

Forewords: Thomas Stodulka & Ningrum Natasya Sirait

JUST INDONESIA

Free from Discrimination & Violence: Gender, Ecology, and Media



Editor: Dewi Candraningrum, Ratna Noviani, Jonathan D. Smith, & Puspa Aqirul Mala



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**Just Indonesia, Free from Discrimination & Violence:
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PREFACE

Ningrum Natasya Sirait

THIS BOOK explores intersectional aspects of human rights studies about women, PwDs (Persons with Disabilities), and children, particularly those who are marginalized. It takes an interdisciplinary approach, including gender studies, environmental studies, and media studies. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) laid the foundation for international human rights law and recognized that all human beings deserve equal treatment and respect. Many other human rights treaties have since been written, covering issues ranging from the prevention of genocide and the elimination of torture and racial discrimination to the protection of migrant workers and their families and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). Two notable treaties are the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). An unprecedented number of countries now have laws against domestic violence, sexual assault, and other forms of violence. Challenges remain, however, in implementing these laws, limiting women's and girls' access to safety and justice. Gender-based violence impacts social, politic, and economic growth because affected women are denied the ability to exercise their basic rights of education, skill development, and employment. Gender roles and societal expectations often hinder the full realization of women's and girls' rights, with adverse consequences for entire families. Understanding how gender manifests in specific situations is therefore a necessary step in addressing the problems of discrimination and violence. Rather than focusing on women, men, or sexual minorities per se, this book examines the relationship and power dynamics between them, their differing roles, responsibilities, opportunities, and needs. In a time of social unrest, hate crimes, discrimination, oppression, fascism, gender inequality, and

inequity, this book highlights how marginalization does not occur in a vacuum free of meaning-making experiences and trajectories. Marginalization is not only at the core of the discrimination itself, and its impacts are also living and breathing throughout an unjust socio-political-cultural matrix. In so doing, this book rediscovers what subversive activists, advocates, lawyers, doctors, researchers, and others have envisioned for the future: a society where discrimination, marginalization, gender-based violence, and oppression will no longer be woven into every fabric of Indonesian life and culture. In line with the DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst/The German Academic Exchange Service) vision on the impact of marginalization across genders and generations, this book aims to radically and courageously fight for a version of the world human so desperately need: one of true equity and equality in which discrimination and violence are replaced with justice, equality, and solidarity.

Medan, North Sumatera, August 2024

FOREWORD

REFLECTIONS ON MARGINALITY, FEELING, AND SPACES

Thomas Stodulka

Abstract

After a brief reflection on the contributions of this volume, this foreword explores the role of public banners and billboards as materialized performances of governance that establish and sustain normative moral orders. These visual media shape citizens' subjectivities and behaviors, promoting the idea of being 'good and abiding citizens' while marginalizing, stigmatizing, and enacting violence against minority groups. I use the implementation of the *Perda Gepeng* No. 1 of 2014, a regional law applied in the city of Yogyakarta targeting "homeless individuals", "street musicians", and "beggars", as a case study and discuss similar developments of discipline, order, and control through sugarcoated rhetoric of "care" across the archipelago. This chapter then examines the emotive power of banners and billboards in instilling feelings of disdain towards marginalized communities, reshaping public spaces, and reinforcing social exclusion. It highlights the emergence of new orders of feeling and the collapse of previously established moral conduct, driven by legal and discursive infrastructures. Through analyzing these visual media, this paper uncovers how they function as emotive instruments of governance that provoke intense emotions and shape social and political actions. It emphasizes the impact of such governance on the emotional dimensions of human experience and the broader implications for social justice and urban life. It calls attention to the need for compassion, care, and support for those most in need, challenging the inhumane practices of governance and advocating for a more inclusive and empathetic society.

Keywords: orders of feeling, public space, governmentality, marginality, media

Introduction

It is an honor to reflect on the many inspiring chapters in this volume. Our planet is facing unprecedented challenges, from ecological degradation to social inequities. Yet, within these crises, we find powerful narratives of resilience, resistance, and innovation that guide us toward a more equitable and sustainable future. This compilation of research papers addresses various dimensions of environmental and social challenges, focusing on the intersection of tradition, gender, and ecological sustainability in Indonesia.

Authors highlight that many of Indonesia's cloth, painting, and weaving industries remain an economic cornerstone where women are pivotal contributors. However, these significant cultural and economic industries face environmental challenges due to heavy metal pollution in wastewater, underscoring the urgent need for sustainable practices and educational initiatives to curb ecological damage. The papers illuminate the resilience and agency of women in many parts of Indonesia as they confront ecological injustices. Through narratives rooted in spirituality and community values, these women embody resistance. Many studies advocate for decolonial methods such as storytelling, cooking, and planting to foster environmental protection, aligning with ecofeminist principles. Extending this line of critical thinking, empowerment, and engagement, the authors push for the integration of ecofeminism into higher education, as it promises a vital strategy to address environmental crises and gender inequality. Empowering students as agents of change can promote ecological awareness and equitable practices essential for sustainable development. Employing ecofeminist theory, the papers reveal the detrimental impacts of both small and large-scale industries, as well as everyday consumption patterns, on health, social relations, and economic resilience, calling for urgent intervention. Considering the water scarcity across many parts of the archipelago, authors underscore the importance of forest conservation and culturally emplaced, rather than extractive, horticultural, and agricultural practices that foster water sustainability and empower vulnerable communities through eco-friendly business initiatives and solidarity networks. Considering the planet's alarming rate of plastic waste pollution, the papers suggest integrating the ethos of ecofeminism and eco-Islam into these practices, resisting unsustainable practices and advocating for environmental stewardship.

Extending the notion of care for the land, water, plants, animals, and other more-than-human agents to the legal and everyday frameworks of caring together with and for persons living with disabilities, the papers hint at significant gaps in the availability of key facilities. The authors call for

improved alignment of regulations, budgets, and educational plans to meet these needs effectively and pragmatically. Focusing on the legal protection for minor refugees in Indonesia, the papers highlight their vulnerability to sexual violence and advocate for better collaboration between national authorities and international organizations to safeguard children's rights.

Considering the link between sensory perception and marginalization, the authors reveal that the visual representation of women in art exhibitions marginalizes women's narratives, favoring other figures and reinforcing gender disparities. Accordingly, the dual role of digital platforms and films in addressing gender-based violence is explored, showing how social media can amplify victims' voices but also expose them to further harassment. Similarly, research on social media's influence on LGBTQI + issues during Pride Month in Indonesia elucidates the performative nature of online interactions and their implications for freedom of expression and human rights. Finally, addressing the impact of social network sites on Indonesian youth, the studies highlight the need for better digital literacy and protective measures to combat privacy issues and bullying.

In summary, these studies collectively advocate for a holistic approach to addressing ecological, social, and gender issues in Indonesia. They emphasize the importance of education, community resilience, and sustainable practices, highlighting the pivotal roles of women and marginalized groups in driving positive change.

Orders of Feeling and Falling in Line – Revisiting the Streets of Yogyakarta

Let me now relate my long-term research with street-related communities (*komunitas jalanan*) to the papers and the theme of this book. My collaborative action research was based on long-term ethnographic fieldwork with marginalized communities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, where I lived and worked for a total of four years between 2011 and 2015. I collaborated with street-related youth, local and expatriate NGOs and solidarity networks, doctors, nurses, and artists. The ethnography elucidates practices of coping with stigmatization and marginality by following the lives and trajectories of street-related persons and communities. I was particularly interested in practices of care, and the role of emotions and feelings in fostering social, economic, and spatial mobility at the margins. The study contributed to anthropological theory on emotion and economy, health and illness, and the coming of age at the margins (Stodulka, 2017).

Accordingly, the remainder of this contribution explores the role of banners and billboards as materialized performances of governance, establishing and sustaining normative moral orders that shape individuals' subjectivities and behaviors. I argue that the public display of orders serves as moralized guidelines for being a good and abiding citizen. Furthermore, I view public banners and billboards as manifestations of marginalization, stigmatization, and violence toward minority groups. I illustrate that such normative practices are not only publicly tolerated but are also institutionalized methods of discursively, legally, and physically oppressing persons and communities constructed as non-citizens, "other," "deviant," and excluded from the vision of a prosperous, modern, thriving, and clean nation—*Indonesia bangkit*. I highlight the emotive power of banners and billboards in instilling and provoking emotions that create new orders of feeling toward minority groups and marginalized communities.

To illustrate this, I focus on a case that has received little public attention when compared to other laws and banners related to the former communist party PKI, the disciplining and control of queer communities, or the law on pornography, and argue that it was the starting point of a series of laws to follow that has significantly contributed to the restructuring of formerly public spaces, accompanied by the moral censure and cultural othering of vulnerable urban communities, effectively denying them the right to exist and participate in the city's social fabric.

In 2014, the government of the autonomous Special Region Yogyakarta (*Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta*) adopted a by-law publicly referred to as *Perda Gepeng* No. 1 2014. This regional law targets the social welfare (*kesejahteraan sosial*) of citizens, stating in its opening paragraph that it concerns "vulnerable social groups living in poverty, lack, limitation, and a social divide, and who lead a disorderly and unworthy life [...] in effective, rigorous ways based on a sustained legal basis and human dignity, to ensure social welfare and public order." A similar regional law was first introduced in the capital autonomous region of Jakarta (*Daerah Khusus Ibukota Jakarta*) and has since been passed in all the Javanese provinces of Indonesia.

Perda Gepeng penalizes "begging via street music" or busking (*ngamen*) in public places. Article 5 prohibits "being a homeless person (*gelandangan*), defined as someone with no ID card, no fixed abode, no steady income, and no plans for themselves or their children's future. Article 6 forbids being a beggar (*pengemis*), defined as someone whose income generation depends on the sympathy and compassion of others (*tergantung pada belas kasihan orang lain*) and exerts pressure or induces anxiety and fear in others (*agak*

terpaksa/takut), wears dirty and disheveled clothes, loiters in busy or strategic places, and applies these and similar practices to induce sympathy and compassion in others”.

After nearly ten years of negotiation between NGOs, CBOs, street-related communities, lawyers, ombudspersons, and various local government departments, the Yogyakarta administration translated social stigma into a legal document that criminalizes street-related communities under the new term *gepeng*, an acronym for “homeless” (*gelandangan*) and “beggars” (*pengemis*). The increased regulation of public spaces is not surprising, but it is striking that the law directly targets the feelings and emotive practices of street-related workers, pedestrians, motorcyclists, and car drivers. It is prohibited to work at strategic locations if wearing inappropriate clothes and trying to evoke sympathy or compassion. Offenders are arrested and taken to camps where they are observed and categorized as “homeless”, “psychotic (*psikotik*) homeless”, or “beggars” based on their behavior, local origin, social provenance, age, and gender. Warning signs at road junctions remind motorcyclists and motorists not to give money to the *gepeng* but to transfer money to the administration’s social welfare office (*Dinas Sosial*) instead. Other signs are less subtle and directly refer to the fines and charges established in Article 24, paragraphs 1 to 5 of the by-law.

The last paragraph of Article 24 targets not only “beggars” and “homeless” persons but also regulates how passersby should not be affected by “illegal”-ized emotive practices aimed at evoking sympathy and compassion: “Any person (including NGOs and legal entities) who violates the regulation not to give money and/or other goods to the *gepeng* publicly [...] is sentenced to up to ten days of prison and/or a maximum fine of Rp 1.000.000,00.” Sympathizing “illegally” and giving a few coins, bills, or small gifts to the *gepeng* at street intersections is now considered a criminal act.

The local government has curtailed street-related communities’ participation in the city and regulated ways of publicly sympathizing with and supporting them with money. The *Perda Gepeng* controls citizens’ actions at street junctions and alters prevalent local norms of compassion and care. Ignoring street musicians and beggars is no longer an individual choice but a legally prescribed ‘good practice’ of civil obedience. Ignorance is now legally endorsed. The good and obedient citizen has no reason to feel compassion or sympathy for street-related persons, or even guilt about ignoring them any longer—the state has taken care of it. Furthermore, the by-law defines social responsibility in Article 18, paragraph 1b, in more ‘modern’ ways:

Yogyakartaans are obliged to report to the police when homeless persons or beggars “loiter” in their neighborhood.

Street-related communities’ opportunities to generate income have been continuously curtailed by the government over the last fifteen years, with no meaningful alternatives provided. Many public spaces and empty land lots once belonging to the Sultanate of Yogyakarta have been sold, privatized, and transformed into shopping malls, hotels, restaurants, or fun parks. In its aspiration to promote Yogyakarta as a Southeast Asian hub of cultural tourism, the local administration has been issuing licenses for hotels and leisure parks since 2012, contributing to water scarcity and pollution which impact local residents and farmers. From a broader perspective, the rigorous application of the *Perda Gepeng* in 2015 feeds into Yogyakarta’s neo-liberalization, which aims to clear the city of the non-normative and that which is presumed ‘dirty’. Today, street-related communities and their art have almost disappeared from the public eye.

Ongoing infrastructural and spatial rearrangements suggest that the local government is serious about pursuing a radical cleansing campaign driven by economic desires to further promote Yogyakarta’s image as a clean and well-mannered haven of orchestrated, Javanized, Indonesian consumer culture. The institutionalized economic and political drive to stage both refined ‘Javaneseness’ and modern rhetoric—reminiscent of Indonesia’s New Order rhetoric of national family, progress, and modernity—marginalizes, stigmatizes, and criminalizes communities labeled as “lacking morals,” which refers to nothing more than disheveled clothes, non-normative public appearances, and engagement in informal economic sectors. Coupled with politico-religious manipulation of various “faiths,” fanaticism, increasing public shaming and stigmatization campaigns against LGBTQI + individuals, violent protests against peaceful feminist events, the continued stigmatization of children and grandchildren of alleged former members of the communist party (PKI), violent attacks on counter-cultural events, and a local media and police that give in to threats from politico-religious thugs for the sake of “public harmony,” the atmosphere in Yogyakarta has turned from sweet to sour.

From a broader perspective, considering the legal practices and related curtailing of free speech, regulations of public spaces, disciplining of gender identities and sexualities, and other politics of “care,” the Yogyakarta *Peraturan Daerah Gelandangan dan Pengemis* No 1 of 2014 hinted at a national movement of disciplining citizens.

Returning to the concept of feelings, I propose that analyzing what I define as “orders of feeling” focuses on the relationship between discursive and infrastructural arrangements of emotives, and their affective repercussions on feeling, interacting (or not), and conducting oneself appropriately. This perspective brings into focus the emergence of new or the collapse of formerly established feeling orders, examining how people’s feelings towards certain persons, communities, and spaces change in response to new orders, laws, and discursive infrastructures. It opens theoretical pathways to track the emergence of political and legal imperatives of authorities that affect the emotional dimensions of human experience in particular times and places. Starting with banners and billboards, we can study emergent discourses and objects as emotive worlding of affective infrastructures of governance and discipline (Stodulka, 2019; 2022).

Studying orders of feeling as an affective gauge of emerging world-making infrastructures opens a variety of research foci on different spatial, social, and political scales. Identifying emotives in public banners can convey explicit authoritative commands of governing and disciplining public spaces.

A word on emotives: I define emotives as signs, gestures, speech, symbols, and metaphors arousing or capable of arousing intense feelings. *Emotive* means “arousing intense feeling,” while *emotional* tends to mean “characterized by intense feeling.” Thus, an emotive issue is one likely to arouse people and instigate action, while an emotional response is itself full of emotional arousal. I understand public banners that target minority groups, or those considered non-normative and stigmatized for various reasons, as carefully arranged spatial and discursive emotives designed to provoke spite, hatred, derogation, distrust, fear, anxiety, and responses of not only disrespecting, looking down upon, ostracizing, or simply ignoring, but also blatant and painful social and physical exclusion, social death, excessive violence, insult, and killings. They shape how individuals perceive governance and promote a hegemonic ethos of what is acceptable to think and voice, how one should rightfully feel, and how to act appropriately ‘against’ minorities. Emotives create orders of feelings that significantly impinge on individuals’ bodies, affect social interactions, and instigate social and political action.

In conclusion, emotive banners do not merely represent the personal opinions of a few radicals. They are anchored in and communicate laws and policies. They are the ultimate witness and manifestation of governance, punching down on those needing compassion, care, and support. These banners travel across social media and other mediascapes, creating and accepting hate speech, abusive language, and calls for action against non-

normative subjects and communities resisting conformity. As the chapters in this book powerfully illustrate, non-normative communities are not weak; they endure, resist, subvert, and contest hegemonic orders of feeling. However, that is a conversation for another time.

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THIS BOOK, *Just Indonesia: Free from Discrimination & Violence: Gender, Ecology, and Media*, is a compilation of writings that aims to provide readers with a deeper understanding of the issues of discrimination and violence from the perspectives of gender, ecology, and media studies, particularly in the Indonesian context. The book results from the collaborative efforts and hard work of various individuals and organizations. Our deepest gratitude to the DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst/The German Academic Exchange Service), Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU), and Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta (UMS), who have provided full support and facilitated the publication of this book. We are sincerely grateful to the authors for generously contributing their expertise, empirical experiences, and scholarly insights on the critical matter of discrimination and violence in Indonesia.

Yogyakarta, September 2024

Dewi Candraningrum
Ratna Noviani
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PART 1

DISCRIMINATED PLANET, GUARDING THE PLANET

Kampoeng Batik Laweyan: Women Crafting Tradition and Facing Ecological Degradation

Denny Vitasari

Abstract

Kampoeng Batik Laweyan, nestled within the historic city of Surakarta (also known as Solo), Indonesia, is a historic center of the batik industry, reflecting a rich blend of cultural heritage and economic activity. The district has been a hub for textile production since the 14th century, evolving into a major batik center by the 16th century. The intricate designs and labor-intensive processes required for producing batik cloth have made it Laweyan's primary industry as well as a cultural symbol. Women, particularly 'Mbok Mase,' have played crucial roles, balancing business leadership with domestic responsibilities, and thereby shaping the economic and social fabric of the community. Despite its success, the batik industry faces environmental challenges, particularly concerning water consumption and pollution. Addressing these issues requires a multifaceted approach, including enhanced education, sustainable practices, and technological innovations. Understanding the environmental consequences of batik production can drive change. Education campaigns play a pivotal role in bridging this gap. By highlighting the benefits of responsible waste management, we can drive change and demonstrate that environmental preservation aligns harmoniously with economic prosperity. Affordability is key to sustainable solutions. Implementing cost-effective wastewater treatment methods and supporting small businesses in adopting eco-friendly practices are crucial steps. Educational programs involving schools, workshops, and local organizations empower residents, including women, to become stewards of their environment. By integrating heritage with sustainability, Laweyan can continue to thrive, leaving a lasting legacy for generations to come.

Keywords: batik, water, pollution, wastewater, businesswomen, environmental sustainability

Historical and Economical Significance of Laweyan

Kampoeng Batik Laweyan is renowned as one of the principal centers of the batik industry in Indonesia. Located in Surakarta (also known as Solo), a city rich in both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, batik is one of Surakarta's most significant cultural assets, playing a vital role in shaping the region's economic and political landscape. The district of Laweyan offers a unique blend of history and culture, deeply intertwined with the craft of batik, which is both an art form and a vital economic activity.

Historically, Laweyan has been a hub for the textile industry since the 14th century, home to businesses renowned for their high-quality fabrics (Primasasti, 2022). The name "*Laweyan*" originates from the word "*Lawe*," which refers to a type of thread used for making fabric (Harjoko & Probowati, 2012), highlighting the area's longstanding association with textile production. As a prominent trading center, Laweyan played a crucial role in the distribution of this essential commodity, establishing itself as a pivotal player in the regional economy (Widayati, 2004).

This rich history of textile production laid the groundwork for the thriving batik industry that would emerge in later centuries. The tradition of batik making in Laweyan began in the 16th century, marking a significant shift in the region's economic focus (Primasasti, 2022). Batik, with its intricate designs and labor-intensive process, quickly became the area's primary industry. This transition was facilitated by Laweyan's established expertise in fabric production and its strategic location as a trading hub.

Over the years, batik evolved into more than just an economic activity; it became a cultural symbol of Laweyan, reflecting the community's artistic skills and innovative spirit. The techniques and patterns developed in Laweyan were passed down through generations, preserving the unique cultural heritage of the region. Today, batik remains the main industry and economic driver for the locals, with numerous artisans and workshops dedicated to maintaining this traditional craft (Primasasti, 2022).

