

Students faced trauma: Expert

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Dr Noor was the ninth witness in the hearing of the suit filed by three former secondary students of SMK Taun Gusi, Kota Belud, namely, first plaintiff Rusiah Sabdarin, second plaintiff Nur Natasha Allisya Hamali and third plaintiff Calvina Angayung.

KOTA KINABALU: A psychologist said students who had allegedly been denied their learning rights for few months, five years ago, experienced trauma and injustice because of losing the opportunity to receive better education. Dr. Noor Aishah Rosli, 46, who is a child clinical psychologist, told High Court Judge Leonard David Shim, that her findings found that the students (three plaintiffs) had suffered structural violence which is social forces that harm certain groups of people, producing and perpetuating inequality in health and well-being. "What I mean is when I met the three students, I was informed that their English teacher name 'JJ' did not enter their class many times and the incident happened in the previous years. So, I called this scenario as the structural violence because the action by the teacher had happened repeatedly and affected the students' psychological well-being. "In psychology, we see the chances that the standard education in Malaysia is important to go study to the higher level. SPM is the main benchmark for a person to enter university.

"In this case, the students had missed the chance to learn systematically for English subject and this caused the opportunity to pass well to be disturbed because English is a compulsory subject to pass with honours at the university level. "Therefore, when students are not taught according to the correct syllabus and sufficient number of hours in Form Five, then the students cannot obtain good results. "These students have the abilities to study better and have chances to excel in the English language subject and this is proven through the IQ test conducted on them (three plaintiffs)," she said. Dr Noor was the ninth witness in the hearing of the suit filed by three former secondary students of SMK Taun Gusi, Kota Belud, namely, first plaintiff Rusiah Sabdarin, second plaintiff Nur Natasha Allisya Hamali and third plaintiff Calvina Angayung. The trio had named the teacher Mohd Jainal Jamrin (Mr JJ), Hj Suid Hj Hanapi (in his capacity as principal of SMK Taun Gusi), Director General of Education Malaysia, Minister of Education Malaysia and Government of Malaysia, as the first, second, third, fourth and fifth defendants, respectively.

They had claimed among others, that the teacher had failed to turn up in class to teach the subject for seven months in 2017 while the other defendants took no reasonable action despite being notified of the matter. The trial was held virtually via Zoom from the Kota Kinabalu Court house on Wednesday. Dr Noor, who is also a registered counsellor that owns a private psychology clinic in Selangor, had also testified about her findings on two emotions suffered by the plaintiffs which were the loss of self-esteem and self-confidence. "These two emotions will be affected if someone misses the chance to get a better life in future from a standard learning in school.

"In another words, from psychological perspective during clinical diagnostic and interviews session, I find that the plaintiffs had lost their self-confidence and lack of self-esteem when the opportunity and rights to learn the English subject were denied when in fact the plaintiffs had interest to learn the subject," said Dr Noor. To a question from counsel Sherzali Herza Asli who defended the plaintiffs, Dr Noor who had many experience on giving evidences and prepared reports for court cases, said she was approached by a representative from the US through email. She said the representative one Mr Ibrahim had through his email asked her if she could prepare a report for the plaintiffs pertaining to the case.

Meanwhile, during cross-examination by Senior Federal Counsel Mohd Hafizi Abd Halim who was assisted by Federal Counsel Fazrul Fardiansyah Abdul Kadir for the defendants, Dr Noor testified that on Dec 12, 2019, she conducted the test on the plaintiffs who were accompanied by a teacher.

Hafizi: You said you were contacted by Mr Ibrahim, did you know him personally?

Dr Noor: No, I did not know him personally.

Mohd Hafizi: Did Mr Ibrahim explain any other things about himself?

Dr Noor: Yes he did. He told me that he teaches an English language subject and he is from the US under Teaching English as a Second Language programme.

Mohd Hafizi: You did testify about funding, can you explain?

Dr Noor: According to Mr Ibrahim, he was with a big organisation that helps people being persecuted or people who were unable to defend their rights for example, not getting education access accordingly.

Mohd Hafizi: Based on your evidence, I put it to you that it was not an initiative by the plaintiffs to meet you but it was Mr Ibrahim's initiative, agree?

Dr Noor: The plaintiffs wanted to get their rights for education, so Mr Ibrahim and the plaintiffs had tried to seek psychological expert opinions from me.

Mohd Hafizi: Did you charge any fee for your service of conducting test and preparing report?

Dr Noor: Yes, I did.

According to Dr Noor, her service was paid by the organisation through Mr Ibrahim. “Here I want to emphasize that I run psychology services through my psychology clinic which is a private clinic. “So, as a private clinic, I must charge certain fees and all of my court cases were through my private clinic and charging clients are normal in mental health industry,” she explained. To a question from Mohd Hafizi, Dr Noor stated that Mr Ibrahim had contacted her via phone and also using Google Meet application which lasted 15 to 20 minutes. She said that the said conversation did not touch about what allegedly happened in school but merely an informal conversation.

Mohd Hafizi: How about when you were contacted via email by Mr Ibrahim, did he tell you a little bit about what allegedly happened in school?

Dr Noor: Yes, he did.

Mohd Hafizi: What did Mr Ibrahim inform you about the alleged incident in school?

Dr Noor: The conversation was actually continued on WhatsApp where he expressed concerns on students who were not getting education access properly and teachers... who did not enter class to teach students were unethical and it should be stopped.