

The Self-Concept of Earthquake Victims: Phenomenology in the Village Community of Nagrak, Cianjur, West Java

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Abstract. This research is about victims of the Cianjur earthquake which occurred in November 2022. The purpose of this study is to reveal the self-concept of victims of the Cianjur earthquake, especially in Nagrak village, which has the highest number of victims. The research method used is qualitative, with phenomenology as a study of analyzing the experiences of victims namely the experiences of individuals directly affected by the Cianjur earthquake disaster. The research informants were Nagrak villagers consisting of six people namely three women and three men. The theories used are Herbert Mead's symbolic interaction theory, a theory related to self-concept, and Alfred Schutz's phenomenology theory, a distinctive theory with intersubjective meaning. The results showed that the self-concept of the people of Nagrak village affected by the earthquake considered that the earthquake event was an unforgettable traumatic experience because it was so powerful and destroyed most of their lives. The conclusion of the research shows that the self-concept of the people of Nagrak village as victims of the earthquake disaster, shows a traumatic attitude (bad experience) but seems to try to understand the traumatic feeling wisely.

Keywords: *Self-Concept; Earthquake Victims, Phenomenology; Village Community.*

A. INTRODUCTION

Earthquakes are one of the disasters that have hit our country, Indonesia, quite often in recent years. One of them is the earthquake that occurred in Cianjur on Monday, November 21, 2022. The 5.6 magnitude earthquake disaster left a lot of damage and victims, not only physical, but also psychological. The victims need a lot of help and recovery in all fields, especially Nagrak village, which has the highest number of victims.

The damage caused by this earthquake had the most impact on 16 sub-districts out of a total of 32 sub-districts, especially on 169 villages out of a total of 360 villages in Cianjur district. Data from CNBC Indonesia, December 12, 2022 23:22 that there are 53 thousand damaged houses. While the death toll from the earthquake amounted to 334 people, and refugees reached 114,683 people from 41,166 families. From this data, it explains that the Cianjur earthquake disaster was an earthquake that left massive destruction. The earthquake that occurred in the Cianjur region caused deep concern for the community, especially those who had become victims of the disaster (Budilaksono et al., 2022). This condition is hard for all of us, and it is the duty of the government to be able to help restore the living conditions of the Cianjur community as before.

Problems that are not heavier than just physical damage are psychological damage, where many affected residents in addition to losing their homes, family lives, plus their income is lost, depleted, which means that economically they are destroyed, this is very heavy, it is natural that many victims experience severe depression after the earthquake occurred (Wu et al., 2014; Zarisman et al., 2023; Sugiura et al., 2015). In Sigmund Freud's psychodynamic theory, the cause of depression is the loss of a beloved object (Kaplan, 2010; Deler & Freyd, 2017; Salim & Darmayanti, 2020). Depression is a period of disruption of human functioning related to the nature of sad feelings and their accompanying symptoms, including changes in sleep and appetite patterns, psychomotor, concentration, anhedonia, fatigue, a sense of hopelessness and helplessness, and suicide (Soegijapranata, 2019; Sharghib & Mottakic, 2021; Liu & Mishna, 2014). This was also proven by the researchers when they visited the victims, especially the victims in Nagrak village who were the most numerous.

A mother sobbed as she recounted the seconds when the earthquake occurred along with the disappearance of her child who was later found dead (Nur, 2023; Roysircar, 2021; Ren et al., 2018). Not to mention a father who lost his wife and child, and a mother who told a sad story when she found her child crying, because the child lost all his family members (Satria et al., 2019; Washington, 2013). But the most common stories were about the destruction of homes and the loss of their sources of work or income.