The continued success of the batik industry in Laweyan is a testament to the community's resilience and adaptability in the face of changing economic conditions. It has not only sustained local livelihoods but has also attracted tourists and researchers interested in the historical and cultural significance of batik. As a result, Laweyan has become a vital cultural and economic center, preserving its heritage while contributing to the broader economy of Surakarta and Indonesia as a whole.

Batik, the name given to a wax-resistant method of dyeing fabric to create intricate, multi-layered patterns, is a deeply ingrained cultural practice in

Surakarta. Initially, batik was exclusive to royal families, with patterns and processes governed by strict protocols that reflected the wearer's social status and heritage. Certain motifs were reserved for the nobility and could not be used by commoners. As the demand for batik grew, members of noble families began to introduce batik to ordinary people, including the community in Laweyan. This democratization of batik marked the beginning of its transformation into a commercial enterprise, making it accessible to a wider audience and establishing Laweyan as a center for batik production and sales (Shodiq, 2017).

The success of the batik industry has also enhanced Laweyan's political significance, particularly during resistance efforts against Dutch colonialism (Widayati, 2004). The merchants of Laweyan played a significant role in the struggle for Indonesian independence. In 1911, K.H. Samanhudi established the *Sarekat Dagang Islam* (Islamic Trade Union) as a response to the Chinese merchants' monopoly (Harjoko & Probowati, 2012). This organization aimed to unite Muslim traders against colonial economic oppression, highlighting the intersection of commerce and politics in the region.

During this period, the invention of '*Batik Cap*,' a stamping technique that replaced traditional hand-drawing methods, enabled mass production of batik for the first time. This innovation allowed batik to be produced more quickly and efficiently, meeting the increasing demand from both domestic and international markets. As a result, there was a significant increase in the wealth of Laweyan's residents, which necessitated improved trade organizations and infrastructure (Shodiq & Mahbub, 2018). This period of economic prosperity coincided with a growing awareness of national identity and resistance against colonial rule.

It can therefore be said that Laweyan's flourishing batik industry influenced Javanese society culturally and politically, as well as economically. The increasingly wealthy traders played an important role in the Indonesian independence movement, using their economic power and organizational skills to support their countrymen's political efforts.

Women's Influence in Laweyan

Women have played a pivotal role in the success of the batik industry in Laweyan, making significant contributions that have shaped the region's economic and cultural landscape. Unlike in many parts of the world, where women's roles were historically limited, from the 18th to the early 20th century, women in Laweyan were at the forefront of the batik trade. These women,

known as '*Mbok Mase*,' were not only skilled artisans but also successful merchants who carved out prominent positions for themselves within the industry (Shodiq & Mahbub, 2018).

The dominance of female batik merchants in Laweyan can be attributed to several interrelated factors. It is worth noting that the nature of batik production itself aligns with qualities which were traditionally associated with women, such as precision, delicacy, and an artistic touch. Batik making requires intricate work and attention to detail, which are essential for producing high-quality products. These skills provided women with the foundation to excel in both the artistic and commercial aspects of the batik industry (Shodiq & Mahbub, 2018).

Starting as artisans, many women in Laweyan expanded their roles to become business leaders. They mastered the art of batik making, marketing, finance, and business development, all while maintaining their roles as homemakers (Primasasti, 2023). This ability to balance multiple responsibilities demonstrates their adaptability and resilience, factors which were surely crucial to their business success. The entrepreneurial spirit of these women was further fueled by their non-aristocratic backgrounds, which instilled in them a hardworking ethos and demanded careful financial management practices (Wahyono et al., 2014).

According to Wahyono et al. (2014), the career path of a '*Mbok Mase*' involved three distinct stages. In the first stage, young girls known as '*Mas Rara*' learned the intricacies of batik crafting and marketing from their mothers, who were already '*Mbok Mase*' themselves. This early exposure to the trade equipped them with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in the industry. They were trained in the traditional techniques of batik making, as well as in the art of negotiating and selling, which were crucial for building a successful business.

As these young women reached adolescence, they entered the second stage of their careers, taking on more responsibility in the batik production process. At this point, they became primarily responsible for crafting batik, which involved tracing intricate patterns on fabric using a special type of wax. This step is one of the most important in batik making, as it requires masterful skill to ensure the quality and consistency of the final product. Mastering these skills was essential for the development and success of their businesses.

Upon marriage, these women transitioned into the third stage of their careers, focusing more on the business side of batik production. As full '*Mbok Mase*,' their roles shifted to include marketing, finance, and business

development. This shift allowed them to expand their influence and grow their businesses further. They were responsible for setting prices, managing finances, and developing strategies to increase sales and market reach. Meanwhile, their husbands, known as *'Mas Nganten,'* took on more of the production responsibilities, including selecting fabrics, dyes, and overseeing the batik process. This partnership allowed the couple to leverage each other's strengths, with the women leading the business aspects and the men supporting production.

Despite their dominant roles in the batik industry, *'Mbok Mase'* continued to fulfill their responsibilities as homemakers. They managed their households, cared for their families, and educated their children to follow in their footsteps as successful batik merchants. This dual role of business leader and homemaker highlights the remarkable capacity of these women to balance professional and personal obligations.

The influence of *'Mbok Mase'* extended beyond their own families and businesses. They played a vital role in shaping the social and economic fabric of Laweyan, contributing to the community's prosperity and development. Their success challenged traditional gender roles and provided a model for other women to aspire to leadership positions in business.

The legacy of *'Mbok Mase'* continues to inspire modern entrepreneurs in Laweyan and beyond. These pioneering women set a precedent for future generations with their ability to innovate and adapt to changing market conditions. Although the status of female merchants today is not as dominant as it was during the era of the *'Mbok Mase,'* their entrepreneurial spirit and resilience remain a source of pride and inspiration in the region. Women in Laweyan continue to play significant roles in the batik business, drawing inspiration from their predecessors and contributing to the industry's ongoing success.

In the modern era, women entrepreneurs in Laweyan have expanded their influence beyond traditional roles, demonstrating their impact through social, economic, and cultural activities (Wahyono et al., 2014). They have embraced contemporary business practices and leveraged their skills to adapt to new market demands while maintaining the cultural heritage of batik production. These women have become key players in the community, participating in various initiatives that support the growth and sustainability of the batik industry.

One of the most notable aspects of modern female entrepreneurship in Laweyan is the collaborative nature of the community. This is exemplified by the monthly gatherings known as *Selawenan*, named because they take

place on the 25th day of each month (Wahyono et al., 2014). These meetings provide a platform for women to come together and discuss a wide range of topics related to their businesses. During *Selawenan*, they exchange ideas on innovations in the batik industry, explore strategies for expanding their commerce, and collaborate on improving the sustainability of the production chain, particularly focusing on waste management practices.

The discussions at *Selawenan* meetings are instrumental in shaping the direction of business in Laweyan. By working together, these women entrepreneurs foster an environment of cooperation and collective growth, allowing them to address common challenges and seize new opportunities. This collaborative approach has strengthened the community's resilience and adaptability, enabling it to thrive in a competitive market.

In addition to their contributions to the business sector, women in Laweyan play an active role in preserving and promoting the region's cultural heritage. They participate in local cultural events, performing traditional music such as *gamelan* and *karawitan* (Wahyono et al., 2014). These performances not only celebrate the rich cultural traditions of the region, but also provide a platform for women to showcase their artistic talents and strengthen community ties.

The involvement of women in cultural activities reinforces the important role they play in sustaining both the economic and cultural vitality of Laweyan. By participating in these events, women help to preserve the region's heritage, ensuring that traditional art forms continue to be appreciated by future generations. Moreover, their active engagement in cultural activities highlights the interconnectedness of cultural preservation and economic development, illustrating how these elements can coexist and support one another.

Laweyan architecture and tourism

The batik business in Laweyan has shaped the area's social structure, culture and architecture, creating a unique urban community with distinctive characteristics. The wealth generated from batik production not only improved living standards but also fostered a sense of identity and pride among the residents. The economic success of batik merchants allowed them to invest in the development of their community, leading to the construction of distinctive architectural styles that blend Javanese and European influences (Shodiq, 2017). These buildings, many of which still stand today, are a testament to the prosperity and cultural richness of Laweyan.

The batik industry in Laweyan has profoundly influenced the local culture, which is reflected in the area's distinctive architectural style. Buildings in Laweyan often function as residences, workplaces, and showrooms for batik production, demonstrating the seamless integration of commerce into daily life. As a result, the houses of batik merchants exhibit unique architectural designs tailored to meet these diverse functions (Rosalina & Rusvianna, 2024). Wealthy merchants typically own compound-like residences (Wahyono et al., 2014), where the front portion of the house features luxurious porches and living rooms, reflecting a blend of Javanese and European styles. This area also serves as a showroom for displaying batik textiles, allowing customers to appreciate the intricate designs and craftsmanship directly within the merchants' homes.

The architectural layout is strategically designed to support the batik-making process. These homes often include a large hall where artisans work diligently to create batik using traditional methods. The proximity of the workspace to the living areas reflects how deeply embedded commerce has become in Laweyan's domestic life. At the back of these residences, there is typically a spacious yard used for drying dyed fabrics, a crucial step in the batik-making process. This outdoor space is essential for ensuring that the colors are set correctly, highlighting the functional aspect of the architectural design.

The unique architectural style and landscape of Laweyan have endured over time, preserving the cultural heritage of the area. The distinct combination of functional design and aesthetic appeal has contributed to Laweyan's recognition as a significant cultural heritage site by the Government of Surakarta (Wihastoro & Rachmawati, 2013). This designation underscores the importance of Laweyan as a center of cultural and economic activity.

Kampoeng Batik Laweyan plays a vital role in Surakarta City, both economically and as a tourist attraction. The preservation of its unique architectural heritage has attracted visitors interested in exploring the rich history of batik production and its influence on local culture. The area serves as a living museum, where tourists can observe the traditional batik-making process and purchase authentic batik products directly from artisans. This influx of tourism provides significant economic benefits to the community, supporting local businesses and promoting cultural exchange.

Tourism has played a pivotal role in revitalizing the batik industry in Laweyan, breathing new life into a tradition that was on the brink of extinction. In the 1970s, the rise of textile printing techniques posed a significant threat to traditional batik businesses. The affordability and mass production

capabilities of printed batik quickly captured the market, leading to the collapse of many traditional batik enterprises. As a result, numerous businesses in Laweyan were forced to cease operations (Shodiq, 2017), and by the early 2000s, only a handful of these businesses remained active (Priyatmono, 2015).

Recognizing the cultural and economic importance of batik, the local community took action through '*Forum Pengembangan Kampung Batik Laweyan*' (Laweyan Batik Village Development Forum) in September 2004 (Wahyono et al., 2014), and established *Kampung Batik Laweyan* (Laweyan Batik Village) (Priyatmono, 2015). This initiative aimed to preserve the unique batik heritage of Laweyan and restore its prominence in the region. The establishment of *Kampung Batik Laweyan* has not only preserved the traditional batik-making techniques but also attracted tourists eager to explore the rich cultural history of the area. This surge in tourism, with the help of the establishment of batik as among UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage of humanity in 2009, has revitalized batik commerce, contributing significantly to the local economy. Today, Laweyan's batik industry stands as a symbol of cultural resilience and economic revival, playing a crucial role in the economy and cultural identity of Surakarta.

Environmental Concerns about the Batik Making Process

While the resurgence of batik production in Laweyan has brought economic prosperity to the community, it has also led to significant environmental challenges. The traditional batik-making process involves multiple applications of wax and dyeing to achieve the intricate patterns that define this art form. Initially, the process begins with drawing a pattern on the fabric using wax to cover specific areas that should remain uncolored during the dyeing process. Once the wax is applied, the fabric is immersed in a dye solution to impart the desired color. The dyed fabric is then washed in boiling water to remove the wax. This cycle of waxing, dyeing, and washing is repeated multiple times to create complex, layered patterns.

This entire process is highly water-intensive, with ground water serving as the primary source for the batik industry. Each step, from the initial dyeing to the final washing, requires large amounts of water to ensure that the fabric is properly treated and free from excess dye and wax. The wastewater generated from these processes contains not only wax and dyes but also small fabric fragments. Without proper treatment, this wastewater poses a threat to the environment. Many dyes contain chemicals that can be harmful

to aquatic life, while residual wax and fabric particles can cause blockages and disrupt natural water systems.

Unfortunately, due to economic constraints, many batik producers cannot afford the necessary infrastructure for effective wastewater treatment. This results in untreated or inadequately treated wastewater being discharged into local waterways, leading to degradation of the environment. The pollutants can affect soil quality, reduce water quality, and harm local ecosystems, posing health risks to humans and wildlife alike.

In the modern era, many batik makers have shifted towards using synthetic dyes due to their ease of application and ability to produce vibrant colors. These synthetic dyes offer a wider range of hues and are more consistent in their results compared to traditional natural dyes. However, the use of synthetic dyes presents significant environmental challenges. During the dyeing process, only about 5% of the dye actually adheres to the fabric, while the remaining 95% is washed away, entering the wastewater system (Wibowo et al., 2017). This results in a substantial amount of dye being released into the environment as a significant source of pollution.

One of the major issues with synthetic dyes is that they are mostly non-biodegradable. Once released into the environment, these dyes can persist for a long time, accumulating in soil and water systems. This persistence poses a threat to ecosystems as it disrupts the balance of aquatic life and reduces the quality of water. Furthermore, many synthetic dyes contain trace amounts of heavy metals, such as lead, mercury, and cadmium (Kusumawati et al., 2021). These heavy metals are toxic to both aquatic organisms and humans, and their accumulation in the environment can lead to severe health problems.

The presence of synthetic dyes and heavy metals in water sources can harm aquatic life by reducing oxygen levels and disrupting reproductive processes. Additionally, contaminated water can affect agriculture and the health of local communities relying on these water sources for drinking and irrigation. Addressing these environmental concerns requires the implementation of effective wastewater treatment processes and the exploration of more sustainable dyeing alternatives. To mitigate the environmental impact of synthetic dyes, batik producers could consider adopting eco-friendly practices, such as using more environmentally friendly natural dyes or developing closed-loop systems to recycle and treat wastewater.

The use of natural dyes in batik production presents both environmental and economic challenges. While natural dyes are often lauded for being environmentally friendly, they are not always the most economical choice

for batik makers. Additional treatments are frequently necessary to ensure that the dye adheres effectively to the fabric, which can increase production costs. Moreover, the extraction and processing of natural dyes can generate significant amounts of waste, contributing to environmental impacts that are often overlooked in the pursuit of sustainability.

A notable drawback of natural dyes is their difficulty in storage and handling. Typically, natural dyes are available in paste form, which makes them prone to biodegradation and microbiological contamination over time. This susceptibility can result in inconsistencies in color quality and longevity, making them less desirable for large-scale production where consistency is key. Moreover, while natural dyes are indeed used in batik coloring, research indicates that the levels of dye contaminants often exceed regulatory limits due to the high load on wastewater treatment facilities, which struggle to process the volume and concentration of effluents produced by the industry (Handayani et al., 2018).

Addressing the environmental impact of batik production requires innovative solutions to manage water consumption and waste. One promising approach is the implementation of closed-loop water systems, where wastewater is treated and recycled for reuse as wash water in the batik-making process. Such systems can significantly reduce water usage and mitigate the environmental impact of dyeing processes. However, the success of these systems depends on the proper treatment of dye-contaminated water to prevent cross-contamination, which can degrade the quality of the final batik product.

Despite the potential benefits of water recycling and improved wastewater management, these practices are not widely adopted among batik producers. The primary barriers are economic and educational. Many batik makers lack awareness of the environmental consequences of their practices and the potential benefits of sustainable alternatives. More critically, the high cost of establishing and maintaining effective wastewater treatment facilities poses a significant economic challenge. Batik producers often operating with tight profit margins, driven to minimize production costs to remain competitive in the market. This financial pressure frequently results in environmental considerations being sidelined.

Batik production is an integral part of the cultural and economic landscape in areas like Laweyan, but it has also raised significant environmental concerns. To address these issues, several collaborative efforts have been undertaken involving the Government of Surakarta, the Indonesian Environmental Agency, universities, and international partners (Priyatmono,

2015). One notable initiative was launched in 2008 in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and the Environmental Impact Management and Control Agency, with assistance from *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit* (GTZ) GmbH. This project aimed to establish an integrated wastewater management program designed to enhance the environmental sustainability and economic performance of the batik industry.

The primary goal of this program was to reduce wastewater discharge and improve overall environmental performance through two main approaches: 1) clean production techniques, and 2) the development of wastewater treatment facilities. Clean production focuses on minimizing waste at the source, implementing practices that reduce resource consumption, and optimizing processes to prevent pollution before it occurs. This approach encourages batik producers to adopt techniques that limit water and chemical use during the dyeing process, thus reducing the volume and toxicity of wastewater generated.

The program also emphasized the parallel importance of wastewater treatment facilities. With financial support from German donors, a communal wastewater treatment plant was established to serve the batik-producing community. This facility is unique because of its collective management system, being managed entirely by representatives from the local batik industry and reflecting a community-driven approach to environmental management. The facility's design aimed to optimize economic efficiency by maximizing the use of gravity to transport wastewater from the sources to the treatment plant, minimizing energy consumption and operational costs.

The technology implemented in the communal facility is based on the Decentralized Wastewater Treatment System (DEWATS). This system involves collecting wastewater at each individual production site, where it undergoes pretreatment to remove scum and larger particles before being transferred to the communal facility (Sari et al., 2019). At the communal plant, the wastewater is subjected to a series of treatment processes. Initially, it undergoes anaerobic biological treatment, where microorganisms break down organic matter in the absence of oxygen. This is followed by aeration, which introduces oxygen to further decompose organic pollutants, and filtration processes to remove remaining impurities, resulting in clean water.

Despite the innovative approach and potential benefits of the communal wastewater treatment facility, several challenges limit its optimal operation and effectiveness as an environmental solution for Laweyan. One major challenge is the area's topography, which complicates the flow of wastewater from certain locations to the facility. Some batik producers are located at

higher altitudes than the communal treatment plant, making it difficult to rely solely on gravity for wastewater transport. As a result, only nine out of 87 active batik producers currently utilize the communal treatment facility, leaving a significant portion of wastewater untreated.

For those industries not participating in the communal treatment system, the level of wastewater treatment is minimal. These producers often manage only basic contaminant removal, such as skimming off wax scum, while discharging untreated dye-laden water into the environment. The dyes used in batik production can contain synthetic chemicals and heavy metals, posing risks to both aquatic ecosystems and human health when released untreated. This highlights the urgent need for more comprehensive engagement and solutions to ensure that all batik producers contribute to environmental sustainability.

Initially, the communal wastewater treatment system in Laweyan was capable of reducing contaminants by up to 50%. However, studies have shown that the treated wastewater still does not meet the quality standards set by the Indonesian government (Kusumawati et al., 2021). Due to inadequate wastewater treatment, nearby rivers in the Laweyan area are subject to significant pollutant loads, as wastewater is commonly discharged directly into these water courses. For instance, the Premulung River experiences low to medium levels of pollution from batik industry effluents (Nurika et al., 2023).

Wastewater treatment and water consumption are significant concerns in the batik industry, including in Laweyan. The production process involves extensive use of water and chemicals, leading to substantial wastewater discharge that poses environmental risks. With the boost in tourism and increasing demand for batik, these issues are expected to intensify. The community of batik producers in Laweyan is aware of these challenges and has made efforts to address water pollution through improved water management practices, such as establishing communal wastewater treatment facility and improvement their production process to reduce the waste. However, significant economic and technical barriers remain, as many producers lack the financial resources and expertise to implement effective treatment solutions. These challenges highlight the need for collaborative efforts among industry stakeholders, government agencies, and environmental organizations to develop cost-effective and scalable solutions, ultimately enhancing sustainability and reducing the environmental footprint of the batik industry.

Towards an Eco-Friendly Batik Industry

Addressing the environmental challenges of batik production requires a multifaceted approach. First, there is a need for increased outreach and education within the batik-producing community. Raising awareness about the environmental impacts of untreated wastewater and the benefits of communal treatment efforts can encourage more producers to adopt sustainable practices. Educational campaigns should highlight the long-term benefits of environmental stewardship, not only in preserving local ecosystems, but also for enhancing the reputation and marketability of batik products as eco-friendly and ethically produced. Women in Laweyan hold a strategic position in promoting eco-friendly batik production. They can use their monthly gatherings to discuss environmental issues and leverage their influence in marketing to educate customers about the benefits of eco-friendly batik. By emphasizing environmental conservation, they can increase consumer awareness and demand for greener products.

