

# How is the Survival Mechanism of Poor People with Orthopedic Handicap?

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**Keywords:** Efficiency, Family resources, Social support.

**Abstract:** All orthopedically handicapped people have different survival mechanisms to continue their life, including the poor people who are orthopedically handicapped. This research has the purpose of analysing the types of survival mechanism for poor orthopedically handicapped people. The study used a qualitative approach with an instrumental case study method. The method for collecting data was in-depth interviews. For analyzing data, the researcher used a thematic analysis technique. The results of this research showed that there were three survival mechanisms for poor orthopedically handicapped people: 1) orthopedically handicapped people should reduce their daily needs budget for treatment costs and prosthetic replacement; 2) they established a home-based small business and empowered family resources; 3) they utilized social networking, such as government (as a patron) and fellow friends with the orthopedically handicapped. The poor orthopedically handicapped people not only need material support, they also need non-material help such as social support. However, this social support was an aspect that had an important role in improving their psychologic condition rather than other aspects. If there were social support, it makes their lives happier.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Based on the National Socio-Economic Survey (Susenas) in 2015, the population of disabled people was 2.45% (5,515,500 people) from 244,919,000 estimated population in 2012. Meanwhile according to the Social Protection and Service Program (PPLS) in 2012, the number of disabled people in Indonesia was 3,828,985 of which there are 263,879 orthopedically handicapped people. A large number of disabled people generates a special problem because the number is not comparable with the ability of the government and the community to handle these disabled people. According to data of the Ministry of Social Affairs, the number of disabled people, government, community (social organizations of disabled people), family and international support have a ratio of 101:1, this means that 101 disabled people were only able to be handled by 1 government official and other elements (Window Bulletin, 2014). This showed that the assistance for disabled people, including orthopedically handicapped people was still very limited.

The limits of government and its elements of assistance force disabled people, and especially orthopedically handicapped people, to find the right ways to survive. Joining a community seems to be one of the ways they choose. Percatu Community is one of the communities for disabled people specifically for orthopedically handicapped people in Tulungagung Regency, East Java. Preliminary studies have been conducted on the Percatu community, these showed that the majority of this community's members were from middle to lower economies, but they can rise up and develop their potential through several existing activities such as cooperative establishment and entrepreneurship training. Based on the preliminary study above, the researcher was interested in choosing members of the Percatu community as this research's participants.

According to Somantri (2007), the definition of orthopedically handicapped is a condition where they are damaged or disturbed because of a form or obstacle in the bones, muscles and joints in their normal function. Or it can be interpreted as a result of damage or disruption in the bones and muscles thereby reducing the normal capacity of individuals

to follow education and stand alone. Generally, the characteristics of this disability are divided into two types, namely muscular skeletal system (such as poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis, amputation of hands, feet, arms, back defects and abnormal growth of limbs) and cerebral system (such as language disorder, reading disability, writing disability, counting disability and cerebral palsy disorders). Based on the level of disability, orthopedically handicapped people can be divided into three groups, namely mild, moderate and severe.

Based on the previous definition we knew that imperfect physical conditions meant that disabled people had to try harder to live well than people with normal conditions. A preliminary study on the Percatu community also showed that disability and poverty forced them to change their life patterns to fight harder. According to Scott (1990), the ways for them to fulfil their needs with limited physical and financial conditions to survive are called the survival mechanism. In Scott's (1990) view there are three ways for poor people to survive: (1) reducing their food cost by eating only once a day and switching to lower quality foods; (2) using alternative subsystems such as self-help which includes small businesses, working as handymen or laborers, and migrating to find work; (3) asking for help from social networks such as relatives, village friends, utilizing relationships with their patrons. Scott's (1990) study explains how people can survive in difficult conditions, especially the poor, stating that difficult conditions are also experienced by orthopedically handicapped people. Persons with poor physical health must survive through greater efforts. Having the right survival strategy is very important for the survival of poor orthopedically handicapped people. From the preliminary exposures above, the researcher is interested in analyzing how survival mechanisms work for poor orthopedically handicapped people.

## 2 METHOD

This research included qualitative study using instrumental case studies. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling. This research's samples were two poor orthopedically handicapped people. The participants' criteria in this research were people who were physical disabled, poor and members of the Percatu (Tulungagung Physical Disability Association). The method of collecting data was a deep interview technique. For analysing data, the researcher used a thematic analysis technique.

## 3 RESULTS

This research's participants were people who became physically disabled due to traffic accidents. They used prosthetic legs to make it easier to walk after their legs were amputated. Previously, daily needs were only focused on household expenditure which must be diverted in part to medical needs. In addition, the cost of replacing a prosthesis which was quite expensive requires that they make savings in daily expenses. Savings were the first method of choice after amputation.

