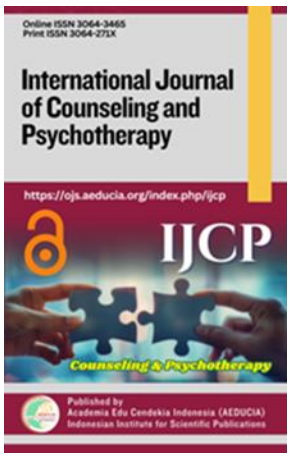
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Humanistic Counseling Psychology Review of Deviant Gigolo Behavior

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Humanistic Counseling Psychology Review of Deviant Gigolo Behavior

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ABSTRACT

Background: The profession of gigolos, which involves providing sexual services in exchange for money and material goods, has long been seen as deviant and morally questionable. **Objective:** This study aims to review the mental and psychological conditions of men who work as gigolos based on the perspective of Rogers' humanistic counseling psychology theory. **Method:** This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach. Data collection techniques are interviews, observations, documentation studies, and audio-visual information. Data analysis is carried out by concluding to produce meaning. **Results:** The main factor that motivates gigolo men is economic factors. Sexual transactions with women generate money and other materials, such as giving gifts of mobile phones (cell phones), laptops, clothes, food, housing, and other goods. Gigolo men use Facebook social media to promote themselves to women. **Conclusion:** The solution to Rogers' humanistic counseling psychology problems regarding gigolo behavioral deviations is as follows: 1) respondents must build self-confidence to quit the gigolo profession; 2) respondents must be honest and more open about the experiences they have experienced; 3) respondents must have the responsibility to solve their problems; 4) respondents must eliminate erroneous perceptions such as fear of being poor and others; 5) Respondents must be able to accept themselves to express feelings of anger, hatred, shame, anxiety, fear, and others that the respondents initially avoided. **Originality/Value:** This study offers novel insights in the field of Guidance and Counseling psychology by uncovering the underlying psychological dynamics, economic motives, and social media promotion regarding deviant gigolo behavior through Carl Rogers' humanistic counseling perspective, an area that remains scarcely examined. These findings enrich existing empirical evidence and serve as a strategic reference for counselors, mental health practitioners, and social welfare institutions in developing humanistic-based therapeutic interventions, self-acceptance programs, and rehabilitation strategies for individuals seeking to leave sex work.

1. INTRODUCTION

Prostitution is an illegal activity that violates the law by exchanging sexual relations in exchange for material obtained from the prostitution activity. Prostitution is understood as the exchange of sexual activity in exchange for something (Nazemi, 2011). Prostitution does not only include the exchange of money but also the exchange of jewelry or illegal drugs (Lehmiller, 2014). In this context, humans are traded commodities (Pitcher, 2015).

Prostitution is carried out, among others, to meet sexual needs. Limitations in terms of economy and sexuality, which are sources of satisfaction, make prostitution an alternative solution (Benoit et al., 2018). Prostitution generally makes women the main object in this illegal transaction, with men as the main consumers and paying for the prostitution transaction to women (Gruskin et al., 2019).

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This means that women are the perpetrators of prostitution, with the majority number that dominates compared to male prostitution perpetrators.

Male prostitutes are a minority with the smallest percentage when compared to female prostitutes (Chan & Beauregard, 2019). In the context of social society in Indonesia, prostitution perpetrators are known as commercial sex workers or commercial sex worker (CSWs). The use of the word CSWs or commercial sex workers in the social order of Indonesian society is always perceived as female CSWs. In contrast, the majority of social society in Indonesia does not call male CSWs commercial sex workers.

There are various terms for male commercial sex workers (CSWs), such as escorts, male prostitutes (man whores/man sluts), rent boys, gays (hustlers), and male sex workers (working boys) (Brents & Hausbeck, 2005). These terms differ for each country. In European countries and the United States, for example, men who become prostitutes are called male prostitutes, man whores/man sluts (Bimbi, 2007). For teenage boys, they are called call boys. In Indonesia, men who become prostitutes are usually called gigolos.