Exploring technical solutions to overcome the aforementioned topographical challenges could significantly improve the usage of wastewater treatment facilities. Installing pumping systems or alternative transport mechanisms would facilitate the movement of wastewater from higher elevations to the communal plant, increasing the facility's capacity to treat more waste. This effort should be coupled with investments in infrastructure to support the efficient operation of these systems. Another approach would be to develop technology for decentralized wastewater treatment facilities. These systems should be designed to be easy to operate, low-maintenance, and cost-effective. When designing wastewater treatment systems, economic considerations must be prioritized to encourage industry actors to adopt the technology. By focusing on affordability and simplicity, these solutions can promote widespread implementation and enhance the sustainability of the batik industry.

Government support, in the form of subsidies or incentives, could also play a crucial role in encouraging participation. Financial assistance to offset the costs of connecting to the communal treatment facility or upgrading individual treatment systems could make sustainable practices more accessible to smaller producers. Collaboration with environmental NGOs and international partners could further bolster these efforts, by providing technical expertise and funding for infrastructure improvements and community education programs.

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My Tongue, My Stories: Women are Caring, Cooking and Planting to Protect Planetary Life

Dewi Candraningrum

Abstract

This research draws attention to how women's stories might negotiate the complexities of positionality and representation in the struggle for ecological justice. These stories are approached with critical eyes that encourage reflexivity from the reader. Whereas feminism has tended to regard religion as the main cause of women's oppression through which practices against women's well-being and rights are legitimized and naturalized, many women in Indonesia see their spiritual lives, both individually and collectively, as sites of resistance and liberation. My approach suggests an alternative way of 'seeing and doing' methods motivated by an ethical commitment to research participants and the desire to respect their knowledge and experiences. This chapter collates first-person accounts of women from climate change affected communities in Central Java. They share how their personal lives, including SRHR (sexual and reproductive health and rights), have been affected by religion, socio-economic status, pollution, ecological degradation, and climate change. Implementing this approach in my research found that Javanese women protesting ecological injustice are informed by Indigenous worldviews or respective liberative religious views with which the women respect each other and reclaim the value of community, where they are at one with the community of the home and the community of the group under the conditions of spirituality, equality, and cooperation. Thus, they reclaim the idea that caring, cooking, planting forests and telling stories are decolonial methods to protect life on our planet.

Keywords: decoloniality, stories, positionality, reflexivity, ecological injustice, sexual and reproductive health and rights

Introduction

It is imperative for women to tell their own stories because they are all of our stories. As women share through our authentic voices, we may help another woman or girl going through similar challenges or issues of ecological injustice. Women have found this to be true as we engage with stories of our ancient mothers in the traditions of our own lives. As women, we have not shared enough about our lives, our mothers' lives, and our ancestors' stories. Information about women and our lives is missing from the history books. Details about the lives of women and the spiritual mothers of our Indigenous leaders have not been preserved. Women have missed many important messages, stories, and lessons that could have assisted us in making tough decisions in the frame of ecological justice, especially the context of today's climate-related disaster mitigation. Stories help women to understand more fully the condition of women and planetary life in our society—yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Today, women are avid readers, highly educated, and well-informed in ecology and climate change related issues. Yet, women have no financial and societal capacity to influence policy related to the climate crises.

This paper aims to foreground the intersectional gender perspectives, initiatives, and worldviews on ecological injustice from women's own tongues, through stories, thereby decolonizing the way the gaze has been narrated and interpreted within the religious domain (Pratt, 1992). Foregrounding grassroots feminist epistemologies and visions advances the development of inclusive and decolonial approaches that embed gender, religion, ecological, and sexual & reproductive justice within marginal groups' responses to climate change related issues. This paper aspires to challenge dominant discourses of gender and climate crisis that rely on a heteronormative binary, perpetuate the marginalization of women from the Global South as actors in climate change knowledge production and management, and neglect pre-existing intersectional inequalities which shape vulnerabilities to climate injustice.

This paper puts forward intersectional feminist approaches to climate justice that are rooted in local concepts of gender, age, sexuality, indigeneity, dis/ability, health, and other key factors (Lewis & Mills, 2003). In particular, it embraces radical approaches offering more inclusive re/workings of loaded concepts including gender, religion, justice, and feminism, revising current realities in the pursuit of more hopeful and just societies, economies, ecology, and climates. Ground realities are rarely reflected in the higher-level discussions and discourses which are fundamental to ensuring the right

decisions are taken for women and girls. This paper collates the following stories told by women from climate change affected communities in Central Java on how their personal lives, including SRHR (sexual & reproductive health & rights), have been affected by religion, socioeconomic class, pollution, natural disasters, ecological degradation, and climate change. This paper draws lessons from their resilience, innovativeness, and strategies in coping with climate change in their communities.

Women Who are Caring, Cooking, and Planting to Protect Planetary Life

Supi Kartosumito

Supi Kartosumito is an 88-year-old traditional midwife living next to Kedung Ombo Dam in Central Java. During her girlhood only the daughters of the well-to-do were able to enter schools. She got the knowledge of midwifery directly from her mother, Wakinem. She explained that three important species of plant, the leaves of which are important to support the nutrition of new mothers' breast milk, are vanishing from the surrounding forest due to the construction of Kedung Ombo Dam. *Rempenan*, *Ragen*, and *Jareman* leaves are a useful source of vitamins for mothers and their babies, but they are becoming increasingly scarce because of what locals say are increasing levels of calcium oxide in the water due to the dam construction. In this way, loss of biodiversity has direct impacts on women through aggravating their SRHR.

Kedung Ombo Community of Traditional Midwives (from Kedung Ombo, Boyolali, Central Java) are women who survive by attending births and serving deliveries since before the dam construction until the present day. Some, like the leader, Supi Kartosumito, did not attend school, and instead received training in midwifery from their mothers and great-grandmothers.

In the 90s the construction of Kedung Ombo Dam was a source of national debate due to the potential social cost of this large scale project, supported and financed by the World Bank, because of a perception that the New Order regime had not been transparent regarding the land price paid to farmers, a case which the farmers would eventually lose in the supreme court. Kedung Ombo was built in 1985 by Suharto's government, creating a new reservoir in Central Java for power generation at a magnitude of 22,5 megawatts, and capable of holding water sufficient for the needs of the surrounding 70 hectares of rice fields. Kedung Ombo Reservoir began to be filled on January

14, 1989—submerging 37 villages, 7 districts in three regencies, namely Sragen, Boyolali, and Grobogan. A total of 5268 families have lost their land due to the construction of this dam.

Alisa Wahid

Alisa Wahid is a 51-year-old mother with four children. In 2010 she moved to Pati in Central Java, where she was looking after pupils at the Islamic School & Boarding House (*pesantren*). She got involved with group of mothers in North Kendeng Mountain who had to resort to defending their water from the Corporate Interests of PT. Semen Indonesia. She speaks passionately about the issues women face; “the government’s policy of economic growth is not based on social justice and has the potential to seriously endanger women’s SRHR.” Access to clean water, she says, is a fundamental right.

The GUSDURIAN network was established in 2009 under the Foundation of Banu Abdurrahman Wahid (former President of Indonesia, Gus Dur). Its current national coordinator is Gus Dur’s first daughter, Alissa Wahid. This network has branches not only in the country but also abroad, including Australia, France, Germany, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, the Netherlands, and the United States. Members are not only Indonesians but also foreigners. Support for GUSDURIAN comes not only from ordinary citizens, but also some important *Kyai* (traditional Islamic community leaders) in Java, such as KH Mustafa Bisri, KH Said Aqil Siradj, Zawawi Imron, and other prominent figures such as Marsilam Simanjuntak and Bondan Gunawan. Issues of equality for women and other minorities like Ahmadis, Shias, and Indigenous groups like Sedulur Sikep (Samin community, Sukolilo, Pati Regency) and others is a part of its narrative work. Siding with minorities, not only in terms of inter-faith relations, but also with regards to gender equality, has become a core issue. This has been illustrated by the role of GUSDURIAN in the 1965 reconciliation process, support for farmers in Salatiga and in the Kendeng Mountains, and providing services to female migrant workers in Saudi Arabia.

“I am Alissa Wahid (51 years old), and I have four children. During my father, Gus Dur’s presidency, he supported the interests of ecology in Kendeng mountain, Central Java against the mining. What he was thinking at that time was ‘water’. The Kendeng dispute has become a multi-faceted and intersectional problem, including poor governance and policymaking, environmental issues affecting the lives of women

and girls' SRHR. At the end of 2010, I came to Pati in Central Java, and then took care of pupils at an Islamic School (Pesantren) belonging to Gus Dur. At that time, I was intensely involved in things that Gus Dur once did. I took the side of the mothers of Kendeng, who defend their water right up to the present day. The government's policy of economic growth is not based on social justice, and may endanger women's SRHR with regards to water. I wanted to show that we (people outside of their community) are there to support them 100%. Water is a vital resource for SRHR".

Sukinah

Sukinah is a 48 year old woman farmer who has led hundreds of women in the Kendeng Mountains in Rembang to speak out against the cement-mining, because it endangered their water sources. They put up a blue tent to commemorate their struggle against the unprecedented flood that happened in Watu Putih in December 2014. The mountain and its water sources are not only a 'source' for women's SRHR, but more importantly the forest and the mountains are their very 'culture'. The culture of farming that they inherited from their farmer parents will vanish with the arrival of the cement factories. They want the government to take their side in preserving the North Kendeng Mountain forest biodiversity, and more importantly in securing women's SRHR.

Sukinah is member of the Women's Community of Tegaldowo, at Mount Kendeng Rembang (Rembang, Central Java). *Cekungan Air Tanah Watu Putih*, Rembang (abbreviated to CAT Watu Putih) is part of the Karst Mountain ring in the North Part of Central Java running from Kudus, Grobogan, Rembang, and Blora in Central Java to Bojonegoro in East Java. It has potential resources such as hundreds of water springs, 52 caves, 129 underground rivers, and a rich variety of vegetation and animals. Many resistance movements against cement-mining have emerged since 2008, including by the customary Sukolilo Sedulur Sikep people and now *CAT Watu Putih* where Sukinah and hundreds of other mothers are blocking the cement-mining to protect their livelihoods. Well-known animals residing there include bats that produce phosphate fertilizer for the local farmers. The vegetation of North Kendeng makes it a perfect site for many bird species. Of the 9,200 bird species in the world, 1,500 species are found in Indonesia, and 45 species are found in the Kendeng Karst region. Those endangered-water-sources provide for around 306,727 women in Rembang, who are now struggling to protect the water-catchment in the Kendeng Mountains.

“My name is Sukina. I am 48 years old, and I have adopted a girl from one of my husband’s siblings. She now has her own child, making me a grandmother. I lead hundreds of women from the Kendeng Mountains in Rembang to speak against the cement-mining because it endangers our water sources, both now and in the future. We put up a blue tent to commemorate our struggle against the flood that happened for the first time in our life in Tegaldowo Village. Since the mining has been there, we have had floods in December 2014, and now every year during the rainy season (November to February). We never had floods before. The condition of the water in the Semen River (Semen means Spring) is now reduced in its debits due to lime mining, sand mining, and illegal logging in Kendeng Forest. The mountain and its water sources are not only a ‘source’ for our SRHR, but, more importantly, the forest and the mountain are our very ‘culture’. The culture of farming that we inherited from our farmer parents will vanish with the ‘invasion’ of the cement. We want the government to take over our side in preserving our culture and more importantly securing our SRHR”.

Magdalena Maria Nunung Purwanti

Magdalena Maria Nunung Purwanti, a 68-year-old single mom with two children, was the former leader of a Catholic Women’s community in Central Java. She also founded a Women’s Caucus in 2004 to promote and protect SRHR in Solo, alongside female politicians, feminists and other activists. Solo has experienced serious problems since present President Joko Widodo (former city Mayor of Solo) permitted the construction of 19 new hotels. Solo all but ran out of water for almost three months during the dry season in July 2013, and now experiences similar shortages every year in the dry season (June to August). Magdalena brought the community together to discuss terms for an agreement to prevent further destruction of the city’s ecology through water scarcity. Due to her bold advocacy, Solo has now signed an MOU in 2013 making the hotel guarantee access to water for locals. Hotels now supply water during the drought season. She believes that water plays a key role in women’s SRHR.

Nunung, as she is known, is a member of the Catholic Women of Indonesia Surakarta Branch (Surakarta, Central Java). Catholic Women of Indonesia (WKRI-Wanita Katolik Republik Indonesia) was founded in 1963, and has branches across Indonesia. Magdalena Maria Nunung Purwanti is the leader of the Surakarta Branch. Surakarta is commonly referred to as Solo, a city in Central Java with 520,061 residents. The 44km² city adjoins other satellite

regencies, namely Karanganyar, Sukoharjo, Boyolali, and Klaten, and is prone to traffic congestion because of its strategic location. With the recent development of around 19 budget hotels across Solo, the city endures water scarcity which further endangers the livelihoods and SRHR of its inhabitants. WKRI, via its leader, has led the communities surrounding the hotel construction sites to sign an MOU regarding water security in the city.

“Friends in my network usually call me Nunung. I am 68 years old, with two children, a single mother, and now lead the Catholic Women in Solo. I also founded the Women’s Caucus in 2004 that promotes and protects SRHR in Solo city, along with female politicians, feminists, and other activists. We have had serious problems since our current President Joko Widodo (former city Mayor of Solo) permitted the construction of 19 hotels in Solo. We ran out of water for almost three months during the dry season in July 2013, and consecutively every year until now. We never had this experience before. Hotels usually gave money to the community living surrounding the hotels, but I led the community to stop that habit. We have to sit together and come to terms of agreement because otherwise it will only lead to further destruction of the urban ecology through scarcity of water. I am the only woman who was doing the negotiation. I actually disagree with the construction entirely, but the community said yes, so I have to fight for our basic rights for water. Due to my bold advocacy, we have now signed an MOU in 2013 that made the hotels guarantee our access to water. Hotels now supply our water during the drought season. I believe that water plays a key-role in our SRHR”.

Neni Yuliawati

Neni Yuliawati is 45 years old, with one son, and was the initiator, founder and chief of Community Learning Center (CLC) UTOMO in the village of Grjugan Kemranjen in the District of Banyumas, Central Java. She independently runs the community to encourage people of Grjugan village and its surroundings to secure access to clean water for family consumption. The community has serious problems in reproductive health due to water-pollution. She initiated development of a community learning center (CLC) to become the center of various activities and information provision, as well as an early childhood learning center. This community center has initiated clean water filtration with the support from YLSKAR (*Yayasan Lingkar Studi Kesetaraan Aksi & Refleksi*) from Salatiga, who then went on to collaborate

on an education and training program for the community to build water filtration technologies for household use. This water filter uses 100% local components, and can be made by the community at low cost. Results of this water filtration product have been tested in the laboratory of UGM Yogyakarta (*Universitas Gajah Mada*), with promising results indicating the water is suitable for drinking (equivalent to a mineral water refill). Neni believes strongly that the basic need for water is a key component in women's reproductive health.

Neni is member of UTOMO Community Learning Center, Grujugan Village (Banyumas, Central Java), low-lying land of around 256,070 Ha. In 2007 there were 3,193 villagers living in Grujugan, distributed across 712 households. The population ratio is 1,605. 1,588 or 100/99, with 412 homemakers. There are problems of water access for 85 Ha of irrigated farmland and clean water for 200 households. To fulfill the village's need for water, the villagers typically build wells. Over the last 3 years or so, these wells have become colored, started to smell, and have high content of metal elements due to previous oil-mining in the 1960s-1990s by a foreign oil company. Over the last 15 years, increasing numbers of villagers have died from tumors and cancer, presumably caused by consuming the contaminated water. In 2006 there were 37 people (Male: 14, Female: 23) diagnosed with cancer/tumors and died soon after. In 2008, there were 57 more people and 8 of them died. This phenomenon suggests a negative impact from ecological degradation, with similar impacts for local women's reproductive systems from water-borne contamination. For these reasons, villagers prefer to consume bottled mineral water for drinking water. Researches and micro pilot projects with the community have also been motivated to implement the aforementioned 'clean water purifier project' led by Neni Yulawati.

"I am Neni Yulawati, 45 years old with one son, and the initiator, founder and chief of Community Learning Center (CLC) UTOMO in the village Grujugan Kemranjen District of Banyumas, Central Java. I independently run the community to encourage people of Grujugan village and its surroundings to secure access to clean water for household consumption. We have serious problems in reproductive health due to water-pollution. I initiated developing a community learning center (CLC) which is the center of activities and information for society, as well as an early childhood learning center. This community center has initiated clean water filtration with support from YLKSAR (Yayasan Lingkar Studi Kesetaraan Aksi & Refleksi) from Salatiga,

and we then together developed education and training for the community to build a water filtration technology for household consumption. This water filter uses 100% local products and can be made by the community at low cost. Results of this water filtration has been tested in the laboratory of UGM Yogyakarta (Universitas Gajah Mada) and the results are very good and can be drunk directly (equivalent to mineral water refill).”

My Tongue, My Voice as a Decolonizing Method

The previous testimonies highlight women’s voices that are related intersectionally to development domination, unequal ecological relations, social, economic, and political position, and the neglected protection of SRHR. Their voices are a means of writing back policies that are not only for vulnerable groups. Decolonization may refer to writing back against ongoing colonialism and latent colonial mentalities that permeate all institutions and systems of government, according to Eric Ritskes, editor of the open-access journal entitled *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, and Society*. Decolonization is the process of revealing and dismantling colonialist power in all its forms. In this case, the new colonialist may be the government, the water pollution itself, the companies and overseas corporations, etc. This power includes dismantling the hidden aspects of those institutional and cultural forces that had maintained the colonialist power and that remain even after political independence is achieved. Claiming or reclaiming Indigenous and women’s identity often involves intensive research and the writing of Indigenous histories and women’s context. Testimonies are a formal means of presenting oral evidence about, all too often in the case of Indigenous communities and women’s issues, painful events, and experiences.

A decolonizing research methodology is an approach that is used to challenge the Eurocentric research methods which undermine the local knowledge and experiences of marginalized population groups. Researchers and the research community are increasingly asked to reflect on various methods that can have positive outcomes and impacts on society, and challenge existing methods. On a range of questions, old and new, there is also a call to pay more attention to the relevance of research and researchers in the Global South and how they are addressing current sustainability challenges (Connell, 2014). In recent years, Gender Studies has focused even more attention on the role of research and evidence in decision making, and the spatial dimensions and tensions of where and how research is conducted

by whom and for whom. The COVID-19 pandemic, for example, accelerated methodological innovations in certain areas, allowing or forcing researchers to conduct various types of research differently, through rapid reviews and synthesis for evidence, remote surveying methodologies, and the use of digital technologies such as online platforms, social media, 'big data', and so on. This does not imply that this is the preferred way of engaging with research, and these methods also come with their own challenges and limitations, but it is a step towards rethinking methods. The pandemic has also provoked many researchers to experiment with remote methods and to embrace alternative ways of engagement, with the potential for desk research to be misrepresented as empirical research. In the Global South, researchers have explored what these (and other) methods mean for their own contexts, while reflecting on the growing agenda for 'decolonizing' research (Mohanty, 1988).

Decolonizing requires that we open up space for free thinking with regard to context, where local knowledge and local experiences in research methodologies challenge the Eurocentric (often dominant) approach to research. This is not to say that the existing methodologies are unfit for purpose, but rather appreciating their benefits and limitations, and articulating them to fit local contexts. Decolonization offers a powerful alternative narrative for those wanting to critique positions of power and dominant culture. By way of its definition around undoing colonial rule over subordinate countries, it implies looking for some level of positionality to counter aspects around incumbent power. In other words, it means telling a more honest version of events, not from the colonial point of view but considering what benefit the participants will derive from the research and forming relationships with them and their community. It is about expanding current methods and studying historical perspectives. The space should ideally promote the potential for researchers to challenge power through scholarly activism.

