

Indonesia: An Study on Sexual Harassment and Denied Maternal Rights towards Garment Workers in KBN Cakung Industrial Zone

Friday 14 December 2018, by [Perempuan Mahardhika](#) (Date first published: 14 December 2018).

Foreword

What a delightful thing to see that this book Sexual Harassment and Denied Maternal Rights towards Garment Workers: A Study on Gender-Based Violence Conducted in KBN Cakung in 2017 *[attached below as PDF]* can be in the hands of all my friends. Gender Based Violence was raised to be a major theme in this study with an intention to illustrate that the nature of violence occurred towards women did not occur randomly, but rather structured and systematic. Due to the structural problems implanted in unequal relations between men and women, discriminatory and subordinate gender roles are attached to women.

This study, conducted in the mid of 2017, is one of the many long journeys of Perempuan Mahardhika's interactions with our fellow women workers, especially those who work as garment factory workers at KBN Cakung. We often obtained facts and complaints about violence against women cases experienced by women garment workers fellows. The need to get the whole picture of complexity of the causal factors and their impacts on women was the reason behind why we conducted this study. In scrutinizing gender-based violence cases in the workplace, we focused on two issues: first, on the situation of sexual harassment on women's garment workers and second, on maternal rights' fulfillment. Talking about sexual harassment is not an easy matter. The advocacy of this form of violence has not been widely supported by policy makers and there are no laws in our country that comprehensively address this issue. It is often that reports of sexual violence are instead turned into false allegations that the reports are merely based on victims' feelings or that the victim's statement was just an attempt to defame the perpetrator. Many victims ended up choosing to be silent and accepted any sexual harassment as an ordinary thing they have to face daily.

Thus, the achievements that KBN Cakung had for the struggle of the KBN's Women Workers' Committee, in this case are the installation of the sign stating "Sexual Harassment Free Industrial Zone" and the establishment of a post that serves as a complaint and report center. The post which was then named Posko Pembelaan Buruh Perempuan (Women Workers' Advocacy Post), contributes major support in the process of data finding on sexual harassment conducted by Perempuan Mahardhika.

In conclusion, not only did the gathered and analyzed data in this research show that sexual harassment at KBN Cakung existed, but also it also revealed that there is a high number of the prevalence of sexual harassment occurred, which is then not reported by those women workers. Thus, the voices of women workers documented in this study are expected become a force to encourage concrete steps for the eradication of sexual harassment in the workplace.

In 28 November 2017, coincided with the first anniversary of the installation of the sign at KBN, a

Social Dialogue of “Nusantara Bonded Zone (KBN Cakung): To be Free from Sexual Harassment” was held. It was attended by the companies, trade unions in KBN Cakung, the government representatives, and other relevant stakeholders. The high number of unreported cases became the basis for improving the effectiveness of existing complaint and report mechanisms. Proposals on the installation of a similar sign inside the production area received positive responses from representatives of companies who were present in the social dialogue.

Furthermore, the findings of the study which focused on the fulfillment of the workers’ maternal rights showed a different result in comparison to sexual harassment. The striking difference may lie in the forces of regulations governing this. Despite that workers’ maternity rights have a clear legal umbrella in our Labour Act (UUK/Law no. 13 of 2003), this study found a surprising result that 50% of women garment workers felt insecure (afraid) during their pregnancies. The results of this study revealed that pregnant workers have fear, anxiety, and insecurity. The findings of this study are expected to provide various parties with a comprehensive understanding of why the fulfillment of the right to work for the maternity is difficult to obtain.

Finally, I hope this book can be used as a means for all friends to understand more deeply about women workers’ situation and a tool that contributes ideas to sharpen the ongoing advocacy strategies of fulfilling the rights of women workers.

Thank you.

Women Workers are Strength!

Regards,

Mutiara Ika Pratiwi
The National Committee of Perempuan Mahardhika
National Secretary

Sexual Harassment and Denied Maternal Rights towards Garment Workers: A Study on Gender-Based Violence Conducted in KBN Cakung in 2017 (PDF)