The term gigolo for male commercial sex workers (CSWs) is more popular in Indonesia than other terms. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a gigolo is a man who is paid to be a sexual partner and companion. A gigolo is understood as a paid man, kept or hired by a woman as a lover or sexual partner. Based on this definition, it can be understood that a gigolo is a man who gets paid for his work as a woman's sexual companion.

In general, gigolos carry out prostitution work based on certain motives. The extrinsic motive underlying the choice to become a gigolo is an economic motive, with a large amount of money or material in return. Another intrinsic motive underlying the choice to become a gigolo is the sexual satisfaction obtained when dealing with customers. The motives driving men to work as gigolos are invitations from friends, the desire to fulfil needs, a luxurious lifestyle, getting affection, and a profession that makes money easily.

Based on the results of the researcher's observations, the motives of gigolos are mostly economic factors; the social conditions of the lower middle class give rise to a social phenomenon, namely poverty; from this poverty factor, various social phenomena arise, such as unemployment, crime, unmet clothing and food needs and various other social symptoms, one of which can be found in the field is the gigolo profession due to pressing economic pressures, forcing this deviant behavior to exist and become symptoms in the social order of society.

Te gigolo profession needs to be reviewed in more detail, not just reviewing economic motives or sexual satisfaction alone. Therefore, the researcher conducted a study to review the gigolo profession based on the perspective of counseling psychology. A review from a counseling psychology perspective can provide a more comprehensive description of the factors that motivate someone to change into a gigolo. Are there hidden motives that are the driving factors for someone to decide to become a gigolo, or is it just encouragement from economic factors and sexual satisfaction alone?

This study aims to review the mental and psychological conditions of men who work as gigolos based on the perspective of Carl Rogers' humanistic counseling psychology theory. Carl Rogers' humanistic theory was chosen because it has advantages over other psychological theories. Among the advantages of Carl Rogers' theory is that it emphasizes positive human values compared to negative values. It is hoped that the advantages of Carl Rogers' theory, which emphasizes positive human values, can build self-awareness in gigolo men and help them change and develop themselves to be better.

It should be noted that in the purpose of this study, the counselor's task is to recommend gigolo men to psychologists or psychiatrists; this is because carrying out counseling therapy to clients who work as gigolos is not the counselor's authority. The counselor's authority is problematic for students still in the school environment, while gigolo is a deviation outside the school setting. Because gigolo cases are outside the school setting, the counselor's task is to refer or hand over the case to a psychologist or psychiatrist.

Previous studies on male prostitution have mainly focused on economic and social factors, neglecting deeper psychological aspects such as self-perception, emotional fulfillment, and personal struggles (Firouzjaeian et al., 2023; Pant, 2024; Scorgie et al., 2021; Pant, 2025). Research on counseling interventions for gigolos is also limited, especially from a humanistic counseling psychology perspective, with most studies focusing on female sex workers (Netrawati et al., 2023; Pederson et al., 2024; Magnan-Tremblay et al., 2020; Parker et al., 2022).

This study applies Carl Rogers' humanistic counseling psychology to analyze gigolo behavior, emphasizing self-awareness, emotional well-being, and personal growth. It explores how gigolos perceive themselves and the internal conflicts they may experience, offering insights for counseling strategies that promote self-reflection and transformation while acknowledging the limitations of counseling professionals in addressing such cases.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach. Qualitative research is based on philosophy, which examines scientific conditions where researchers act as instruments. Data collection techniques and qualitative analysis

produce meaning. Qualitative research is a condition where researchers collect data at a specific location or place, collect information from respondents without engineering or artificial situations, and analyze respondent behavior according to their context (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative research is a researcher's effort to understand how certain individuals or groups experience certain symptoms or phenomena using an exploratory approach as a scientific method (Johnson & Larry, 2014).

2.2 Research Subjects

This research was conducted in city X. The city's name or research location is disguised for the city's good reputation. The subject of the study was a man who was around 27 years old and was in the gigolo profession. The research subject chosen was only one respondent so that the researcher could focus fully and carefully on observing the respondent's behavior comprehensively.