Participants are usually considered as subjects in research. For the researcher to incorporate the researched and expound the meaning of the methods to them, and more broadly to people who are not researchers, would be one of the ways research methods are decolonized. But researchers may also go beyond seeing the people being researched as mere subjects of the research, positioning them instead as collaborators and co-designers of research agendas, opening up opportunities for co-producing knowledge. However, on its own, decolonizing methodologies may not yield desired results, and need to be part of a broader agenda in research discourses. There are various philosophical underpinnings around methods that are

often ignored in epistemological debates, especially as a result of disciplinary positionality (McCorkel & Myers, 2003). For instance, some researchers tend to have a positivist view in research and/or a constructivist view, whereas others tend to favor quantitative methods over qualitative methods. Therefore, acknowledging these strands of research disciplines and exploring how to contextually build functional (transdisciplinary & intersectional) research relationships is instrumental. Decolonizing research will therefore bring in different ontological and epistemological perspectives across different disciplines and incorporate them: for instance, the land philosophy within the indigenous *Samin Sedulur Sikep Kendeng* people's reality would perhaps be a radical challenge to Eurocentric methodology.

Considering that different disciplines have various methodological applications, which are perceived differently among researchers, it follows that those aspects such as funding flows and the broader politics of research – including rewards to researchers carrying out research in the Global South, and the perceived research power dynamics between female and male researcher – are likely to tilt decolonizing research into multiple layers of actions. Decolonizing methods require action on a number of fronts, including ongoing debates and the exploration of different worldviews, the need to document concrete examples, and challenges to the funding regimes and wider systems within which researchers operate (Mignolo, 2007). In the context of Indonesia, decoloniality is already complex, with various actors, power plays, intersectionality, and disciplinary tensions present. Continuous debates and critiquing what this implies for research methods is a good starting point. In fact, there is more to learn about how methods engage with both the legacy of research leaders and those providing alternative and transformational views on research ideas and agendas, and resource allocation and distribution. This then points to the ideas around examining the funding agendas and the research methods that they support.

While it is true that decolonizing methods is a growing agenda, it is also true that there is a lack of attention in documenting real, practical experiences in the global south around the various methods that exist, are emerging and have been used in practice. The initial step is to document what 'decolonizing methods in practice' means, perhaps through a series of case studies. Methodologies are part of a system which includes actors that have legitimized methodologies contributing to the dominant research practices. The inclusion of cultures, Indigenous peoples, and perspectives from non-colonial sources is one way to strengthen the systems facilitating research. Decolonizing the policies and political power which emphasize some methods and close down

others is also key in the process of articulating methods that would objectively support alternative thinking.

Learning to being a decolonial feminist I continue to engage in reflexive practices upon my return to the 'center' (meaning, my university). When analyzing and interpreting data I continually questioned what I was seeing and why I was seeing it, I also wrote notes about themes that were emerging, and, alongside this, I wrote further notes about the context in which themes emerged in the field. Providing context to my emerging themes helps resist Othering by developing narratives that reflect the women's social, cultural, and historical location (Bhabha, 1994; Parpart, 1993). Contextualization provides space for the Javanese women's agency and voice, by exposing their everydayness, strengths, and structures that oppress them in their organizational and personal realities. Although I may be writing the women's narratives, the narratives reflect the women's lived experience. For example, the previous narrative extract provides insight into the evolving role of Javanese women in a changing Indonesian environment, demonstrating the complexity of the women's lived experience and offering insight into the particularities of the women's subjectivity, agency, and their social, cultural, and gendered context. Sukinah from Kendeng staunchly argues that it is possible for a Javanese woman to protest ecological injustice to protect the Planet. It is not only the role of male or the government. It is becoming a core concern for women.

I acknowledge that I write from a position of power and privilege, but at the same time, the voices of the marginalized Javanese women are located with mine in the telling of their story. My research is localized, grounded in the Javanese women's meaning of themselves and their work, and through reflection, dialogue, and collaboration we explore their organizing in the margins. This approach helps me to construct a historical, social, and cultural representation of Javanese women working together in groups. I do not separate myself from the women's narratives, we co-built relationships through our differences and commonalities, and worked together to develop our story.

Representation is a complex, ethical issue. No matter how well intentioned or collaborative the researcher-participant relationship, data can be used by researchers to un/intentionally (mis)represent participants. Addressing the issue of representation is an iterative process, one that requires continual reflexivity and questioning. In practice, I dealt with this by ensuring the women were partners in the research process, where we engaged in a dialogue to develop an understanding of their organizing and work practices. To

facilitate this, I began my data analysis and interpretation during my data collection. Upon leaving the field, I continued to be reflexive in my analysis and interpretation whereby I continually questioned the finding (Geertz, 1973). Moreover, when I write I provide context to the women's lives and narratives.

I am reflecting upon my own positionality, as a Javanese Muslim woman, of (un)learning many issues that make me think of myself as an outsider to the Indigenous community. From my feminist perspective, I consider key possibilities of the co-existence of Islam, Muslim knowledge, Indigenous cosmology, and feminism. I agree with other scholars, including Mohanty (1991), Ahmed (2000), Abu-Lughod (2002), Ahmed (2004) and Nagar and Geiger (2007), that how to engage with the colonial—to redefine and review the concepts and categories upon which Western feminism bases its arguments—is a tremendous challenge facing feminist theory today. Decolonial, religious, anti-racist, and anti-colonial scholars and struggles have already made the critique of many Western feminist assumptions about, for example, female agency (such as norms of motherhood, beauty, and the way in which the subject thinks of such issues from her normative and ethical perspective) being derived from an exclusively Western idea of norm, role, and social and moral order. Thus, feminist theory needs to go further than it has in formulating its analyses of the changing and contradictory agency of women in specific contexts.

A decolonizing approach to feminism renders the relationship between religion and modern secularism far more complex, and it opens up possibilities to (un)learn and critically review our theories, views, projects, and positions from our particular pathways of resistance and liberation. A decolonizing feminism serves as an invitation that begins and advances without fear through the colonial encounter—a process by which we might begin to re-evaluate and reclaim previously colonized and appropriated knowledges as contemporary contributions to feminist theory and social emancipation. That is, decolonizing feminism is a way by which to attend to the inevitable incompleteness of knowledge and the infinite richness of emancipatory imaginaries, and to start to heal what Anzaldúa (1987) called the 'colonial wound'. I propose here a decolonial politics of articulation to account for difference, diverse intersectional knowledges, cosmologies, religions and spiritualities with particular forms of subjectification that enunciate fundamentally different, yet always entangled worlds. Whereas feminism has tended to regard religion as the main cause of women's oppression through which practices against women's well-being and rights are legitimized and

naturalized, many Muslim women in Indonesia, for example, see their spiritual lives, both individually and collectively, as sites of resistance and liberation. At the same time, Islam is contested and discussed amongst Muslim females and within movements, for example, with a range of intermediate positions and a multiplicity of voices giving rise to creative possibilities as well as to open-ended contact zones and narratives.

Conclusion

Contextualization locates women at the center of their story. There is no simple or direct way to address the ambiguous and complex issue of representation. It is a complicated and sensitive topic, often confusing and contradictory, but one that requires honesty and ethics, and more than anything, a commitment. In this paper, I provide insight to offer critical researchers an alternative approach to research that reconfigures a critical ethnography recognizing the cultural, social, and historical location of participants, and identifies positionality and representation as the key complexities of engaging in research with marginalized Others. My approach suggests an alternative way of 'seeing and doing,' motivated by an ethical commitment to the participants and the desire to respect their knowledge and experiences. Decolonial feminist method therefore helps researchers to be more ethically engaged, to embrace differences, seek out commonalities, and rethink how to speak 'of' or 'for' the Other (Spivak, 1988). This requires researchers to be reflexively engaged with research participants to understand how we experience our relationships and how to (re)present participants and their knowledge.

This research offers a critical perspective on conducting research with women by addressing the issues arising from decolonial feminist theory. It contributes in the following main ways. First, highlighting how to conduct research with, not about, 'Other' people and cultures. Secondly, a decolonial feminist approach underscores how theory, research, and writing are political engagements, and being a decolonial feminist researcher requires an ethical commitment to decolonizing our ways of 'seeing and doing.' Third, in so doing, decolonial feminist method can create a space to challenge the ontology of modernity that dominates the discipline, and recognize that many marginalized, indigenous communities and women in Indonesia have learned how to survive in challenging conditions and how to create something from nothing. A decolonial feminist approach to research offers a means to decolonize, it is a collaborative approach to building new knowledge that is socially, culturally, and historically located (Lugones, 2010). Implementing

this approach in my research found that Javanese women protesting ecological injustice are orientated by indigenous worldviews or respective liberative religious views with which the women respect each other and reclaimed the value of community, where they are at one with the community of the home and the community of the group under the conditions of equality and cooperation.

My account of implementing decolonial feminist method offers researchers a means through which their commitment to marginalized, Other participants may be enhanced. Decolonial feminist method, as an approach to research, would benefit from further application by management researchers to explore further the complexities of positionality and representation. There is no one best way to engage in research with the Other, but scholars interested in producing knowledge with marginalized Others in Indonesia need to consider how they address the complexities of their positionality with participants and the (re)presentation of participants and their knowledge. Thereby, ensuring that they are not implicit in perpetuating the conditions of inequality or potential silencing of the participants' knowledge and voice, and thus, reproducing the participants Otherness.

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Urgency of Ecofeminist Pedagogy in Higher Education: Perspectives and Awareness Raising

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Abstract

Integrating ecofeminist pedagogy into higher education has become increasingly urgent in an era marked by escalating environmental crises and social inequalities. Higher education students, as agents of change, play a significant role in raising public awareness about ecofeminism. This research explores the perspective of ecofeminist pedagogy and its pivotal role in enhancing ecological awareness and fostering a more equitable and sustainable society. This chapter sheds light on the urgency of ecofeminist pedagogy in higher education, and focuses on its perspectives and awareness raising. The chapter employs a qualitative analysis that collects data from observations, questionnaires, and interviews. Data were obtained from 34 respondents (10 males and 24 females), who had been purposively chosen based on their roles as students, teachers, and activists. The findings yield three main points. First, with regards to the depiction of ecological crisis in the surroundings. It was found that waste was perceived as the most critical ecological issue in terms of polluting the air, land, and water, and threatening the sustainability of life more generally. Second, the ecofeminist perspective between men and women still needs more attention in reaching equality. Third, citizens' awareness of ecofeminist perspectives remains low. The ecofeminist perspective is an academic tool for building character and moral development. Underscoring that high-education students are perceived as role models and agents of change, the need for integrating literary studies into an ecofeminist perspective in the education curricula becomes a priority. Therefore, implementing an ecofeminist pedagogy in higher education is crucial for raising people's ecological awareness.

Keywords: ecofeminist pedagogy, literary study, urgency, ecological issues, environmental awareness

Introduction

A shocking fact released by Ipsos Indonesia, a global leader in market research and public opinion, is 95% of respondents agreed that climate emergencies, environmental disasters, and inequalities were critical conditions for the Indonesian nation (IPSOS Flair Collection, 2024). Lower-income communities often feel the brunt of these environmental problems the most. These communities are more vulnerable to environmental degradation and climate change due to limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and reduced capacity to adapt to changing conditions. Ali, the 2024 vice president of the Air Asia Council, stated that Indonesia is undergoing a water crisis, and that water management is urgent for future civilization. He mentioned that maintaining the availability of safe and clean water in Indonesia has been raised during talks on global climate change (Permana, 2020). He added that Indonesia also faces surface water quality problems, stating that “Around 52% of our rivers are heavily polluted. It gives us the challenge of providing advanced water treatment technology.” This critical issue has far-reaching implications for both the environment and human societies since it contributes to the water shortage and poses emergency health risks.

That Ipsos Indonesia survey classified challenges facing Indonesia into six major themes: societal changes, technological accelerations, generational and economic disparities, the climate emergency and its impact, the fragmentation of the political landscape, and health issues (see Figure 1).

SOCIETIES IN FLUX	TECH-CELERATION	INEQUALITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES	ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCIES	POLITICAL SPLINTERING	WELL-ROUNDED WELL-BEING
Ageing populations	Pervasive technology	Rise & fall of middle classes	Climate change	Plateau of globalization	Growing mental health crisis
Community migration	The immersive frontier	Employee power shift	A greener way of thinking	Security dilemmas	Systemic health inequality
Life stage evolutions	AI advances & quantum computing	Generational wealth disparities	Overdevelopment	Rethinking institutions	Integration of health & technology
Greater ethnic & religious diversity	Increased automation	Impacts of inflation		Increasing geopolitical conflicts	
Identity fluidity	Toll of technology	Alternative value structures		Entrenched inequality	

Figure 1. Classification of issues in Indonesia into six themes (Ipsos Flair Collection, 2024)

Three of the six major themes of the survey relate to the discussion in this chapter about the ecofeminist perspective: 1) inequality and opportunities, 2) environmental emergencies, and 3) wellbeing that contributes to solving climate crises and promoting environmental sustainability, which ultimately enables the existence of human life (Ipsos Flair Collection, 2024). To ensure the continued survival of humanity, a high level of awareness regarding environmental issues and climate change is essential. Environmental awareness is crucial for several reasons; it helps people live healthier lives by understanding and mitigating the dangers posed by air pollution, water contamination, and toxic chemicals, thereby protecting themselves and their families from associated health risks (Earth Reminder, 2023). Moreover, raising environmental awareness is vital for preserving biodiversity, as human activities threaten many species with extinction, which can severely impact ecosystems (Earth Reminder, 2023). In the educational field, environmental awareness is essential because it not only enhances students' appreciation for the Earth but also promotes healthy behaviors, inspires future leaders, and improves the overall school environment. Integrating environmental themes into the curriculum, hosting related events, and encouraging outdoor learning can lead to a more environmentally conscious and responsible society (Cambridge Core, 2023). Additionally, environmental education equips students with critical thinking and problem-solving skills, enabling them to address and solve environmental issues effectively (McPhee, S. 2023).

The planet's critical condition led to the birth of ecological activism through various movements that campaign against the oppression of women and the exploitation of nature. Ecofeminism is a literature study that examines the connections between women and nature. This term signifies a commitment to the environment and an awareness of the associations made between women and nature (Widayaningrum, 2021). Ecofeminism argues that in a patriarchal system, both nature and women are seen as objects and property meant for exploitation (Candraningrum, 2013). Regarding their connections, ecofeminism advocates for the mutual liberation and respect of both women and the environment. In ecological studies, Saleem et al. (2021) highlighted that ecofeminism as a theoretical framework not only broadens the foundation and scope of feminist theories but also enhances the depth of research. Candraningrum (2013) noted that the rise of ecofeminism is fostering a social movement among women driven by the increasing degradation of nature and the environment. Additionally, ecofeminism's influence is becoming more evident in Indonesian literature, addressing a significant gap in the field.

Education serves as a potent tool for raising awareness among people. The concept of pedagogy is intrinsically linked to education as it encompasses various instructional strategies, methods, and approaches that educators use to facilitate learning, ensuring that teaching is effective, engaging, and responsive to the diverse needs of students (Main, 2021). Pedagogy shapes the overall educational experience by providing a framework for educators to design and deliver instruction in a purposeful and meaningful manner Mahata (2023). Through pedagogy, educators design curricula, assess student understanding, and create a supportive learning environment, ultimately aiming to foster critical thinking, knowledge acquisition, and personal growth. Ecofeminist pedagogy is characterized by learning taking place in a more expanded environment than the classroom, including outdoor environments in which students can experience relationships and build community between themselves, their locale, and the rest of nature. Supported by Sanz and Ezpeleta (2021), this notion of authentic dialogue, along with both a growing implicit thread of experiential education and a critical philosophical stance, are three key components of an ecofeminist pedagogy. By integrating the concept of ecofeminism into educational curricula, individuals can better understand the interconnectedness between the oppression of women and the exploitation of nature. This awareness can foster a more profound respect for both the environment and gender equality. Educating people about ecofeminism encourages critical thinking and inspires collective action toward sustainable and equitable solutions. Ultimately, education empowers communities to address environmental and social injustices, promoting a more harmonious coexistence with nature.

Ecofeminist pedagogy is an instructional model that combines theoretical and practical approaches to merge ecological issues with educational practices (Gough et al., 2017). As a subset of environmental pedagogy (Goralnik et al., 2012), it serves as an educational framework promoting both social/gender justice and ecological sustainability (Harvester, 2009). This pedagogy facilitates comprehensive discussions on environmental and social issues within the context of patriarchal societal structures (Harvester, 2009). It has also been indicated that feminist pedagogy embodies feminist theory in education, translating feminist ideas into classroom practices. Adopting ecofeminist pedagogy as a learning approach is crucial for several reasons: the widespread ecological issues, the advancement of green campus initiatives, and the scarcity of ecofeminist theory and practice. Indonesia's severe ecological challenges are partly due to poor natural resource management (Wiyatmi et al., 2023). This approach not only supports the development of

green campus initiatives but also addresses the critical gap in ecofeminist theory and practice, fostering a more sustainable and equitable educational framework.

Higher education institutions play a significant role in promoting ecological awareness and sustainability. They contribute through various means, including education, research, and policy influence. This, in turn, contributes to the growth and efficacy of various social movements and societal changes. Students of HE indicated strong ambition and power, giving them the potential to become agents of change. Under ecofeminism, HE contributes to an enhanced understanding of many social issues, including ecological conditions, sustainability, gender and equity, and environmental crises. Universities offer programs and courses focused on sustainability and the environment, and Ashida, S. (2023) stated those programs aim to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to address ecological challenges. Ecofeminist pedagogy in higher education is urgent because it intertwines ecological awareness with social justice, emphasizing the interconnectedness of environmental issues and gender equality. This educational approach can help students understand and address environmental challenges through a lens that acknowledges the disproportionate impact of ecological degradation on women and marginalized communities. Besides that, ecofeminist pedagogy can enhance students' ecological awareness and lead them to become more compassionate and informed role models and decision-makers.

Kurniasih (2022), in her research on ecofeminism in patriarchy deconstruction through Sastra Hijau, claimed that literary works are one form of activists using their voices to preserve ecology and simultaneously fight against patriarchal power. Prasad (2022) examined the role of the University of the South Pacific and the State University of Malang students in mitigating climate change. The results of the study show that the actions of students at the State University of Malang are centered around campus activities, while students at the University of the South Pacific boast broader participation, such as in policymaking. Barriers to climate change mitigation at both universities include lack of funds, information, involvement, time, and attitudes towards climate change mitigation.

Özalemdar (2021) examined the effect on environmental attitudes of the active learning method applied in teaching the biology topic "Current Environmental Issues and Humanity" for 10th-grade school students. The results of the study show that the active learning method, which is applied in teaching the aforementioned topic, has a positive effect on the students'

environmental attitude and environmental behavior. Sudirman and Mirnawati (2021) researched literary works as character-building for students. They concluded that literary works positively influence character and attitude formation. In addition, they also claimed that literary works can serve as an educational medium to develop, transform, and shape the character and attitudes of students. Character formation is realized in aspects of spirituality, knowledge, deeds, and social interactions. Additionally, the benefits of literary works can provide recreational means that lead to peace of mind (happiness, tranquility, and comfort) and reduce boredom during learning.

Despite the findings outlined above, there remains a paucity of research focusing on the urgency of ecofeminist pedagogy and its perspective and awareness in higher education.. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to reveal the urgency of ecofeminist pedagogy in higher education. Outlining the above background of the study, the ecofeminist pedagogical perspective, and the increased awareness of the issue is the preliminary research on constructing a teaching model for the related issue. By integrating ecofeminist principles into pedagogical practices, educators can promote critical consciousness and empower learners to engage with complex socio-environmental challenges.

Methods

The present research is a descriptive qualitative study that aims to determine the urgency of ecofeminist pedagogy in higher education. To this end, the research instrument covers observation, reflective practice questionnaires (RPQ), and interviews. Observation was done to meet the need for ecological issues in the environment. The RPQ was initially created as a tool to assess self-reported reflection with various other factors that are important for reflective practice (Priddis & Rogers, 2018). It requires actively paying attention to knowledge and beliefs, along with concentrated reflection on experiences, to gain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding. Data was obtained from questionnaires, field observations, and interviews to get respondents' experience and background knowledge. The questionnaire was provided with clear commands, descriptions, and examples that correlate with the statement at hand, in order for respondents to better understand and imagine the real context of a specific issue. To obtain a broader interpretation of the data, interviews were conducted with selected respondents whose perspectives were essential for achieving a more in-depth description and understanding. The technique for analyzing data is: first, transcribing

and classifying data based on the research questions, then interpreting raw data from the questionnaires; after that, listing the results that need further explanation from the respondents; last, analyzing the data related to the research questions.