Witnessing and listening to all the stories of the victims, made the researcher feel deep sadness, although of course not as heavy as they felt. It was thought to voice the moans in their experience as victims of the Cianjur earthquake disaster in a study, by examining more deeply the experiences of victims and the way they perceive the events experienced so that they become the self-concept of victims as survivors affected by the earthquake (Karanci & Acaturk, 2005; Roccanello et al., 2020). The research is intended to provide benefits not only for phenomenological scientists, but also as an important note in understanding victims of natural disasters, especially earthquakes.

Based on this experience when visiting victims, researchers are interested in examining phenomenologically the individual experiences of Cianjur earthquake victims when experiencing and how they survive in the recovery process after the earthquake occurred. Among the many victims, in this study researchers selected 6 people based on gender and age criteria, with the hope that their expressions could describe the experiences of the Cianjur community when hit by the earthquake and how they survived the earthquake disaster. Experience is something that is experienced. This is in accordance with the statement that, "all objects of knowledge must conform to experience" (Wirman, 2016).

B. METHOD

The methodological aspect questions how researchers can find whatever they want to know (Ishak, Fajar et al., 2011). The approach of this research is descriptive qualitative, where according to Moleong (2016) qualitative research is research to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, actions, etc., holistically, and presented by means of descriptions in the form of words and language, in a special natural context and by utilizing various natural methods. Meanwhile, according to Creswell (2013) descriptive qualitative is one type of method to describe, explore, and understand the meaning given by a number of individuals or a group of people to social or humanitarian problems.

While the study approach is phenomenology. According to Husserl and other experts, such as Maurice, Merleau-Ponty, Alfred Schutz, Sartre, and de Beauvoir, phenomenology is used to analyze experience (Haryanto, 2012). The selection of informants, consisting of six victims, was carried out by purposive sampling. According to Sugiono (2016) that purposive sampling is a sampling technique with certain considerations, namely research that does not generalize. Based on this opinion, the researcher selected informants based on the criteria that the researcher determined based on the consideration that these informants could provide the data most needed by the researcher.

Data collection techniques in this study used in-depth interviews, observation and documentation, while data analysis techniques used the Miles & Huberman model (1994), which basically suggests that in the process of searching for data, it must be continuously carried out according to research needs, until the data is saturated, or there is no repetition of data.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In accordance with the research objective that researchers want to know the self-concept of earthquake disaster victims, the questions are described as experiences and the way they interpret (the meaning) of the event, as expressed by Herbert Mead that the self-concept is related to the larger community or society, focusing on interaction only emphasizes more on subjective interpretation (Mead in Haryanto, 2012; Duclos & Barasch, 2011). Based on the questions and interviews, and after conducting the analysis as recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994), namely reducing, presenting and verifying data, here the researcher will present the findings in the form of themes that have gone through the process of comparing one with another and finding themes that match one another.

1. Traumatic Experiences

It is classified as a bad experience due to a frightening event that a person has experienced, such as the natural disaster experienced by the victims of the Cianjur earthquake. The feeling of fear, worry, which still disturbs victims psychologically is an experience that all informants expressed in their in-depth interviews with researchers, as the oldest informant Mr. Asep told researchers, " ...yes still and always remember, it was a shocking, frightening event that we have experienced."

Similarly, Mrs. Dede said, "...it's impossible to forget, I keep remembering, thinking about it, if I remember it, I'm sad, scared, worried, afraid that it will happen again..."

Fear, worry and always remembering what happened during the earthquake and how they dealt with it, was an experience that all informants shared in common: it was the worst experience that had ever happened to them. Based on the traumatic experiences told in depth, plus the gestures of the informants who all showed sad faces, especially Euis' mother who sounded stammering to tell her bad experiences, it is certain that the earthquake event only left trauma for them, as victims of the earthquake.

2. Wisdom

Based on the experiences that the six informants expressed, they interpreted that experience as wisdom for them. The definition of wisdom in the large Indonesian dictionary (KBBI), is wisdom, meaning that is useful, useful. This is in line with what informant Euis, a housewife whose family's economic condition was severely affected by the earthquake, said, "The events that happened to me and my family are like wisdom, all of these disasters are a warning from God to make us better..."