2.3 Data Collection

The instrument used in this study is oneself. Qualitative research differs from quantitative research, which uses test tools such as questionnaires. The instrument in qualitative is the researcher himself. This is because qualitative research produces meaning by analyzing data from respondents. At the same time, test tools such as questionnaires produce analysis in the form of numbers.

2.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative is done by concluding to produce meaning. The characterization of the final results of qualitative research or studies is to produce meaningful coherence (Tracy, 2013). Data analysis in qualitative studies involves techniques of sorting, examining, evaluating, categorizing, synthesis, comparing, and interpreting codes and data and testing raw data that has been recorded (Neuman, 2014).

2.5 Research Procedure

The qualitative research procedure is carried out through the following steps: 1) identifying problems to clarify the main problems of the research being discussed; 2) formulating objectives so that the research can be known clearly and specifically; 3) reviewing literature to understand the context of the research problem; 4) field observation where researchers observe the behavior or actions of respondents; 5) interviews with respondents, where interviews are conducted directly and via electronic devices (cell phones); 6) audio-visual information inclu-ding via social media Facebook. Creswell argues that qua-litative researchers must collect important data, namely interviews, observations, documentation, and audio-vi-sual information (Creswell, 2014).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

Prostitution activities carried out by gigolos are not 100 percent to their desires. There are certain driving factors or motives that make men work as gigolos. Based on the causal factors, someone is involved in prostitution due to two factors, namely external factors and internal factors. Internal factors involve conditions or feelings, such as desire, frustration, and self-concept. External factors include external influences that influence involvement in prostitution, such as economic pressure, social environment, family problems, failure in romantic relationships, and so on (Setiawan et al., 2023).

If classified, the factors that influence men to become gigolos are a combination of economic factors, environmental factors, psychological factors, educational factors, and technological development factors (Berliana, 2024). These factors are the driving motives for gigolo men to carry out prostitution activities. All of the factors mentioned are the field researchers' findings in the form of observations, interviews, and documentation studies.

The first thing to know is the identity of the respondent. The respondent has a dark past due to the separation of parents when the client was still in elementary school. The respondent's father and mother separated, which resulted in the respondent being raised by only his mother. The respondent's economic condition is classified as poor because he only relies on his mother's income. The respondent's academic achievement during school was not good enough, and the respondent was involved in problems several times.

The findings of the researcher through observation describe that the way respondents dress is the use of clothing that shows the nature of Gentleman or shows masculinity such as leather jackets, Levis pants, or jeans, then classification based on the mode, fashion, and lifestyle of respondents follows the style of black metal or hardcore music. The style of dress and fashion are characteristics and identity of the respondents.

The findings of the researcher through interviews describe that the material obtained by respondents from sexual transactions does not always have to be in the form of money but can be in other forms, such as giving gifts of mobile phones (cell phones), laptops, clothes, food, housing, and other items. However, most of what respondents get from sexual transactions is money.

The results of interviews with respondents also stated that the number of clients obtained ranged from 15-20 women, most of whom were older. In general, they are established older women who already have families. Respondents said that the husbands of these women did not know about the sexual activities that the respondents were doing. Respondents are always vigilant so that the pros-

titution activities they do are not known by the husbands of the women they date.

The researcher's findings from documentation studies show that respondents get female clients through Facebook social media. Besides conventional methods such as direct interaction at the location, Facebook is the main promotional tool for getting female clients. The researcher directly saw how respondents promoted themselves through Facebook social media, with responses like or comments from older women in the respondents' Facebook account column.

The researcher tried to describe the risks or dangers faced by respondents from their profession as gigolos, including 1) the threat of contracting sexually transmitted diseases; 2) accusations of committing criminal acts because of having an affair with a married woman; 3) abuse of illegal drugs and alcoholic beverages; 4) physical threats such as fights or ganging up; 5) cases of unwanted pregnancies obtained from women they date; 6) isolated from the social environment due to the bad stigma obtained from society.