There were 34 respondents in the research. They consist of 10 males and 24 females. The classification is established in order to compare and contrast different points of view regarding ecofeminist perspectives based on the gender of participants. Since this study is related to ecofeminist pedagogy, the respondents were chosen purposively based on their occupation, lectures, studies, and other factors. The data varies as it is sourced not only from academic voices but also from non-academic voices, enriching perspectives on the issue of ecofeminism.

This is an initial interdisciplinary research that opens a study on literature, ecology, gender, and society in pedagogy. Thus, the result is expected firstly to provide a comprehensive portrayal of the ecological issue; secondly to know the society's awareness of the issues, and finally to reveal how far the urgency of ecofeminist pedagogy has been established in the educational context.

Findings and Discussion

The findings shed light on three points: first, the ecological problems; second, the ecofeminist perspective; and third, awareness raising.

Ecological Problems

This research was initiated because of the critical environmental conditions on our planet, threatening the sustainability of human life. These conditions have even influenced the essential aspects of life, such as water, soil, and air. Any factors that pollute or degrade these elements lead to ecological problems. Based on data obtained from the questionnaire, there are three types of environmental issues occurring in the respondents' surroundings. These environmental issues are waste, social inequality, and ecosystem imbalance. The result showed a significant number of waste disposal issues in many regions, including some local districts, either in respondents' surroundings or hometowns. 93 percent of the respondents claimed that there were waste and other issues. Most of the waste was disposed of close to the river. This causes more significant environmental problems due to its proximity to the water. One of the respondent's statements is provided below.

In the village of Tawangmangu, Karanganyar, there is an environmental issue regarding cigarette butts being discarded on Mount Lawu. Often, Mount Lawu experiences wildfires due to discarded cigarette butts. (DA, Participant 09)

The excerpt above highlights the waste issue occurring in the Tawangmangu area, a cool highland region. Mount Lawu is often used for recreational activities and is visited by many tourists. However, on the other hand, a lack of awareness or care on the part of visitors, who do not realize the importance of protecting the environment and carelessly leave cigarette butts behind. This causes environmental damage, air pollution from wildfires, and soil contamination from the many cigarette butts left behind. Another phenomenon is found in the village of Purbayan, where garbage piles up at the landfill, causing a strong odor. Many residents dispose of their garbage at the landfill, despite its inadequate capacity. Furthermore, the presence of these garbage piles is also very disruptive to residents and can cause diseases.

In Purbayan, Gentan, and Sukoharjo, there is a garbage disposal site where waste accumulates excessively, emitting a strong odor that significantly pollutes the air and disrupts the surrounding environment. (ARP, Participant 23)

Accumulated waste becomes a problem wherever it is found, not only within households and local environments or at landfills, but also frequently along riverbanks. Waste piles along riverbanks have a more complex negative impact because they pollute multiple elements: soil, air, and water. This accumulated waste comes from various sources, including residents, as seen in the village of Joho.

In the village of Joho, Mojolaban, Sukoharjo, there are environmental issues related to waste management. The waste disposal site is located near the riverbanks, significantly affecting the river's flow. Residents from nearby hamlets dispose of their waste here, and sometimes, the waste is burned, leading to air and soil pollution. This contamination is also expected to affect the river water soon. (NK, Participant 03)

Dumping waste into rivers impacts both the river water and the disruption of the river's normal hydrological flow. This multiplies the negative effect of the waste, as it not only destroys natural beauty but also damages the

river ecosystem and contaminates the water. The pollution of water and air due to waste is a very serious issue because it affects residents' health. Rivers become vulnerable dumping grounds not only for residents disposing of household waste but also for traders in markets, as several respondents have noted (K, Participant 18, DN, Participant 11).

Near the traditional market, there is a river polluted by garbage waste. The garbage waste piles up on the riverbanks, causing unpleasant odors and an unsightly view. (DN, Participant 11)

In the village of Jati, there is an environmental issue concerning garbage. In a corner of the Jati village market, there is an unattended pile of garbage, emitting a strong odor that reaches the market area. This discomforts market visitors. (K, Participant 18)

The effects of accumulated waste in public places are more extensive than those previously described. Public places are frequented by many people, which means more individuals are affected. They inhale polluted air, are close to unhealthy environments, and are exposed to insects and animals that can carry diseases, such as rats, cockroaches, and others. The waste problem in rivers requires special attention. Not only are more parts of the local environment contaminated, but many residents are also affected. Therefore, further information was gathered by the researcher through an interview with one of the respondents, AW, who works at the Daleman market. Daleman market is a traditional market. It sells all kinds of good related to local citizens' daily needs. Every morning, this market is crowded with hundreds of sellers and buyers. The respondent elected to provide a photograph of the local conditions, therefore ensuring the research accurately depicts the river's current state.

In the Daleman Market area, there is a stream where the banks are used as a dumping ground for garbage. Every day, some market residents dispose of their trash there, resulting in large piles of garbage that disrupt the scenery and emit unpleasant odors. (AW, Participant 12)



Figure 2. Waste disposal in a traditional market

From the data describing waste management problems, two respondents mentioned the same issue: waste disposal in rivers. However, a finding that drew special attention was the disposal of livestock waste. Small-scale farms within the community often dump animal waste or manure into the river (GM, Participant 19 and FA, Participant 34). This, of course, has very serious environmental impacts. This condition is not only found in one place but also other locations, as stated by the following respondent.

In the village of Ngringo, residents dispose of garbage along the banks of the Bengawan Solo River and raise pigs. (GM, Participant 19)

In Kampung Mekarsari, Sragen, there are environmental issues concerning waste management and the disposal of livestock manure. Every day, residents burn garbage, leading to soil pollution and air pollution, and they also dispose of animal waste in the river. (FA, Participant 34)

Based on the findings above, many places have waste problems originating from various sources. Waste was found in households, markets, and from livestock. There are also waste piles at landfills, markets, and rivers. This

situation has both current and future impacts. These impacts affect other essential ecological components such as water, soil, and air. Furthermore, some findings regarding river waste also degrade the river ecosystem. Over the long term, waste disposal disrupts the environmental balance. All these factors demonstrate that public awareness about the environment is still very low, particularly regarding waste disposal. Meanwhile, environmental conditions are rapidly deteriorating, giving fresh urgency to the search for effective waste management solutions. Aside from waste, another emerging environmental issue is the blockage of drainage systems. Proper attention to drainage systems is crucial in environmental management. Poorly managed drainage systems can become clogged and lead to bigger problems, such as flooding. Drainage blockages can be caused by several factors, including waste, soil sedimentation, obstructions, or other technical conditions. An example of drainage problems is illustrated by the situation in the village of Babalanlor.

In the village of Babalanlor, Bojong, Pekalongan, there is an environmental issue related to the blockage of drainage channels, especially during the rainy season. This is due to the construction of shallow (short) drainage channels that have become filled with soil from yards and garbage, preventing water from flowing smoothly and causing flooding on the roads. (F, Participant 31)

Environmental issues have been addressed by residents through various efforts; however, these efforts often create new problems. For example, the waste problem caused by residents is often dealt with by burning the waste. As explained in the following excerpt (RF, Participant 13 & SM, Participant 17), burning waste does not solve the problem but instead creates new problems, such as soil and air pollution.

In the villages of Karangasem, Tanon, and Sragen, there is an environmental issue concerning waste management. Every day, residents burn garbage, leading to soil and air pollution. (RF, Participant 13)

In my neighborhood, every afternoon/evening, residents in my village burn garbage, causing soil pollution and air pollution. Not only that, but it also disrupts other residents' activities, such as clothes that have been hung out to dry, becoming dirty or smelly again. (SM, Participant 17)

Besides waste, the data shows that social inequality also contributes to environmental problems. Respondent 23 explains that the impact of environmental issues is a major problem for lower-middle-class communities. Although all segments of society can contribute to environmental conditions, when environmental problems occur, such as accumulating waste, problematic drainage systems, water pollution, air pollution, and soil pollution, it is the lower-middle-class communities that are the first to experience these issues. The following excerpt highlights two environmental problems that have not been discussed previously: social inequality and the shrinking of wetlands.

Social inequality is often linked to environmental issues. Less affluent communities are typically more vulnerable to the negative impacts of pollution and climate change because they have limited access to resources and adequate infrastructure to protect themselves. (L, Participant 23)

In my village, there is a narrowing of the swamp to be used as a road. (E, Participant 29)

The research results indicate that waste problems contribute the most significantly to environmental issues. Understanding the terms waste, rubbish, garbage, and trash is essential in any ecological study. One of the most important concerns is to determine the appropriate handling for different categories and typologies of waste. The term ‘waste’ includes all unwanted materials that are discarded because they are no longer useful or needed. Garbage is specifically from household activities, like kitchen and bathroom. Rubbish refers to dry ones, such as paper, glass, metal, and plastics. Meanwhile, trash also refers to dry, nonorganic waste that can be recycled.

The Ecofeminist Perspective

Ecofeminism, as a theoretical framework, intersects with literary works in various contexts, offering insightful perspectives on the relationship between gender, nature, and societal structures. Scholars have explored ecofeminist themes in literature to analyze how narratives reflect and challenge dominant paradigms of environmental exploitation, gender inequality, and patriarchal systems. By applying ecofeminist lenses to literary texts, researchers delve into the intricate connections between women, nature, and power dynamics, shedding light on how these elements are

intertwined and shape narratives (Nanjeeba, 2023). The previous section has provided empirical evidence concerning environmental issues. This second research outcome delves into the perspective of ecofeminism. It examines whether the ecological problems identified in the first research are issues that concern only women or also men. This is crucial to investigate because, from an ecofeminist viewpoint, both men and women have equal roles in maintaining environmental stability. The following discussion on the ecofeminist perspective is presented with a diagram illustrating the respondents' awareness levels regarding ecofeminism (see Figure 3).

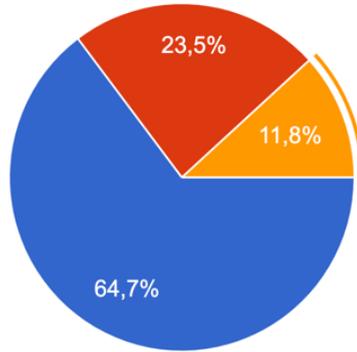


Figure 3. Level of respondents' awareness of the ecofeminist perspective

Responding to the ecological issues, the pie chart presents respondents' answers to the question of whether the ecofeminist perspective needs both men's and women's contributions. To ensure the sustainability of human life, the role of women in environmental conditions is a crucial aspect of ecofeminism. Men must also actively participate in the ecofeminism movement, as they, too, depend on the sustainability of life. The pie chart consists of three colors, with blue indicating strong agreement, red indicating agreement, while orange indicates neutrality. There are 64,7%, or 22 respondents, who strongly agree that the ecofeminist perspective must also be fostered among men. At the same time, 23,55%, or 8 respondents, agree with the statement, while the remaining state that they are neutral about the statement. The interview data also indicate ecofeminism awareness, as stated in the quote below.

Because household chores are related to the environment, some household tasks such as cooking, washing, and sweeping, do not have to be done solely by women. Men can also perform these tasks. (SM, Participant 11)

The statement argues that household chores, such as cooking, washing, and sweeping, are connected to environmental concerns. This connection implies that these tasks are essential for maintaining a clean and healthy living environment. Therefore, the statement asserts that these activities should not be assigned exclusively to women; men should also share in performing these tasks. This perspective promotes gender equality within household responsibilities, challenging traditional gender roles by advocating that both men and women can and should contribute equally to maintaining a sustainable and healthy home environment. Ecofeminism motivates men to adopt ecofeminist values, reject dominant masculine norms, and strive for a more equitable and sustainable future for all living beings. By redefining masculinity within the ecofeminist context, individuals can help foster transformative environmental practices that emphasize care, compassion, and environmental justice.

Awareness Raising

Awareness of ecofeminist principles is crucial for the sustainability of the environment, and therefore a survey was conducted to determine the extent to which respondents are conscious of maintaining environmental sustainability. It presents respondents' participation in various daily activities. There are 7 activities used to determine their awareness in maintaining the condition of their local environment. They are (from the top line) sorting waste by its type, turning off taps, reusing shopping bags, cleaning their surroundings, planting and caring for trees, finishing all the food on their plates, and turning off lights in the morning. These activities demonstrate the respondents' level of awareness regarding environmental conditions (see Figure 4).

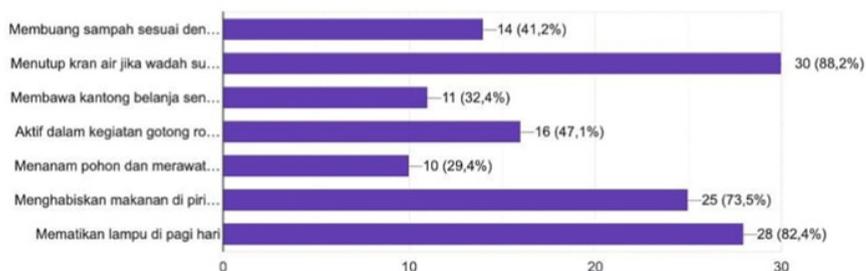


Figure 4. Respondent`s activities that indicate awareness of conserving ecology

The results show that amongst the activities, turning off taps has the highest frequency of responses, with 88,2 % of the respondents doing so. This indicating that the majority of respondents are conscious of water usage and make efforts to conserve water by turning off the tap when not needed. Turning off the lights in the morning came second at 82,4%, which means respondents conserve electricity by turning off lights when they are no longer needed in the morning. Finishing the food on the planet scored 73.5%, which indicates good awareness and practice of minimizing food waste. On the other hand, participating in cleaning the surroundings, sorting and disposing of waste, reusing shopping bags, and planting and taking care of plants was performed by no more than half of total respondents. The survey results indicate that activities with participation rates below 50 percent reflect a low level of public awareness about the importance of maintaining environmental sustainability, particularly in terms of waste management, using reusable shopping bags, and tree planting. This suggests an opportunity to enhance education and community programs focused on sustainable practices. Raising public awareness about ecofeminist principles can help bridge this gap by emphasizing the connection between gender equality and environmental health and promoting more comprehensive and inclusive approaches to ecological conservation.

Based on further interview findings, the data on public awareness levels regarding environmental issues indicates a low level of awareness, as expressed by Kania. Additionally, several respondents also mentioned similar issues, attributing the low environmental awareness to the lack of education among residents.

In my opinion, public awareness in the area is still low. This is because many other residents also burn their trash. Moreover, they do not receive education on how to manage waste properly and responsibly.
(KBR, Participant 7)

In addition, Kayla (Participant 27) also states that the lack of education causes many people to disregard their surrounding environment. The findings reveal that the level of awareness about environmental cleanliness is still low, due to the lack of education provided to the residents. From the residents' perspective, they do not know how to address the issue. Therefore, efforts to increase environmental awareness are essential. This research derives from an understanding of this issue, where the low level of public awareness will have widespread impacts on other problems. High school students act

as agents of change who can impact the community. They serve as role models to raise public awareness about ecofeminism. On the other hand, higher education still lacks evidence of environmental issues and a low level of public awareness. Therefore, the ideas in this research are intended to have a significant impact on increasing public awareness about environmental issues by teaching ecofeminist pedagogy.

Ecofeminism Pedagogy

The fourth research finding reveals the study of ecofeminism. This section is a follow-up to previous findings on ecological issues, ecofeminist perspectives, and awareness-raising. The first data was taken from a survey that depicts the level of agreement on ecofeminist education in higher education, illustrated in Figure 4. The interpretation of the data figure is that 50% of all respondents agree with the teaching of ecofeminism. 32.4% strongly agree, and the remainder are neutral. This indicates that more than 80% of respondents support the idea that ecofeminism should be inserted into higher education pedagogy (see Figure 5).

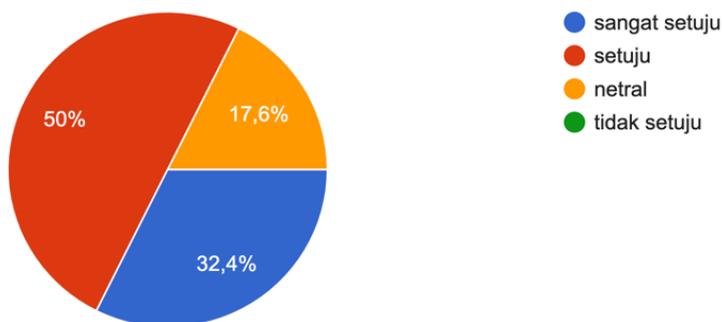


Figure 5. Percentage of respondents supporting ecofeminist pedagogy

The research findings that support the need for ecofeminist pedagogy at the higher education level are evidenced by interview data. Among 43 respondents, 8 of them were interviewed regarding the need for ecofeminist pedagogy. The purposive respondents were asked about how literary works (paintings, dramas, posters, poems, etc.) can be a means of campaigning against environmental destruction. The principle is to raise public awareness about ecofeminist issues or environmental crises that impact women. The transcribed interview explains why literary works in the teaching of ecofeminism in education are important to be implemented.

Literary works as a medium for teaching ecofeminism will greatly support increasing students' awareness of the environment. Literary works encompass human life or experiences involving thoughts, feelings, and imagination about inseparable conditions (the environment), making the actualization of ecofeminism issues tangible when linked to teaching. (FDW, Participant 33)

The statement by Participant 33 emphasizes the effectiveness of using literary works to teach ecofeminism, as they can significantly enhance students' environmental awareness. Literary works vividly depict human experiences intertwined with the environment, capturing thoughts, feelings, and imagination. By linking these narratives to teaching, the tangible aspects of ecofeminism become more relatable and comprehensible. This method helps students better understand and engage with ecofeminism issues, fostering a deeper appreciation for environmental sustainability and gender equality. Participant 29 also highlights the intrinsic value of literary works in exploring the intricate connections between humans, nature, and gender issues. Through literary analysis, it becomes evident how women and nature are often similarly exploited and neglected. This parallel helps identify patterns that raise critical awareness about these injustices. Furthermore, literary works serve as powerful tools to cultivate empathy and deepen understanding of ecofeminism, thereby enriching perspectives on environmental and gender justice.

Because literary works often reflect the complexity of the relationship between humans and nature as well as gender issues. Through literary analysis, we can identify patterns that depict how women and nature are often placed in similar positions as entities that are exploited and neglected. Additionally, literary works can be an effective tool for developing empathy and critical awareness of environmental and gender justice issues, as well as providing rich and deep perspectives in understanding the theory and practice of ecofeminism. (RRS, Participant 29)

The significance of integrating literary works into ecofeminist pedagogy was also revealed by Participant 32. The participant strongly agrees with this approach, highlighting that literary works are a familiar and accessible medium for students. This familiarity makes literary works an effective intermediary for conveying complex ecofeminist concepts in a manner that

is engaging and easy to understand. By presenting these themes through literature, educators can foster a deeper connection and comprehension among students regarding environmental and gender-related issues.

Using literary works in the teaching of ecofeminism in education is important, and I strongly agree with this opinion. The reason is that literary works are a familiar medium among students, so the use of this medium is expected to serve as an intermediary that is easily accepted and understood by students because it is presented in a light and engaging manner. (F, Participant 32)

The statements by Participants 11 and 12 emphasize the intrinsic connection between literary works and character education, particularly within the context of ecofeminism. They argue that literary works serve as a medium through which students can develop a deeper understanding of environmental sustainability and gender roles. This perspective suggests that literature is not just a tool for academic learning but also a vehicle for personal and moral development. By engaging with ecofeminist themes in literature, students are encouraged to reflect on their relationship with the environment, and the societal roles of different genders. This dual focus can lead to the formation of a more conscientious and empathetic character.

Literary works are closely related to character education, while ecofeminism encompasses literary works in the environmental field that are related to the sustainability of life. Therefore, learning ecofeminism through literary works is akin to studying or forming a new character that cares about the environment, gender roles, and sustainability. (DN, Participant 11)

The need to integrate literature and character education in the teaching of ecofeminism involves many aspects, as explained by the previous participants. In addition, participants 5 and 7 provide valuable insights into the role of literary works in promoting ecofeminism and environmental awareness, particularly in the context of modern technological advancements.