Similarly, Aan, a young woman who owns a grocery store, whose business has now been destroyed, stammered that the events that befell her were a lesson,

"...just take the lessons, maybe it has to be like this, hopefully with this incident we can live better..."

Although Mr. Didin, who is also a merchant and whose business was also destroyed, looks strong, he can only interpret what happened to them as wisdom,

"The wisdom is for us, just take the positives and benefits, because this has happened."

Added Muhammad, a stall owner, "...we have to accept and take lessons from this incident, everything has a lesson, leave it to Allah.."

Interpreting disaster as wisdom was also agreed by Mr. Asep, the oldest informant.

3. Warning

It is understandable that most of the victims also interpreted the earthquake disaster that they experienced and were traumatized by as a warning to them, in order to correct what they had done wrong, consciously or unconsciously, before the earthquake hit them. Researchers

took this meaning of warning as the second theme, because all six informants also expressed the same thing.

Muhammad, " ... our religion teaches that if we get a disaster we must interpret it as a warning or a warning so that we change for the better."

Asep, "A warning from Allah SWT"

Didin, "... maybe we are being reminded, maybe we have behaved badly before, so given this incident, just think positively."

What the three fathers said was also in line with what the three mothers said,

Euis, "we are reminded by Gusti Allah, so that we can become better people"

Dede, "...take more wisdom that this is a sign of warning from Allah swt, so that we improve ourselves in the future to become better people."

Aan, "maybe if we are not reminded like this, we forget"

The meaning of warning, which was also expressed by all six informants, explains the character of the village community, which culturally, they are quite religious people, always remembering and prejudiced to their creator, Allah SWT. It is only natural that the meanings that emerge always refer to self-awareness of the presence of Allah in their lives, that what happens to their villages as wisdom and warnings that all make them realize to become better human beings.

Based on the data found in the field, it was not difficult to find themes in the interviews with the victims (informants). Because most of them gave similar meaningful answers, this can be understood if we refer to Mead's opinion in Haryanto, that "the meaning of something for someone arises from how other people interpret that thing", in essence the perspective of symbolic interaction theory explains that meaning is a social product formed through interaction.

The meaning perspective of symbolic interaction is also in line with Alfred Schutz's social phenomenology theory of intersubjective experience, which is as an experience of reciprocal experience that each individual has (occurs in the experience of each individual). (Haryanto, 2012). Experience always forms meaning, but the meaning formed is not always in line with experience, but it can be a meaning that emerges as new knowledge. This means that bad experiences do not always mean bad things. Bad experiences can become new knowledge that gives birth to the opposite meaning, namely good meanings. This is what researchers conclude based on the findings in the field.

Meaning will greatly affect the self-concept of individuals in interaction. Mead's symbolic interaction perspective explains that society is a product of symbolic interaction (Mulyana, 2010)(Behina, 2004). Mead's perspective briefly explains that self-concept is the taking of other people's roles, meaning that the way a person communicates will consider other people as communicators. So the self-concept formed in an individual is also the result of interaction with his environment, which forms certain meanings and influences his actions.

Based on the findings in the field, the way victims express their experiences and the meaning of their experiences is a product of their social environment. They experience the same things, they live in the same culture, interact with each other, so they will tend to have the same understanding, as well as the self-concept that is formed, which is the basis for them to show similar ways of communication (verbal, non-verbal).

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the self-concept of the people of Nagrak village as victims of the earthquake disaster, shows a traumatic attitude (bad experience) but seems to try to understand the traumatic feeling wisely, namely taking lessons by being positive about the disaster that befell them. The wise interpretation that emerges is

strongly influenced by the community's socio-cultural environment. Symbolic interactionism theory, which emphasizes individual meanings based on the consideration of others and can change according to the social environment, seems to also need to consider ideological factors formed due to social culture.

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