The respondent once said that he had been attacked by a sexually transmitted disease, namely impotence, and this slightly interfered with daily activities and slightly affected the psychological and mental condition of the respondent. The impotence experienced did not make the respondent stop the prostitution activity. Researchers assume that respondents have the seeds of dangerous sexually transmitted diseases based on the sexual activities that respondents have had with dozens of women.

3.2. Discussion

Research on deviant gigolo behavior through the lens of humanistic counseling psychology focuses on gaining a deep understanding of the subjective experiences of individuals involved in such behavior. Humanistic psychology, pioneered by figures like Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, emphasizes the importance of fulfilling basic human needs, including the need for unconditional acceptance and self-actualization (Väänänen et al., 2012). In the context of gigolo behavior, this approach suggests that individuals engaged in such activities may experience emotional emptiness or dissatisfaction in certain areas of their lives, leading them to seek recognition or validation from others through unhealthy means, such as prostitution or paid companionship.

Humanistic psychology centers on creating a safe and supportive environment where individuals can explore their deepest feelings and needs without fear of judgment (Bilodeau et al., 2014). This approach places significant value on the therapeutic relationship, characterized by empathy, in which the counselor helps clients understand and resolve their internal conflicts (Ryum & Kazantzis, 2024). Additionally, humanistic counseling theory empowers individuals to make better choices and achieve greater self-fulfillment (LaFromboise et al., 2023). For example, this approach can be used to help gigolos understand the root causes of their behavior, whether stemming from past trauma, unmet emotional needs, or financial pressures. Humanistic counseling can help individuals transform their behavioral patterns and build healthier relationships by providing space for self-exploration and reflection.

The counseling psychology that is the basis of this study is Carl Rogers' counseling psychology theory. Carl Rogers is a therapist who put forward the theory of Person Centered Therapy. Person-centered therapy is a school of psychology that is a special branch of humanistic therapy. Humanistic therapy is a method that emphasizes the positive side and human freedom to develop for the better, not the negative side of humans, as in Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory.

The concept of Carl Rogers' humanistic counseling psychology theory is as follows: 1) counseling therapy is centered on the client, not the therapist; 2) the client is fully responsible for solving the problems they face; 3) the client has full awareness to make decisions; 4) the client is free to express the experiences they have experienced openly; 5) the client is the person who knows the problems they face best and rejects the therapist's control to control the client during the counseling session (Corey, 2013).

The therapist's duties during the counseling session are as follows: 1) the therapist must believe in the client's decision to solve their problems; 2) the role of the therapist is more to provide positive suggestions so that the client has self-confidence; 3) the function of the therapist is to build a therapeutic climate that supports the development of the client's personality to be better; 4) the therapist builds an atmosphere of intimacy with the client; 5) the therapist must have sincere attention, respect, warmth, non-possessive acceptance and empathy; 6) the therapist uses himself as a tool to change the client's condition (Corey, 2013).

The review of Carl Rogers' humanistic counseling psychology theory on gigolo behavioral deviations is as follows: 1) respondents have a low level of self-confidence in the problems they experience; 2) respondents are not honest in expressing their experiences in full to the therapist; 3) respondents are consciously aware of the context of the problems they experience, but lack the responsibility to solve their problems; 4) respondents know the solution to the problems they face, but respondents are trapped in rigid perceptions of themselves.

Carl Rogers' humanistic counseling psychology problem solution to gigolo behavioral deviations is as follows: 1) respondents must build self-confidence to quit the gigolo profession; 2) respondents must be honest and more open about the experiences they experience; 3) respondents must have the responsibility to solve their problems;

4) respondents must eliminate erroneous perceptions such as fear of being poor and others; 5) respondents must be able to accept themselves to express feelings of anger, hatred, shame, anxiety, fear, and others that respondents initially avoided.

4. IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

4.1 Research Implications

This study provides important implications for counselors, namely insight into individual behavioral deviations. For things that might happen in schools, if there are students who work as gigolos, then counselors have important insights about gigolos and the right actions to use in dealing with behavioral deviations in students who work as gigolos. Counselors can also use this study as class socialization material so students can recognize the dangers of gigolo behavior.