The literary work aligns with the campaign against environmental destruction. It would be even better if it were packaged in a digital format so that more people could access it. (R, Participant 5)

With the fast growth of technological advancement, we not only use technology for teaching ecofeminism but also through literary works. Especially the youth of today, who I believe are less inclined to read very long texts, making it necessary for us to use other media in teaching ecofeminism. One of these is through literary works. (KBR, Participant 7)

Participant 5 emphasizes the importance of literary works in campaigning against environmental destruction. They suggest that packaging these works in a digital format would enhance accessibility, allowing a broader audience to engage with the content. This reflects an understanding of the increasing reliance on digital media and the potential it holds for spreading important messages more widely and effectively. Participant 7 highlights the need to adapt educational methods to align with technological growth. They argue that technology should be leveraged not only for teaching ecofeminism directly but also through literary works. They point out a critical observation about the current generation's reading habits, noting that young people today may be less inclined to read lengthy texts. This underscores the necessity of diversifying the media used to teach ecofeminism to maintain engagement and relevance. By using literary works in various digital formats, educators can cater to the preferences of contemporary students, making the learning process more engaging and impactful.

Discussion

This research has yielded findings on the urgency of ecofeminist pedagogy in higher education. To begin with, the first finding concerning environmental issues is the starting point for understanding ecological problems and respondent awareness. The survey results from Ipsos indicate that Indonesia is currently facing significant environmental challenges, with several key themes emerging from the research. These themes encompass societal changes, technological advancements, generational and economic gaps, the pressing issue of climate change and its repercussions, the fragmentation of the political sphere, and health concerns. Among these, waste management emerges as a critical factor contributing significantly to the environmental challenges faced by the country. Moreover, the study highlights various factors influencing the quality of waste management services in Indonesia. These factors include the absence of robust policies and strategies, limited

financial support, inadequate involvement of the private sector, operational inefficiencies, and low levels of public awareness.

Addressing these challenges is crucial in enhancing waste management practices and mitigating the environmental impact of improper waste disposal (Rokib, 2019). Waste problems not only impact the environment directly, but also have far-reaching consequences on public health and ecological sustainability (Mangunjaya & Praharawati, 2019). The research findings highlight that waste problems are the most significant contributors to environmental issues. In addition, Zameer et al. (2021) discussed how environmental problems such as air pollution, global warming, and water scarcity are rooted in human behaviors, emphasizing the role of human actions in exacerbating environmental issues. In addressing these environmental issues, the concept of ecofeminism emerges as a potential solution. Ecofeminism posits that the responsibility of preserving the environment should not solely rest on women but should be a collective duty of humanity as a whole. Wiyatmi, et al. (2017) also claimed that through the study on ecofeminist literary criticism, the awareness to respond to ecological sustainability and gender equality will rise. It will create a harmonious social life for both humans and nature.

The second finding reveals that awareness of ecofeminism in society is still very low. Environmental problems discussed in the first finding did not get much attention from both genders of the respondents. Men give less attention to the domestic need, which has become a core value of ecofeminism. Patriarchal culture not only arises in social habit and interaction, but also nature conservation (Candraningrum, 2013). To raise gender equality, both men and women need an equal role, especially in understanding ecofeminist perspectives. One of the respondents revealed that the factor contributing to this low awareness is the lack of knowledge and education that has yet to be provided to local communities. The results underscore that environmental awareness still needs more attention. Consequently, it is crucial to enhance efforts to raise environmental awareness. In the realm of education, leveraging digital formats and literary works can enhance the learning experience for students, particularly in the context of environmental education. Literature serves not only as a means of academic education but also as a catalyst for personal and ethical growth. Through exploring ecofeminist themes in literature, students are prompted to contemplate their connections with the environment and the societal roles of various genders (Wulandari, 2014). This dual emphasis has the potential to foster the development of a more thoughtful and compassionate individual. Zhang (2022) agreed that through

literary analysis, ecofeminism emerges as a tool for deconstructing power dynamics and advocating for more equitable and sustainable relationships with the natural world. More than half of the respondents also claimed that ecofeminist pedagogy is urgently needed as a tool to raise awareness in society. By incorporating feminist pedagogy into educational curricula, educators can cater to the preferences of contemporary learners, making the process of acquiring knowledge more engaging and impactful.

Conclusion

In summary, the present study was conducted to better understand how the urgency of ecofeminist pedagogy is received in higher education. Drawing on the questionnaire, the 43 participants classified into three backgrounds, lecturer, higher students, and others highlights the ecological crisis in the environment, the citizen`s awareness of ecofeminism, and the urgency of ecofeminism pedagogy. The ecological crisis has a significant impact on the survival of humanity as the primary actors in the ecosystem. If the ecological balance is disrupted by this crisis, it will affect the natural resources produced. At the same time, we know that the population is increasing, which corresponds directly with the rising demand for consumption.

Ecofeminism is a literary study that highlights environmental issues significantly impacting the domestic work traditionally done by women, such as washing, cooking, caring for plants, and creating a sustainably healthy and clean environment. All of these tasks are not solely the responsibility of women but also of men, hence the need for a new perspective regarding household chores. Men also play a role in sustaining life. Ecofeminism raises six crucial points in this regard. Firstly, it promotes gender equity and reduces women`s burden. Secondly, environmental awareness encourages more sustainable practices. Third, ecofeminism campaigns for a healthier living environment, which contributes to the wellbeing of both men and women. Fourth, community empowerment encourages people to work together to address challenges and improve living conditions. Fifth, ecofeminism breaks stereotypes of the traditional gender role paradigms in domestic and environmental participation. Sixth, ecofeminism leads to more sustainable living practices. Therefore, ecofeminist studies have emerged to increase public awareness and knowledge about caring for the environment. Ecofeminism serves as the intersection of literary studies with feminist and environmental studies.

This interdisciplinary study represents the evolution of literary science, which now extends beyond focusing solely on authors, readers, moral values, and other elements that form the backdrop of literary creation. Moreover, the research discussion reveals that society's awareness level still needs increased attention, especially in terms of dealing with the ecological issues that emerge in the immediate domestic or local environment. The presence of higher education students bridges the knowledge of ecofeminism towards its implementation in the field. Therefore, implementing ecofeminist pedagogy in higher education is crucial to raising people's ecological awareness. Finally, scrutinizing ecofeminist pedagogy in higher education students and creating an ecofeminism teaching model is a worthy inquiry for further study.

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Too Polluted to Live? Pollution Impacts of Rayon Factory for Women and Affected Residents in Nguter Sukoharjo

Kania Bening Rahmayna

Abstract

The growth of global fast fashion industries has contributed directly to the establishment of rayon fiber factories in Indonesia, giving rise to serious environmental pollution impacts in this region. This study aims to determine the impact of rayon fiber textile production factory waste on vulnerable groups; women, children, disabled people and the elderly in Nguter, Sukoharjo, Central Java, Indonesia. The qualitative-descriptive method was chosen through a literature review, observations, and in-depth interviews with affected residents. The data was then analyzed using ecofeminist theory and a Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework. The research results show that pollution from rayon fiber textile factories has polluted the air with a strong, foul odor which causes nausea, dizziness, neck tension, and shortness of breath. Apart from also polluting the air, water in the tributary rivers flowing along the Gupit River, eventually leading to the Bengawan Solo River are also being heavily polluted, resulting in residents around the factory environment experiencing a decline in health levels, welfare levels, and a decline in the level of social relations due to increased conflict risk factors. Many residents feel that environmental pollution has had negative impacts on public health, changed social relations, and reduced the overall level of economic resilience on the part of the local community. Various efforts have been made by the community to regain their right to life. Residents hope that all these efforts can restore their right to live with fresh air, clean and healthy water, and a healthy ecosystem in their rice fields, so they may avoid horizontal and vertical conflicts.

Keywords: PT. RUM, women, environmental pollution, rayon fiber factory, ecofeminism, SDGs

Introduction

According to Fertman & Allensworth (Wahyuni, 2022) health is a physical, mental, and social condition of complete prosperity, and not just freedom from disease or weakness/disability. Leddy (in Wahyuni, 2022) states that health is a condition of intact functional abilities and a better/prosperous state, so that a person is seen as being able to have good bodily function, be able to adapt to the environment adequately, and feel better. According to the World Health Organization (Wahyuni, 2022) there are numerous factors that influence health, such as: the social and economic environment, including income and social status, the physical environment, including clean water and air, healthy workplaces, safe housing, communities, individual characteristics and behavior, level of education, genetic factors, accessible health services, gender, and social support networks including culture and traditions. In the book *Sociology of Health (A Theoretical and Empirical Study)*, Iskandar states that social health is defined as the ability to create and maintain relationships with other people, both dependent relationships and interdependent relationships.

Meanwhile, the Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI: *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*) defines pollution as “the process, method, or act of polluting; or fouling.” Meanwhile, according to Darmono (1995), pollution is any form of change resulting from human activities that is undesirable to nature (the environment). According to the Decree of the Minister of Population and Environment Number 02/MENKLH/1988 (now Ministry of Environment and Forestry), pollution is the entry or entry of living creatures, substances, energy and other components into water or air. However, pollution can also be interpreted as a change in the order (composition) of water or air so that it becomes less or no longer able to function according to its intended purpose. Environmental pollution can be summarized as the contamination of the physical and biological components of the earth system and atmosphere, thereby disrupting the balance of the ecosystem. Meanwhile, Law Number 32 of 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management explains that environmental pollution is the entry of living creatures, substances, energy and/or other components into the environment by human activities in excess of environmental quality standards.

For the context of this research, a general description of Nguter in Sukoharjo District is important. One of the sub-districts located in Sukoharjo Regency, Central Java, this sub-district has sixteen villages, namely Kepuh, Pondok, Tanjung, Daleman, Lawu, Baran, Nguter, Gupit, Pengkol, Jangglengan, Tanjungrejo, Serut, Juron, Celep, Plesan, and Kedungwinong. However, in

this article I will focus on just one of the villages in Nguter District, namely Gupit Village. Gupit Village is one of the sixteen villages in Nguter District, Sukoharjo Regency, Central Java. The area of this village is 4,22 km² or 7,29% of the area of Nguter District. Gupit Village is divided into nine hamlets, namely Dukuh, Guntur, Gupit, Ngrapah, Ngrombot, Tawang, Tenongan, Tukulrejo, and Tumpaksari. The total population is 4,863 people, with a total of 2,473 men and 2,363 women in 2022 (Wulandari et al, 2023).

Based on the description of health, pollution, and general description of Nguter sub-district as the research location above, this research will critically analyze the health impacts for mothers in Nguter Sukoharjo, especially Gupit Village, as a result of environmental pollution carried out by the rayon textile factory by PT. RUM. Rayon or rayon fabric is a fabric made from regenerated cellulose fibers. The fibers that are made into rayon yarn come from organic polymers, so they are called semisynthetic fibers because they cannot be classified as synthetic fibers or true natural fibers. In the textile industry, rayon fabric is known as viscose rayon or artificial silk. This fabric usually looks shiny and does not wrinkle easily. Rayon fiber is comprised of the chemical elements carbon, hydrogen and oxygen. In the rayon production process, three main waste products are produced: in the form of sulfur gas (CS₂, H₂S, and CO₂) from the residue from burning coal in the boiler, from the Spinning Department and from the Spinbath Department; Liquid waste (dissolved solids such as residual H₂SO₄, Na₂SO₄ and ZnSO₄); and solid waste (sludge/mud). The main characteristics of rayon waste are that it has a strong odor, is toxic, dissolves in water, is corrosive, and contributes to the risk of acid rain (H₂SO₄). The distribution of gas depends on local meteorological and geographic conditions.

In order to sharpen the descriptive analysis, this article will use an ecofeminist theoretical approach and the concept of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Specifically, the SDGs that will be linked to cases of environmental pollution faced by the Gupit village community are the third (3) and sixth (6) sustainable development goals. The SDGs were launched in 2015 and will be in place for the next 15 years for the implementation of 17 global development goals. The SDGs themselves have been signed by 190 countries, including Indonesia, and were ratified by the UN General Assembly on September 25, 2015, in New York, United States. The preparation of SDGs includes 3 (three) pillars of sustainable development, namely social development goals, environmental development goals and economic development goals (Pertiwani, 2017). SDGs have also been ratified into law in Indonesia through Presidential Regulation no. 59 of 2017 concerning SDGs

and their follow-up. Measuring the level of public health from an SDGs perspective is a macro measure of whether the direction of development has guaranteed the achievement of the development goals set by the world.

Apart from the perspective of achieving the SDGs goals above, it will also be explained critically through the latest feminist approach (Donovan, 1988), namely ecofeminism, which is an understanding of the connection between women and the natural world, especially in the helplessness and unfair treatment of both. Ecofeminism first appeared in 1974. This flow tries to provide an understanding of the interconnectedness between all forms of human oppression. In this case the relationship between humans and non-humans (nature) highlights women's involvement in all ecosystems. This perspective is interesting considering that it contributes additional layers of analysis to the issues of health and environmental sustainability in cases of environmental pollution.

The method that will be used to collect data is comprised of in-depth interviews with residents affected by environmental pollution carried out by PT RUM (PT Rayon Utama Makmur) rayon company in Nguter, Sukoharjo District.

Theory Description: Ecofeminism and SDGs

Ecofeminism

Ecofeminism is an understanding of the connection between women and the living environment, especially with regards to the helplessness and unfair treatment of both within a patriarchal framework. Ecofeminism appeared around 1974 in a book by Françoise d'Eaubonne entitled *Le Féminisme ou la Mort*. In the book it is recommended that feminist theory and practice must include ecological practices and ecological solutions developed in line with feminist perspectives (Tong, 2009). Ecofeminism combines ecological criticism and gender criticism aimed at "Western" science, which is dualistic, tends to be dominated by technology, and is gender blind. Ecofeminists state that domination of nature is directly related to economic, cultural and psychological factors that create hierarchies, and in practice oppress women and exploit nature (Gamble, 2010). Characteristics of masculine ideas such as war and violence, discrimination, ethnocentric views, when facilitated by technology and western science, are seen by ecofeminists as a major threat to the sustainability of nature and the environment. Apart from being mentioned in the book by Françoise d'Eaubonne, ecofeminism is also

mentioned in *Post-Victimology Stance* written by an Indian writer named Vandana Shiva in 1989. In the book it is written that she believes women are able to mobilize in defense of the environment.

The rationale of ecofeminism is in line with multicultural and global feminism. This school tries to provide an understanding of the interconnectedness between all forms of human oppression. In this case, the relationship between humans and non-humans (nature) highlights women's involvement in all ecosystems. The issues in this school are the framework of masculine domination in environmental destruction (Gamble, 2010). Ecofeminist thinking is based on an ethic of care that exists because of the inherent nature of women themselves. This understanding explains the powerlessness of women and global environmental damage in view of established social and cultural structures. This understanding links domination between humans and their relationship with the environment, which results in suffering for humans in the form of environmental damage, with the intention to ultimately increase awareness of environmental conservation and explain the importance of gender equality for humans.

Ecofeminism seeks to solve the problems of human life, nature, and planet based on women's experiences, making these experiences a source of learning for the management and preservation of nature (Fahimah, 2017). This means providing equal (fair and equal) access for women and men in managing and preserving nature. In this case, the relationship between humans and non-humans (nature) shows women's involvement in all ecosystems. The issues in this study are the existence of a framework of toxic masculine domination in environmental destruction. Ecofeminism uses a mixture of approaches focusing on the natural environment (ecology) and the role of women (feminism). This study posits that women are culturally linked to nature. Ecofeminism seeks to understand the relationship between humans and each other, as well as the non-human world, namely animals and even plants.

Ecofeminism is a dialectic that moves in the areas of concept (theory) and practice to solve the problem of the crisis in relations between humans, as well as the crisis in the relationship between humans and nature. The aim is to achieve changes in the systems and structures of society that place men, women and nature into an integral, holistic whole. Thus the ecofeminist movement is primarily grounded in the field of economic justice between men and women, social justice for men and women, gender equality between men and women, and ecology.

SDGs: Focus on Achieving Sustainable Development Goals

The *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* is a sustainable development program prepared by the United Nations (UN) and agreed upon by member countries in September 2015. The aim of the SDGs is to encourage change based on human rights and an equality of social, economic and environmental development (EcoEduId, 2022). Indonesia, having signed the SDGs, ratified them through Presidential Regulation (*Perpres*) No 59 of 2017 concerning Implementation of the Achievement of SDGs Sustainable Development Goals. This contains 17 goals for 2030 declared by the Head of State. The 17 goals are: No poverty, No hunger, Healthy and Prosperous Life, Quality Education, Gender Equality, Clean Water and Adequate Sanitation, Clean and Affordable Energy, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, Reducing Inequality, Cities and Sustainable Settlements, Responsible Consumption and Production, Addressing Climate Change, Ocean Ecosystems, Land Ecosystems, Peace, Justice and Resilient Institutions, and Partnerships to Achieve Goals (Pristiandaru, 2023a, 2023b).

This study specifically focuses on Sustainable Development Goals goal 3, namely Healthy and Prosperous Life, and goal 6, namely Clean Water and Decent Sanitation. Goal 3 of the SDGs, namely Healthy and Prosperous Life, in Indonesia, focuses on ensuring community nutrition, supporting the national health system, access to health and reproduction, family planning (famously known as *Keluarga Berencana*), as well as sanitation and clean water. In this third goal, there are nine (9) targets to be achieved, namely: "First, by 2030 reducing the maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births; second, by 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and toddlers with all countries trying to reduce the Neonatal Mortality Rate to at least 12 per 1000 KH (Live Births) and the Under-Five Mortality Rate to 25 per 1000' third, by 2030, end the epidemic of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases, and fighting hepatitis, waterborne diseases and other infectious diseases; fourth, by 2030, reduce by one third the number of premature deaths due to non-communicable diseases, through prevention and treatment, as well as improving mental health and well-being; fifth, strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotics abuse and harmful alcohol use; sixth, by 2020, reduce by half the number of global deaths and injuries from traffic accidents; seventh, by 2030, guarantee universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programs; eighth, achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to good

basic health services, and access to basic medicines and vaccines that are safe, effective, quality and affordable for everyone; and ninth, by 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and illnesses due to dangerous chemicals, as well as pollution and contamination of air, water and land” (EcoEduId, 2022).

SDG’s goal 6, Clean Water and Adequate Sanitation, ensures the availability and sustainable management of clean water and sanitation for all. In achieving this goal, there are 8 targets set. The target are: First, by 2030, to achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all; second, by 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, and end the practice of open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and vulnerable groups; third, by 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating discharges, and minimizing the release of hazardous materials and chemicals, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater, and significantly increasing recycling and the safe reuse of global recyclables; fourth, by 2030, significantly increase water use efficiency in all sectors and ensure sustainable use and supply of fresh water to overcome water scarcity, and significantly reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity; fifth, by 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through appropriate cross-border cooperation; sixth, by 2020 protect and restore ecosystems related to water resources, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, groundwater and lakes. This sixth target is further subdivided into two, namely 6.a by 2030, expanding international cooperation and support in terms of capacity building for developing countries, in programs and activities related to water and sanitation, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, water treatment waste, recycling and recycling technology. 6.b Support and strengthen local community participation in improving water and sanitation management .

Nguter District Demography: Health Conditions of Mothers and Children Who Are Victims of Environmental Pollution

In terms of administrative division, Nguter District is divided into 16 villages and further divided into 55 hamlets/*kecamatanans*, 122 RWs (*Rukun Warga, neighborhood units*), and 352 RTs (*Rukun Tetangga, sub-neighborhood units*). The location of Nguter District is on a plain with an altitude of 104m above sea level, with an area of 59,64 km². To the north, this sub-district borders Bendosari District and Sukoharjo District, to the east it borders

Karanganyar Regency. Then to the south it borders Bulu District and Wonogiri Regency, while to the west it borders Sukoharjo, Tawang Sari and Bulu Districts (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020) (see Figure 1).