Poor orthopedically handicapped people tried to find income that was in accordance with their physical condition after an accident. Limitations of limb function encouraged them to create small businesses at home. Imperfect physical conditions made them unable to pursue their initial profession. Nevertheless, the disability did not stop them from fulfilling their daily needs. In carrying out their business, physically disabled people were assisted by their wives because there were some jobs that they cannot complete themselves.

*"Yes, after I can't drive anymore, I look for another job, learn to sew ... I can do that.. So, I'm sewing now "(ZN021217: 11-12).*

Besides running home-based small businesses, orthopedically handicapped people also tried to get side jobs. They hoped to get additional income from it. However, their limited skills made it become an expectation only. The absence of parties who help to provide them with skills was one of the obstacles

In addition to develop small businesses at home, orthopedically handicapped people also asked for government assistance. The assistance received included business and financial assistance. For financial assistance, it was usually managed directly by the Percatu community where the assistance was then channeled to its members in the form of goods (such as basic needs) because the amount of aid they receive was small.

The role of Percatu community for its members was to provide space for fellow members (physically disabled) to provide mutual support or motivation. Orthopedically handicapped people who had previously felt hopeless about their condition could rise again because they met people who had the same conditions. They felt they had the same fate, so they thought to give each other encouragement and support to other disabled people. This was an improvement because previously disabled people withdrew from their social environment because of their disability.

*"I am happy in Percatu, there are many friends, so they can give support to each other (KM011217: 100-101)".*

## 4 DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the research, the survival mechanism for poor orthopedically handicapped people was divided into three strategies. First, orthopedically handicapped people reduced the expenses of daily needs that were diverted for medical expenses and substitution of prosthetic limbs. Second, they used alternative subsystems such as establishing small businesses at home and asking for help from their wives to help fulfil their daily needs. Third, they asked for help from social networks, such as the government (as patrons) and fellow disabled people. So, the survival mechanism for poor orthopedically handicapped people was the same as that expressed by Scott, but social networking played an important role in their lives.

As a social network of orthopedically handicapped people, the Percatu community has provided space for them to share stories and strengthen each other. Besides the great support from the family, the support of fellow disabled people was also needed. Joining the community of Percatu has provided positive changes for them. They were able to rise after experiencing despair after an accident. This can help them to overcome their problems, especially psychological problems because of their disability.

Feist and Feist (2006) state that deficiencies are one part of an individual's physics and can affect the individual as a whole. Physical limitations in orthopedically handicapped people can cause problems in mobility, activities, and various psychological problems. The negative view of the community towards them can also cause a variety of psychological problems, such as feelings of inadequacy, worthlessness, despair, and tending to withdraw. In other words, social support was needed by orthopedically handicapped people. This was in accordance with Stuart's opinion (2007) stating that orthopedically handicapped people really needed high social support from their environment, in order to be able to manage all problems well and to encourage them to be able to accept themselves and interact and build good self-confidence to continue to have high self-esteem.

Sarafino (2002) described social support as comfort, attention, appreciation, and assistance in other forms received by individuals from other people or groups. He also divided social support

into five forms, namely emotional support, award support, information support, instrumental support, and group support. While Fiona and Fajrianti (2013) stated that social support can be either emotional or instrumental as well as information.

Based on the forms of social support above, it can be divided into several forms based on whatever those orthopedically handicapped people needed. The presence of attention and empathy was a form of emotional support that they had received. Emotional support made them feel comfortable and loved. Besides that, feeling appreciated by friends makes them feel more confident and valuable. This form of support includes forms of award support. In addition to emotional support and award support, there is also group support. Sharing stories with fellow physically disabled people, especially when they were in a depressed condition, was one form of group support. Thus there were three forms of social support received by orthopedically handicapped people, namely emotional support, appreciation support and group support.

If looking back to Scott's survival mechanism theory, it only focused on fulfilling material needs. Poor orthopedically handicapped people not only used material assistance from their social networks, but also focused on non-material assistance. They still needed material assistance from the government as patrons, but social support from their social networks was much more needed. The existence of great support from social networks was able to improve their psychological condition so that they become happier than before.

## 5 CONCLUSION

Unlike people in perfect physical condition, orthopedically handicapped people have different survival mechanisms. Even less if they were in poor condition. At least, there were three ways for them to survive, such as reducing daily expenses for treatment cost and prosthetic replacement, using sub-system alternatives such as establishing a home-based small business and asking for the help of their wives to fulfil the daily needs, and asking for help from social networking, such as government (as patron) and fellow friends with orthopedic handicaps.

The new findings from this research show that social networking has an important role in improving their psychological condition. In contrast to Scott's opinion, social networking for orthopedically handicapped people has a crucial role in giving support and non-material aid. This social support can make their life happier. Nevertheless,

this research still has limets, especially for the participants. The participants of this research were limited to orthopedically handicapped people because of accidents. So, it still has possibility for congenital abnormalities and people having different ways of surviving.

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