4.2 Research Contribution

This study contributes to the development of guidance and counseling science, especially in the development of Carl Rogers' humanistic counseling psychology theory. This study is the basis for schools to pay attention to the economic conditions of students, especially poor students with lower economic levels. Because one of the main reasons for men to become gigolos is economic factors, with schools paying attention to and caring about the economic conditions of students, it is hoped that students will not fall into gigolo behavior due to poor economic conditions.

5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

5.1 Research Limitations

This study has several limitations due to the limited resources of the researcher in conducting this research study; among the limitations of this study are the following: 1) Limited sample: the sample is only one man due to the difficulty of finding respondents who meet the researcher's criteria; 2) covert observation: respondents do not know that they are the research subjects who are observed or used as samples; 3) the authority of the counselor in this study is not to provide counseling therapy but only to provide recommendations to psychologists or psychiatrists; 4) the counselor's task is only to provide a theoretical review, not a practical one because the gigolo case is outside the school setting.

5.2 Recommendations for Future Research

This study provides recommendations to certain parties, especially those related to resolving the problem of gigolo prostitution, including:

a) Recommendations for schools: Schools should become aware of the importance of students' mental health, especially those related to gigolo behavioral deviations, and then schools should take preventive and curative steps to overcome all forms of student behavioral deviations in schools.
b) Recommendations for psychologists/psychiatrists: this study can provide advice to psychologists and psychiatrists to follow up on reports of clients who work as gigolos to be then given counseling psychology therapy
c) Recommendations for the government: this study indirectly satirizes the government because the economic conditions are the main motive for gigolo men to carry out illegal prostitution activities because the government is slow in addressing the economic conditions of the poor.

6. CONCLUSION

The driving factors that motivate male gigolos are economic, psychological, and technological development factors. Economic factors are caused by the financial condition of the respondents, who do not have much money to meet their daily needs. Psychological factors are caused by the respondents having a sad childhood background; the respondents are children of broken homes abandoned by their father since childhood. Technological development factors are caused by the respondents using Facebook social media accounts to promote themselves as gigolos.

Carl Rogers' humanistic counseling psychology approach can be an alternative solution for men who work as gigolos. Carl Rogers's humanistic counseling psychology approach emphasizes the humanitarian aspect more than judging someone for the bad deeds they do. This is very fundamental because judgment is very mentally painful for someone, especially male gigolos. With Carl Rogers' humanistic counseling psychology approach, the guilty individual does not have to be judged, but rather guidance from the therapist to develop for the better. The respondents (male gigolos) know the answers to all the problems they experience. Hence, the therapist's (counselor's) job is only to be a close friend who guides the client to find the answers to their problems without being judged by the therapist.

The solution to the problem of humanistic counseling psychology Carl Rogers on the deviation of gigolo behavior is as follows: 1) respondents must build self-confidence to quit the gigolo profession; 2) respondents must be honest and more open about the experiences they have experienced; 3) respondents must have the responsibility to solve their problems; 4) respondents must eliminate erroneous perceptions such as fear of being poor and others; 5) respondents must be able to accept themselves to express feelings of anger, hatred, shame, anxiety, fear, and others that respondents initially avoided.

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CRediT Authorship Contribution Statement

All authors discussed the results, contributed to the final manuscript, and approved the final version for publication. Dody Riswanto: Conceptualization, Methodology, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft. Formal analysis. Adaobi Jennifer Iloakasia: Conceptualization, Writing - Review & Editing.

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The authors declare that Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) (https://gemini.google.com/app) tools were used to identify relevant academic literature to understand the arguments presented in the sources and to create an outline/research framework. All instances of Generative AI usage in this article were conducted by the authors in accordance with the IJCP Generative AI (GenAI) Policy, with the authors assuming full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the work.

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Ethical Approval Statement

The author declares that this study was conducted in accordance with research ethics principles and has received ethical approval from the author's institution, including respect for participants' autonomy, confidentiality of data, and ensuring their safety and well-being, as outlined in the applicable research ethics guidelines.

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