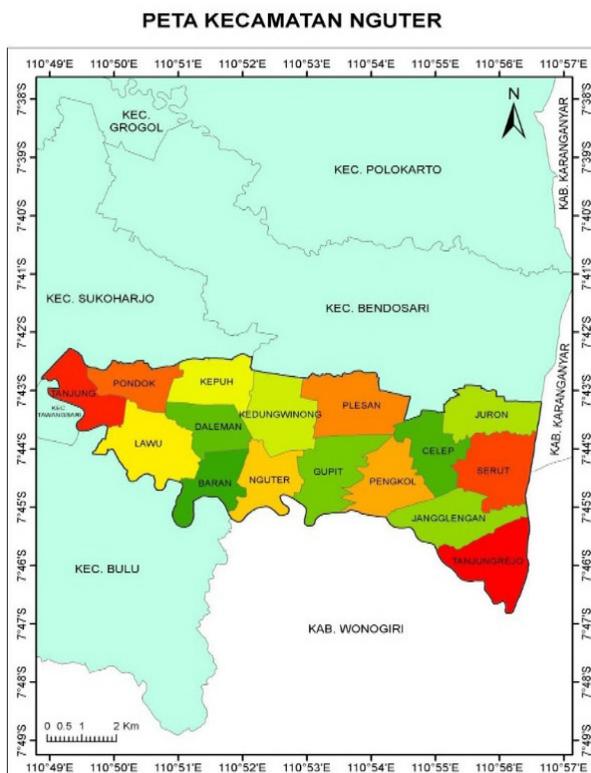


Figure 1. Map of Nguter District, Sukoharjo Regency, Central Java

Demographically, in 2022 the population in Nguter District was 47,599 people, consisting of 23,633 women and 23,966 men. The area of Nguter District in 2022 was recorded at 5,964 Ha or around 12.19 percent of the area of Sukoharjo Regency (48,912 Ha). Of the 5,964 Ha, there are 2,418 Ha or 40.54 percent which are rice fields, and 3,546 Ha or 59.46 percent are not rice fields. Gupit Village is one of the villages in Nguter District, Sukoharjo Regency. This village has an area of 3,91 km², this land is divided into rice fields and non-rice fields. Rice fields have an area of 132 Ha and non-rice fields have an area of 259 Ha.

Meanwhile, demographically, Gupit Village has 3 Hamlets, 9 neighborhood units (*Rukun Warga*), and 32 sub-neighborhood units (*Rukun Tetangga*). Gupit Village is one of the sixteen villages in Nguter District, Sukoharjo

Regency, Central Java. The area of this village is 4,22 km² or 7,29% of Nguter District. Gupit Village is divided into nine hamlets, namely Dukuh, Guntur, Gupit, Ngrapah, Ngrombot, Tawang, Tenongan, Tukulrejo, and Tumpaksari. Meanwhile, the total population is 4,863 people, with a total of 2,473 men and 2,363 women. Gupit Village has 3,937 residents with 1,969 men and 1968 women. In this village there are 10 mosques and 9 prayer rooms, although in Gupit Village there are only prayer rooms and a single mosque. In other villages there are also Protestant churches and Catholic churches. Gupit Village is the closest village to the operating location of PT RUM, which spreads strong smelling effluent and liquid waste which pollutes the Gupit River, one of the tributaries of the Bengawan Solo River.

The health conditions of mothers affected by PT RUM's environmental pollution in Sukoharjo are very diverse, ranging from medical health to social health. First, medical health can be defined as a condition of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not simply the absence of disease or infirmity. According to the biomedical model perspective, health is focused on the body's ability to function normally, which can be disrupted by disease from time to time. Second, from a social perspective, social health is defined as the ability to create and maintain relationships with other people, both dependent relationships and interdependent relationships. So, if we look at the medical health of the people in Gupit Village, they have various health problems such as vertigo, heart disease, Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI), skin diseases, etc.

Meanwhile, in terms of social health, it is difficult for people in Gupit Village to connect and maintain relationships with other people socially, considering that the environmental conditions that have been polluted by strong odors for years have made it difficult for residents of the Gupit village hamlets located around the factory to socialize outside their homes. Residents choose to leave the village if the smell is strong, or simply stay indoors.

Vertigo is a condition where a person experiences dizziness and feels that the environment or objects around them are moving, floating and as if they are spinning. A person affected by vertigo will feel that their head hurts, experience dizziness, and they may even feel nauseous or want to vomit. Many people experience these symptoms in Ngrapah hamlet, Nguter Village, where the people are affected by environmental pollution produced by PT RUM. There have been several known cases of vertigo since PT RUM went into production. Below the results of an interview with *Mbok* Sarmi, one of the residents affected by pollution carried out by PT RUM, are summarized:

“When the residents here smell it, their heads become dizzy, and they can even faint. Mbok Sarmi’s own child, who was previously healthy and didn’t get sick easily, is now suffering from vertigo,” (results from interviews with Several Affected Residents, 9 February 2024).

Acute Respiratory Tract Infections (ARI) are types of infections that affect the upper and lower respiratory tract, including the nose, throat, sinuses, bronchi and lungs. This infection can occur due to various factors such as viruses, bacteria, or even fungi. Exposure to air pollution and decreased air quality in the community can also cause people to suffer from ISPA. Particles such as fine dust, motor vehicle fumes, and industrial pollution can damage the respiratory tract and trigger infections. The ARI disease control program divides ARI diseases into 2 groups, namely Pneumonia and non-Pneumonia. Based on data from the Sukoharjo District Health Service (Wulandari, R., Fajar, MK, and Puspa P., 2023), there were 993 cases of pneumonia in toddlers in Sukoharjo District in 2017, 991 cases in 2018, 1,315 cases in 2019, 1,315 cases in 2020, 572 cases, in 2021 there will be 877 cases, and in 2022 there will be 862 cases.

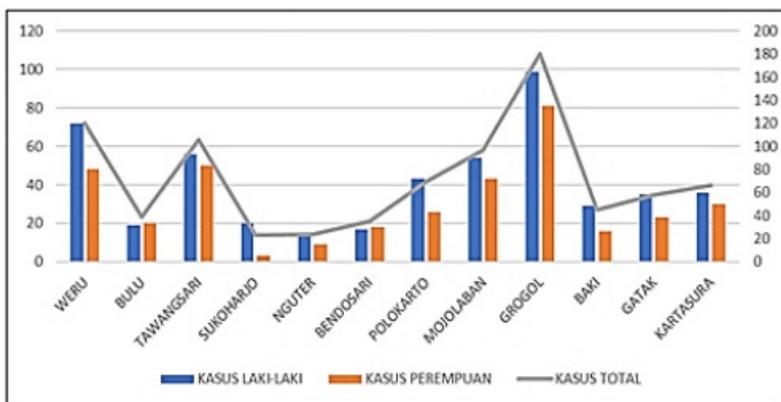


Figure 2. Pneumonia Cases in Toddlers Based on Sukoharjo Regency Health Center Areas in 2022

From the graph above, it can be seen that in Nguter District alone there were 20 cases of male toddlers affected by pneumonia, and 10 cases of female toddlers affected by pneumonia. The pneumonia rate in Nguter sub-district is low compared to other sub-districts, considering that in 2022, PT RUM was not operating. Meanwhile, data regarding pneumonia actually experienced by residents of Nguter District, especially Gupit Village, can be confirmed

to be very high since the operation of PT. RUM, which causes very strong odor pollution. However, the data above does not fully represent what is happening in the villages around the factory, because much of the ARI/ISPA (*infeksi saluran pernafasan akut*) data is not well documented and is not available.

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, is a condition where the systolic blood pressure in a person's body is more than or equal to 140 mmHg and/or diastolic blood pressure is more than or equal to 90 mmHg. From the results of the health report in Sukoharjo Regency in 2022 from blood measurements for residents over 15 years of age, as many as 580,262 (91,6%) had hypertension, 139,114 (52,7%).

No	Kecamatan	Jumlah Pelayanan Penderita Hipertensi		
		L	P	Jumlah
1	Weru	989	3.963	4.952
2	Bulu	5.515	5.619	11.134
3	Tawang Sari	8.341	8.357	16.698
4	Sukoharjo	2.914	5.461	8.375
5	Nguter	709	1.876	2.585
6	Bendosari	5.458	6.026	11.484
7	Polokarto	6.827	7.500	14.327
8	Mojolaban	8.379	10.218	18.597
9	Grogol	13.882	14.364	28.246
10	Baki	2.393	3.737	6.130
11	Gatak	3.658	4.732	8.390
12	Kartasura	2.592	5.604	8.196
Jumlah				139.114

Figure 3. Health Services for Hypertension Sufferers in Sukoharjo Regency in 2022

From the graph above it can be seen that in 2022 there were 139,114 thousand people affected by hypertension in Sukoharjo Regency. From this data it can also be seen that in Nguter District there were 2,585 people affected by hypertension. Of this number, 709 men and 1,876 women were affected by hypertension. In line with the results of interviews with communities affected by pollution:

Before RUM operated, Mbok was healthy, not sick at all. However, when RUM started operating, Mbok now gets sick easily and suffers from high blood pressure (hypertension). Initially her blood pressure was

at least 90-100. But now it has changed to 150-160. (Interview with Mbok Sarmi, 8 February 2024)

Heart and blood vessel disease is a group of disorders including hypertension. From the results of the 2022 report, there were 139,114 cases of hypertension which were then further divided into 61,657 men and 77,457 women). Strokes were recorded at 2,466 cases with 1,311 men and 1,155 women, Dekomp Cordis was 1,040 cases with 559 men and 481 women. Acute Myocardial Infarction (AMI) was 302 cases with 176 men and 126 women and Angina pectoris was 450 cases with 230 men and 220 women (Rahmayna, 2023). Meanwhile, the results of an interview with the Head of RW 9 of Gupit Village said that:

Because of the smell of RUM factory waste....there are a lot of sick people here, such as heart disease, death, babies born abnormally, etc. (Interview with Pak Semin RW 9, 8 February 2024).

In assessing the level of public health, several indicators are used, such as the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Under-5 Mortality Rate (AKABA), Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR), morbidity rates, several diseases and nutritional status, etc. Public health can also be influenced by many factors. The factors in question are economics, education, social environment, heredity and other factors. The Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) is the number of deaths of infants aged under 1 year (0-11 months) per 1000 live births in a particular year. In data obtained in 2022 in Sukoharjo there were 67 infant deaths from various causes, including 20 cases of low birth weight (LBW), 25 cases of congenital abnormalities, 7 cases of asphyxia, 3 cases of COVID-19, 1 case of dengue fever, 3 cases of very low birth weight babies (BBLSR) or premature birth, 2 cases of aspiration, 1 case of fetal distress, 1 case of pneumonia, 1 case of cardiac arrest, 1 case of Down's Syndrome, 1 case of febrile seizure, and 1 case of bronchopneumonia.

Meanwhile, from the perspective of antenatal health service provision, this can be monitored through the new program of visiting services for pregnant women (K1) which meet established standards, namely a minimum of 4 visits during pregnancy (K4 - Kunjungan Antenatal/antenatal visit) it can be monitored through new visiting services for pregnant women (K1) to see access and health services for pregnant women that meet standards, namely a minimum of 4 visits during pregnancy (K4 Kunjungan Antenatal/Antenatal Visit). K4 coverage during antenatal visits in 2022 was 94,24%, but

this does not meet the SPM (*Standar Pelayanan Minimal*/ Minimum Service Standards) target of 100%. This amount decreased from 2021 when it reached 95.87%. In 2022, it was found that 3,499 pregnant women were at high risk of health complications. Meanwhile, in 2021 there were 3,556 cases of high risk pregnancy. Of the high-risk detections in 2022, the majority were in the 4T rest type, namely (too young, too many (children), too close together (pregnancy spacing), or too old). *Puskesmas* (*Pusat kesehatan masyarakat* – local health clinic) provides services to pregnant women, one of which is providing iron tablets. This is done so that pregnant women do not get anemia, because most maternal deaths are caused by anemia. Meanwhile, for postpartum mothers, the community health center provides vitamin A, and it has been reported that 100% of postpartum mothers have received vitamin A. The additional protection provided by the community health center for mothers and babies against the possibility of tetanus during childbirth includes providing tetanus toxoid (TT) immunization to pregnant women. In 2022, there were 41,09% and 42,70% of women receiving tetanus toxoid (TT) 1 and tetanus toxoid (TT) 2 immunizations, respectively.

Rayon Fiber Factory Seizes Residents' Right to Life

PT Rayon Utama Makmur has started operations since 2017, for their factory that produces synthetic rayon fiber. PT. RUM is located in Nguter District, Sukoharjo Regency. Since operating they have polluted the air and water. Rayon fiber produced by PT. RUM is supplied to PT. SRITEX *Sri Rejeki Isman Textile*, as raw material for making textiles to be processed into garment products. Construction of the PT.RUM factory is located very close to residents' homes, where it pollutes the air by producing H₂S and CS₂ compounds, which have foul and pungent odors, causing a strong foul odor comparable to the smell of septic tanks and sewers. As a result, residents around the PT RUM factory location experience nausea, dizziness, sore throats and shortness of breath.

There are at least four villages around PT RUM that are affected by air pollution, these villages are Gupit, Plesan, Pengkol and Celep Villages. The form of pollution carried out by PT. RUM includes disposing of liquid waste from production, this waste sometimes being dark yellow, black, cloudy, hot, and smelly, and thrown every day into the Gupit River, one of the tributaries of the Bengawan Solo River. Since the factory began operating, affected residents have also repeatedly taken direct action in front of PT. RUM, entered into mediation with PT. RUM, even evacuated the area in front

of the PT. RUM factory because of the bad smell. However, PT. RUM remains silent and has not shown willingness to engage with these issues, continuing instead to cause pollution which is very disturbing to residents. In 2018, the Regent of Sukoharjo imposed administrative sanctions on PT. RUM, after being pressured by residents with mass action for many days attended by thousands of people. The sanctions imposed by the Regent of Sukoharjo were a temporary cessation of production activities for 18 months from 22 February 2018 to 22 August 2019, and an obligation to repair and install several pieces of equipment to prevent pollution. However, ultimately the sanctions were not upheld, and were in fact revoked through the decision of the Regent of Sukoharjo No 660.1/451 of 2019. Even though PT. RUM did not fully implement these sanctions and pollution continued to occur, from the lifting of these sanctions it can be seen that the Regent of Sukoharjo's intervention was only a token gesture, despite their jurisdiction providing for direct supervision of PT. RUM up to and including the revocation of environmental permits.

The impact of pollution as a result of PT. RUM's operations continues to be felt by residents every day, despite the results of PT. RUM's waste tests for both liquid and airborne waste, carried out by the Central Java Province Environment and Hygiene Service, which stated both to be below the quality standard threshold. This has led local residents to become increasingly distrustful of the results of these tests, given their direct experience of pollution and its impacts.

After almost 6 years, PT. RUM continues to pollute the environment and the Regional Government and Central Government has not shown itself to be serious about dealing with pollution. As many as 185 residents from 7 villages in Nguter District, Sukoharjo Regency filed a class action lawsuit at the Sukoharjo District Court suing PT. RUM because for the unlawful acts it has committed by polluting and damaging the environment during the period 2017-2023. The lawsuit was authorized by the SUMBU (*Sukoharjo Melawan Bau Busuk/Sukoharjo Against the Bad Smell*) Advocacy Team, consisting of LBH Semarang, the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation, and Net Attorney. The lawsuit demanded PT. RUM respect the rights of local residents by stopping all activities contributing to the bad smell, and for PT. RUM to take financial responsibility for the pollution which has occurred by paying compensation of 1,859,000,000. PT. RUM has also been named as a suspect by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, determined through Decision Letter Number: S.Tap. 15/PHPLHK-TPLH/PPNS/06/2022 dated 10 June 2022

issued by the Directorate of Criminal Law Enforcement, KLHK (quoted from LBH Semarang press release circular, 8 June 2023).

PT. RUM started operating in 2017 and has been causing odors and other impacts since its initial operation period. PT. RUM began construction in 2010, initially stating that their land would be used to grow cotton. Before building a factory, companies usually carry out outreach to the community, such as asking for permission and notifying the community. However, this did not occur. PT. RUM only asking for permission from the village head without any direct outreach to the community, and then immediately initiating construction. An interview with the Head of RT 2 stated:

Initially PT. RUM said it would build a factory to grow cotton. But previously the information was like that. However, the reality is very different when the factory starts operating. So, the public has been lied to by PT. RUM. The RUM factory was built in 2010, but only started operating in 2017. Before building the factory, they (RUM) had no outreach to the community, so they just built it straight away (Interview with Pak Semo RT 2, 8 February 2024).

Since PT. RUM started operating in 2017, the people living around the factory have been affected. Starting from health, environmental, social and even economic impacts. For example, the environment around the factory was initially very healthy and beautiful. The air was still fresh, the land could still be planted, the water was still clean and could be used for various daily activities. However, since the factory started operating, the surrounding environment is no longer beautiful, the air is not fresh, the land can no longer be planted, the water is dirty and unusable, and there is often a foul smell. Interviews with local people who live near the factory reveal:

The environment here was initially very good, the air was clean, the water could be used, the land was still good and could be planted. However, since PT. RUM started operating, the environment has changed 100%. The water has become dirty and the land can no longer be planted. The air is no longer fresh, because it definitely smells bad. The stench can be different, such as the smell of coffee, septic tanks, petai (bitter beans), etc. (Interviews with several affected residents, 8-9 February 2024)

From the description above it can be seen that from the construction of PT. RUM has a negative impact on society. Like the environmental impact outlined in the interview results above, apart from the people who are affected directly, the surrounding environment is also affected. The impacts include the water becoming dirty, the land not being able to be planted, the air not being fresh and there being a foul smell (Andalas, 2013).

Meanwhile, the social impact for the affected community is that it becomes difficult for the community to socialize with fellow communities; this is because PT. RUM's operations create a very strong stench. This disturbs residents and ultimately, they were forced to return to their homes, making it very rare for people to be outside their homes to socialize. The Head of RT 2 said:

When the factory is not operating, in the afternoon residents usually gather and socialize and chat outside their homes. But if the smell appears, all the residents immediately disperse to their homes (Results of Interview with Pak Semo RT 2, February 8, 2024).

Apart from difficulties in socializing, the communities affected by pollution from PT. RUM also experienced subsequent social conflicts. The social conflict in question is a conflict between fellow citizens who support PT. RUM and those who reject PT. RUM. Apart from that, there are also conflicts between residents who reject the existence of the factory on various grounds, conflict between affected residents and the Village Government which is perceived as not supporting residents' efforts to obtain justice, as well as conflict between affected residents and PT. RUM directly. Interview with Mr. RT 2, Mr. RW 9, and affected residents states:

At the start of operations, the smell from the factory was not very strong, but over time the smell got stronger. Even in the past, when the smell started to appear, they accused each other. They accused each other that this was the smell from one of the residents' houses (Interview with Pak Semin RW 9, February 8, 2024).

Meanwhile, the results of interviews with the Head of RT 2 and Head of RW 9 stated that there was conflict between residents who were for and against the construction of the PT RUM factory in the area.

Many people here have been conditioned by PT. RUM. So many residents here support and defend PT. RUM (Interview with Pak Semo RT 2 and Pak Semin RW 9, February 8, 2024).

Then there were also the results of an interview with the Leader of RW 9, which stated that there was a conflict between the affected residents and local village officials who were pro-PT. RUM. This is in accordance with the results of the interview below.

Sometimes I confide in my neighbors about this problem, I want to confide in village officials. But this is not possible, because all RT/RW, even the sub-district heads, have been conditioned by PT. RUM (Interview with Pak Semin RW 9, April 8, 2024).

There are also the results of an interview with one of the residents affected by environmental pollution carried out by PT. RUM, stating that from the start village and even sub-district officials had been conditioned by PT. RUM to support their operations. This is expressed in the interview results below:

Since it started operating, village and sub-district officials have supported PT. RUM and even they are conditioned directly from the factory. Then there is also the possibility that they are paid monthly by PT. RUM to remain silent (Mbok Sarmi, interview on February 8, 2024).

From the description above it can be seen that not only the environment is affected but there are also social impacts as well. The social impact in question is the increasing escalation of conflict between residents who reject and support the presence of the factory, which increasingly extends to the village government and the Sukoharjo district government. These conflicts occurred because of the construction of the PT. RUM near residential areas. They accuse each other and grow to dislike other residents who live together in the same village. Where residents in such a small community should be able to live harmoniously alongside one another, the reality is that mutual distrust and suspicion has come to define much of their social interaction as a direct result of the factory's presence. This extends a fracturing of their relationship to their political representatives in village and sub-district government, where their concerns are perceived to be largely ignored.

