counselor attitude rather than technique, and prioritizes counseling relationships rather than counselor's words and actions. The implementation of counseling techniques is based on understanding the philosophy and attitude of the counselor. Rogers's counseling techniques, therefore, range from ways to receive statements and communication, respect for others and understand them. Some of the characteristics of counselors are as follows:

- Acceptance means that the counselor accepts the client as he is with all the problems. So the counselor's attitude is to accept it neutral.
- Congruence means that the characteristics of the counselor are integrated, according to the word with deeds and consistent
- Understanding means that the counselor must be able to accurately and understand empathetically the world of the clients as seen from within the client.
- Nonjudgemental means not assessing the client, but the counselor is always objective.

D. *Multicultural Counselor Competence*

Multicultural counselor competence includes the counselor's understanding of assumptions, biases and cultural values themselves; counselor awareness about the counselee's perspective; and appropriate cultural intervention strategies. The three competencies are further divided into three levels, namely attitudes and beliefs, knowledge and skills [12].

Based on the concept of multicultural counselor competence put forward by Arredondo, several counselor competencies were developed to assist LGBT clients in facing discrimination.

Table 1 shows an understanding of the counselor assumptions, bias, and cultural values, Table 2 shows

counselor awareness about the counselee perspective, and Table 3 shows a cultural intervention strategy.

TABLE I. UNDERSTANDING THE COUNSELOR ASSUMPTIONS, BIAS, AND OWN CULTURAL VALUES

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Attitudes and Beliefs | Recognizing the background and experience of their culture influences attitudes, values, and biased view against LGBT. Identifying the source of their discomfort with the differences that exist between them and the LGBT people. |
| Knowledge | Having special knowledge about their own culture and how it affects their definition and bias against LGBT. Having knowledge and understanding of how oppression, racism, discrimination, and stereotypes affect them personally in work and about the social impact on others. |
| Skills | Looking for an educational experience, consulting, and training to improve their understanding and effectiveness in working with LGBT groups. Trying to understand themselves as racial and cultural beings and are actively seeking non racial identity. |

TABLE II. COUNSELOR AWARENESS ABOUT COUNSELEE PERSPECTIVE

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Attitudes and Beliefs | Being aware of the negative and positive emotional reaction against LGBT that those who might harm relations counseling. Willing to contrast their own beliefs and attitudes with LGBT groups in a way that is not judgmental. Realizing their stereotypes and preconceived notions they hold against LGBT. |
| Knowledge | Being aware of the experience of life, culture, and historical background of the LGBT group counselees them. Understanding how the LGBT sexual orientation may affect personality formation, vocational choice, a manifestation of psychological disorders, behavioral seek help and conformity or inaccuracy of counseling approaches. Knowing social influence politics, racism, and stereotypes and powerlessness can affect self-esteem and self-concept LGBT groups in the counseling process. |
| Skills | Reviewing the relevant research topics and the latest findings on racism, discrimination, and health issues in the LGBT group Actively involved with LGBT groups outside counseling practice (e.g., community events, scientific study, friendship, group LGBT psychological assistance, etc.) so that their perspective on LGBT group is more than just an academic exercise. |

TABLE III. CULTURAL INTERVENTION STRATEGY

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Attitudes and Beliefs | Respect for the beliefs and spiritual values counselees of LGBT, including attribution and things that are taboo, because it affects the perspective and psychosocial functioning. Appreciate the help of other LGBT groups and respecting help network among the LGBT communities. |
| Knowledge | Have knowledge and understanding of a clear and explicit about the general characteristics of counseling and therapy (culture-bound, bound class, and monolingual) and how they can collide with the cultural values of LGBT counselees. Recognizing the institutional barriers that prevent LGBT counselees use mental health services. Having knowledge about the use of the assessment tool, using the procedure and interpret the LGBT group. Have knowledge of the LGBT community in which these groups live in a community environment. |

| | |
|---------------|---|
| | Be aware to avoid discriminatory practices that affect the psychological well-being of LGBT counselees. |
| Skills | Deliver and receive verbal and nonverbal messages accurately and precisely than LGBT counselees. Not tied to one particular method or approach but can modify and collaborate with other methods or approaches. Can perform on counselees LGBT intervention skills. Help counselees discover what the "problem" is derived from racism or bias in others so it must accurately counselees not personalize issues. No objection to consult with LGBT communities that exist around the environment if needed. Train and be expertise in the use of assessments and instruments in the LGBT group. Present as well as work to eliminate biases, prejudices and discriminatory context in the evaluation and interventions, and the need to develop a sensitivity to issues of oppression, sexism, heterosexism, elitism and racism in the LGBT group. Be responsible for educating LGBT counselees to process psychological interventions, such as goals, expectations, legal rights, and orientation counselor. |

IV. CONCLUSION

The Spiral of Silence Theory and Person-Centered Theory have the potential and can be implemented to help alleviate the discrimination experienced by LBGT. The goal is that LGBT people can access all health care services and obtain their rights as humans. LGBT are afraid to express their sexual orientation because they are afraid that they cannot get fair health services. LGBT people as a minority will tend to be silent because of the pressure from the majority community that rejects their existence in the social order. The values of humanism and respect for human rights are a manifestation of the character of multicultural counselors who are open to all kinds of differences, including differences in sexual orientation and gender identity. Acceptance, congruence, understanding and non-judgmental make LGBT counselees who face discrimination in society feel comfortable. There is cohesiveness between counselors and counselees in the hope of increasing the percentage of success of the counseling process. Guidance and counseling services for LGBT ideally guide and give counseling in the name of humanity.

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