The operation of PT. RUM not only has a social and environmental impact on the surrounding community, but also has a health impact, as admitted by *Mbok Sipon*, whose feet were covered in chemical burns due to exposure to waste-contaminated water. There is also *Mbok Sarmi*, who has to take medicine every day, and is often in and out of the hospital. Other affected residents experienced nausea, dizziness and even fainted when the strong smell appeared. In general, it can be concluded that people who used to be healthy, never went to hospital, rarely got sick, and rarely took medicine, have now experienced significant changes in their health condition, lifestyle, and reliance on medical treatment.

The local people said that when the factory was operating, it would intermittently produce a very strong stench, which could appear in the morning, afternoon, or evening. This foul smell sometimes resembles the smell of *Torabica* (local brand of ground coffee), *petai* (bitter beans), human waste, septic tanks and bathroom waste. When this smell appears, residents around the factory will feel dizzy, nauseous, and some members of the community will even faint. They also said that of all the smells the most unpleasant was the smell of *Torabica* coffee. At first the smell was fragrant, but over time the smell got stronger and made anyone who smelled it feel dizzy and nauseous. When the smell appears, people struggle to do anything, including sleeping, and even eating becomes unpleasant. People here have dealt with this H₂S odor every day for more than seven years, and it can sometimes reach as far as the small city of Sukoharjo, around 11km from the factory location. The fact that it has been reported to disturb residents there highlights the intense impact experienced by local residents in the immediate vicinity.

When the factory is operating, it is certain that there will be a smell, and this smell will last for 24 hours. The smell sometimes resembles torabika coffee, petai, septic tank, sometimes also the smell of a toilet. They (PT. RUM) also throw their waste into rivers and residents' rice fields. Eventually the river was polluted and the water turned into various colors. The color is sometimes black, sometimes green, but the smelliest is the black one which smells like Torabica coffee. If it smells, you usually get a headache, nausea, vomiting, and it feels like you're going to catch a cold. There are also those who vomit blood and become short of breath when the factory operates (Interviews with several affected residents, 8-9 February 2024).

Apart from causing a bad smell, PT. RUM also dumps its waste into the river around the factory and sometimes it ends up in residents' rice fields. As a result, local communities experienced crop failure, because their crops were exposed to PT. RUM's waste. Those who previously could harvest twice a year can now only harvest once a year.

Before there was PT. RUM, the air here was still fresh and the water was very clean, the land could still be planted. However, after RUM arrived, things changed, the land could no longer be planted. The soil here changed color to brownish black, the color became cloudy and cracked after PT. RUM came. As a result, people who usually harvest twice a year now have only one harvest a year (Interview with Mbok Sipon, February 9, 2024).

Apart from affecting crop yields, polluted river water cannot be used by the community because it will cause skin diseases. As happened to one of the affected communities named Mbok Sipon, who stated:

In the past, when I went to the rice fields to plant rice, in the afternoon when Mbok had to go home, I washed my feet in the river. The river water was very clear and looked clean, fortunately I didn't wash my face at that time. Even though Mbok usually always washes her face in the river. At night when she was resting, Mbok's feet felt very hot and felt like they were burning and itchy. In the morning when she woke up, her whole leg was reddish (Interview with Mbok Sipon, February 9, 2024).

From this situation, it can be ascertained that this pollution has a direct economic impact on the communities affected by environmental pollution carried out by PT. RUM. Affected residents said:

"Most of the people who live here work as farmers and there are also a lot of rice fields here. All buildings owned by PT. RUM, were originally a rice field owned by residents which was later purchased by PT. RUM. Rice fields owned by PT. RUM can reach around 80 hectares. From an economic perspective, after the existence of PT. RUM the economic level of residents around the factory has decreased, because the land belonging to residents has been purchased by PT. RUM" (Interview with Mbok Sarmi, February 8, 2024).

From the results of these interviews, it can be seen that the average level of economic prosperity among residents who work as farmers is decreasing. This is because the residents' rice fields of around 80 hectares have been purchased by PT. RUM at low prices. So that people currently live on the remaining land they own, the productive area of which is decreasing (Yuliati, 2014).

From an urban planning perspective, of course the presence of rayon industrial waste by PT RUM has changed the landscape and function of the settlement in the Nguter Industrial Zone Area. Not only physically, but the implementation of urban planning that does not support environmental sustainability, clearly has an impact on increasing the level of community vulnerability, especially for women, children, and disabled seniors (Ramdhon, 2014).

Ecofeminism: Loss of the Right to Life and Escalation of Gender-Based Conflicts

If it is related to the health conditions of people affected by environmental pollution, especially vulnerable groups, the pollution process can be considered to lead to a process of ecocide, paying the ecological price of fast fashion consumption (Candraningrum, 2023). So, in this case, women, who are said to be involved in all ecosystems according to ecofeminism, have a high level of impact on the environment and on human health. For example, *Mbok Sipon*, who is one of the residents affected by environmental pollution carried out by PT. RUM. From the interview, *Mbok Sipon* said that in the past, when she went to the fields and planted, she was asked to come home for lunch. Before going home, she usually washed her feet and hands in the river near her rice fields. The clear river water where she washed her hands and feet turned out to be contaminated with factory waste. This made her feet feel like they are burning, red, and rotting. From the results of these interviews, it can be seen that women are vulnerable to being affected by environmental pollution. Not only because of their involvement in the ecosystem, but also because women are the main caretakers of their families and homes, where they clean the house, cook, wash clothes every day, which definitely requires direct interaction with water. The water around them is not necessarily clean and could be polluted as has happened in Gupit Village.

In the conflict between affected residents and PT RUM there is also oppression of humans and non-humans (nature). For non-humans (nature) PT. RUM damages the environment around its factory area by dumping

waste into nearby rivers for economic reasons and economic gain. Then this waste passes through and enters the residents' rice fields. So, PT. RUM also carries out economic oppression for the community by degrading the livelihood for residents directly affected by pollution. The form of economic oppression occurs via this discharging of waste into rice fields, affecting both the commercial crop of rice, as well as other plants and animals. Most of the residents in the surrounding area are farmers and they depend on their rice fields to support their lives and those of their families.

The sharpening of conflicts between residents also has a gender dimension. Female victims affected by the pollution come into direct conflict with residents who support PT. RUM's presence in the village. This conflict is particularly serious considering that gender-based conflict stems from the resistance of women (especially mothers) who lose their right to live at home in a healthy manner with their children and family. The awareness that women and children are more vulnerable to being directly affected by environmental pollution, combined with levels of poverty, constitutes a deep vulnerability (Tiwon, 2014). Meanwhile, on the other hand, women who are 'pro PT. RUM' can be considered to have been co-opted by the dominant gender, and sided with established interests, namely investors and officials, rather than their own environmental interests.

Achieving the SDGs: Reducing the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) constitute a sustainable development program prepared by the United Nations (UN) and agreed upon by member countries in September 2015. The aim of the SDGs is to encourage change based on human rights and equality of social, economic and environmental development (EcoEduId, 2022). SDGs have 17 goals ranging from social to economic, but this article focuses on goal 3, namely healthy and prosperous life and goal 6, clean water and adequate sanitation. Goal 3 of a healthy and prosperous life focuses on ensuring community nutrition, supporting the national health system, access to health and reproduction, family planning (famously known as *Keluarga Berencana*), as well as sanitation and clean water.. If this third objective is related to our case, it can be observed that from all the data submitted through the Sukoharjo Regency government regarding the level of health in Sukoharjo Regency, it has met its targets, especially the first and second targets concerning maternal and newborn mortality rates. However, the ninth target, namely reducing the number of

deaths and illnesses due to dangerous chemicals, as well as pollution and contamination of air, water and land, has degraded. In interviews with people affected by environmental pollution, it appears that this target has not yet been achieved due to the decline in the carrying capacity of a beautiful, healthy environment as the basis for a good quality of life. People living around the factory are still affected by diseases and complaints of secondary diseases as a result of PT. RUMS's operations. This is highlighted by interviews with the community, such as *Mbok Sipon* whose feet rotted because she washed her feet in a river contaminated with waste and dangerous chemicals, or *Mbok Sarmi*, who has to take medicine every time the factory operates. Other affected residents also reported feel nauseous, dizzy, vomiting, and even shortness of breath and bloody vomit due to the operations of PT. RUM and the associated foul and very pungent odor.

Based on this description, the government and the people of Sukoharjo are directly affected by PT. RUM and have experienced a decline in achieving SDGs, especially in terms of the third and sixth sustainable development goals. The threat of decreasing development progress is caused by a decrease in the carrying capacity of the environment, water, air, public health and the economy (the main source of income for the community), which have been negatively impacted by factory management that does not pay attention to good waste management standards in accordance with the law.

Conclusion

Environmental damage is caused by waste from the operation of the PT. RUM rayon fiber factory, resulting in residents around the factory environment experiencing a decline in health levels, welfare levels, and a decline in the level of social relations due to increased conflict risk factors. There is a condition of deprivation of the rights of affected communities to be able to live in peace and breathe fresh air, get access to adequate and affordable health services, get access to improved management of economic resources, and healthy social relations. While the very strong stench produced by PT. RUM in producing rayon fiber over the years has deprived all the rights of residents living around the factory, women, children, the elderly and the disabled are particularly affected because they are the ones who experience the most severe impacts considering the loss of a sense of security in their homes. For vulnerable groups, home is synonymous with a safe place. Currently, various efforts have been made by the community to regain their right to life, either via non-litigation through demonstrations, hearings, etc.,

or through litigation, by taking legal action through class action lawsuits. Residents hope that all these efforts can restore their right to live with fresh air, clean and healthy water, and a healthy ecosystem in their rice fields, so they may avoid horizontal and vertical conflicts. The residents' demands are very reasonable considering the impact of PT. RUM pollution and the resulting decline in the achievement of SDGs, which are the world's commitment to building a better and more environmentally friendly human civilization.

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***Ananing Banyu Amarga Ananing Alas* as Inspiration for the Socio-Cultural Based Ecofeminist Movement Omah Sawah Kendal**

Puspa Aqirul Mala

Abstract

Omah Sawah Kendal is an ecological and cultural foundation in Gempol, Ngesrepebalong, Limbangan, Kendal, Central Java (northwestern slope of Mount Ungaran). Founded in 2014 and active since 2015, Omah Sawah Kendal movements based on education, culture, environmental conservation, and women's entrepreneurship. Aligned with ecofeminism, the author wants to show how Omah Sawah Kendal views nature (in the form of the forest) as an important element for sustainability, not to be exploited, but to be protected and preserved. Upholding the philosophy of '*Ananing Banyu Amargo Ananing Alas*' which means 'the existence of water because of the existence of sustainable forests,' Omah Sawah Kendal clarifies to the community the original purpose of the traditional ceremony entitled '*Iriban*' forest conservation. Then, buy as much as possible *Sanggem(s)* to plant trees that support hydrological functions. Omah Sawah also opens courses that encourage closeness to nature, such as *Saba Alas* (exploring and learning the forest), making eco-print cloth, natural colored batik, processing tea, coffee, palm sugar, and herbal drinks, all of which are sourced locally. Also, cultural classes such as traditional dance, bamboo flute playing, and the Javanese language. Apart from that, the author also wants to highlight cultural practices that support natural sustainability and empower local women and girls by making them mentors on courses for participants from various regions in Indonesia and even abroad. Omah Sawah Kendal acts as an engine for local mothers to produce natural dyes batik, eco-prints, local food, and beverages as a form of local eco-entrepreneurship. Thus, the writer believes that what Omah Sawah Kendal is doing a unique and worthwhile movement because it not only takes the form of nature conservation but also supports participation of women in the local sustainable economy.

Keywords: Conservations, Ecofeminism, Socio-cultural movements, Natural Dyes Batik, Eco-print, Mount Ungaran.

Introduction

Water is essential for all living creatures. The presence of water indicates the life for living creatures, and, in fact, water is the most abundant element in the human body. Without adequate water availability, ecosystems will be disrupted, ultimately causing mass extinction of many species. Water is also important for various biological, agricultural, and industrial processes. Water shortages will result in crop failure, decreased food production, malnutrition and even starvation for the global population. Potential water crises will also affect human health, increasing the risk of diseases transmitted through unclean water and poor sanitation. Apart from the direct impact on life, water shortages will inevitably give rise to social and political conflicts, gender inequality, and intergenerational injustices. Women in particular are very dependent on the availability of clean water, especially as a support for achieving good reproductive health.

Water availability must be supported by a good hydrological cycle, the continuous journey of water in various components of the Earth's climatic system. Water is found in the oceans, atmosphere, above and below the earth's surface, and the land we walk on. This journey begins with the process of evaporation from sea water, the vapor of which rises into the atmosphere, condenses in clouds, and then eventually falls to the earth's surface in the form of rain, snow, and hail (precipitation). Rainwater seeps through the soil layers and is stored there (in underground reservoirs or aquifers), and then usually the water comes back to the surface through river flows. Through rivers, water re-enters the ocean, repeats the process of evaporation, and the cycle begins anew. This process is very important for nature and a vital process for all living things (Pagano and Sorooshian, 2002). In this cycle, we recognize an important storage place for water, which is typically referred to as a reservoir. There are several important reservoirs in this hydrological cycle, namely oceans, rivers, glacier ice, groundwater, lakes, soil moisture, atmosphere, and living organisms. The largest water reservoir is the ocean, stored in the form of salt water, amounting to approximately 97% of the total water in the world. Then, ranked second and third respectively are glaciers and groundwater reservoirs. Because most water is stored in the ocean, the hydrological cycle begins and ends in the ocean (Donev et al, 2024). One element that is no less important in the critical function of protecting water sources are forests. One of the functions of forests that is closely relates to the hydrological system is the protection of river watersheds (DAS), namely by absorbing, holding and releasing stored water slowly, and thereby also reducing the negative effects of erosion and flooding (Ulfah et al, 2017).

As the founder of Omah Sawah Kendal, Munashikin (local people and colleagues call him Simon) understands the importance of protecting this critical water source. His typical strategy involves protecting water sources by protecting the forest where Omah Sawah Kendal stands, on the northwestern slopes of Mount Ungaran, precisely in Gempol, Ngesrepbalong Village, Limbangan District, Kendal Regency, Central Java. Simon and his wife, Dania Sindi Qistina (Sindi), through the work of Omah Sawah Kendal, are trying to raise awareness in the local community to promote forest conservation, with the ultimate aim of preserving the freshwater springs of Mount Ungaran. Through integrated education, culture and conservation approaches, Omah Sawah exists and is still developing, becoming a hub of positive action in the society of Ngesrepbalong village. Omah Sawah Kendal practices, as carried out by Simon, Sindi, mothers and girls of Gempol, as well as other members of the local community, are in line with the spirit of the ecofeminist movement, where attitudes towards nature must support sound ecological functioning, and be protection-orientated rather than exploitative.

The roots of this local movement stem from a philosophy that was uncovered during research conducted with local communities to identify extant traditions of forest conservation as practiced on the slopes of Mount Ungaran. This philosophy is encapsulated in a Javanese maxim, '*Ananing Banyu Amarga Ananing Alas*', which means 'the existence of water is due to the existence of sustainable forests.' This motto then became the inspiration for Omah Sawah Kendal's practices, which emphasize the preservation of nature. In this article, the author will further explore precisely how the philosophy of '*Ananing Banyu Amarga Ananing Alas*' is applied by the environmental movement in Omah Sawah, which has manifested into a wide range of cultural activities, educational activities, ecology-based entrepreneurship or eco-entrepreneurship, and so on. These activities include *Iriban* cultural ceremonies, Javanese language classes, Javanese dancing classes, bamboo flute classes, *Saba Alas*, making local food and herbal drinks, making palm sugar, processing coffee and tea, making batik and eco-prints with natural dyes, and so on. All of these activities involve and empower the community, especially women, consisting of mothers and girls, even children. Aside from the process of semi-structured interviews, observations, and studying documents related to Omah Sawah Kendal written by Sindi, the author also learned about the practice of making eco-prints and mingled with members of the local society, particularly with the empowered women from Omah Sawah Kendal.

Ecofeminism as a Foundation for Socio-Environmental Movements

Ecofeminism emerged as a social movement within the framework of the relationship between ecological issues and women. Ecofeminism was born as a result of the many intersections of feminism and environmentalism. Ecofeminism was first introduced by Françoise d'Eaubonne in her book *'Le Feminisme ou la mort'* or *Feminism or death* (1974). In which there is a description of the connection between the oppression of nature and the oppression of women. Ecofeminism not only connects women with the environment but also spirituality. Ecofeminism views nature from a women's perspective, within which the construction of violence and exploitation of women is parallel to the exploitation of the earth carried out by the capitalist economic system, controlled by a fundamentally patriarchal system (Candraningrum, 2013).

In 1978, Rosemary Radford Ruether in *'New Women New Earth'* said that for there to be radical changes in socio-economic relations, the women's movement must always be linked to ecological issues. Ten years later, in 1984, Karen's work *'Feminism and Ecology: Making Connection'* was born. J Warren summarizes at least four basic assumptions of ecofeminism. **First**, there is a connection between women's oppression and the oppression of nature. **Second**, understanding between these two oppressions has always been an important concern for efforts to understand them more deeply and comprehensively. **Third**, in theory and practice, feminists must have an ecological perspective. **Fourth**, the solutions discussed to overcome ecological problems must not be separated from a feminist perspective. In other words, the core of these assumptions are the two elements, namely feminism and ecological obligation or fixed price as a condition of the ecofeminist movement (Nurhalimah, 2023).

The serious focus of Ecofeminism is gender and environmental injustice in the face of several sources of oppression and injustice for women and the environment at simultaneously (Hunga and Dhewy, 2020 in Nurhalimah, 2023). Culturally, women are often linked to nature or the environment which results in conceptual, symbolic and linguistic connections between feminist and ecological issues. Tong (2009,) in Nurhalimah (2023), emphasized that the liberation of nature is only possible if there is liberation of women. Ecofeminism's efforts are intended to find solutions to various problems in human life from the female perspective, and to that end it is the experience of women which are used as a form of knowledge for managing and preserving nature.

Ecofeminism also posits that women who primarily come from marginalized classes are the ones most negatively affected by environmental degradation and extractive practices. This is because they are the most vulnerable group, and are typically held to play the greatest traditional role in the reproduction of life and the role of caring for the environment. So, how does Ecofeminism position itself in theory and practice in a movement? First, it is manifested as a critique of anthropocentrism which positions humans as superior, dominant, and separate from nature. Dominance in anthropocentrism is related to the domination of women: exploiting and controlling. Second, maintaining and supporting an ethic of care is inspired by the traditional practice of women as guardians and nurturers of life, in its application supporting respect and protection of ecosystem communities and local culture. Of course, the ethic of care is in direct conflict with the ethic of domination practiced by patriarchy. Third, as the antithesis of exploitation and environmental destruction. Ecofeminism opposes extractivist practices, pollution of ecosystems and the environment, and climate change as manifestations and expressions of patriarchy in line with capitalism, which maximizes the benefits of nature at the expense of the ecosystem. This movement of struggle includes rejecting extractive industries, increasing sustainable production and consumption of nature, and increasing environmental justice in all dimensions. Not surprisingly, ecofeminism as a unique social movement has a strong ideology in challenging unsustainable economic growth which places heavy burdens on ecosystems. Apart from being an ideology and philosophy, ecofeminism has also become a social movement that is increasingly growing along with the worsening environmental conditions of the world at the present time (Candraningrum, et al. 2016).

Ananing Banyu Amarga Ananing Alas as an Inspirational Philosophy

Simon told me that he got the inspiration for 'Ananing Banyu Amarga Ananing Alas' (the existence of water because of sustainable forests) by accident, while conducting research around the slopes of Mount Ungaran. Mount Ungaran is a stratovolcanic-type mountain, its morphology has undergone many changes, including severe erosion, so that today it does not have a perfect cone shape. Mount Ungaran is considered dormant, despite the existence of ongoing geothermal activity (there are geysers, for example in Gedongsongo and Gonoharjo) (Marin, et al, 2021). This mountain is a vital area as a provider of fresh water for the surrounding areas, namely Kendal Regency, Semarang Regency, Semarang Municipality and other surrounding areas.

Apart from that, this mountain is also upstream of various important rivers that support the lives of the residents of Semarang-Kendal-Ungaran and its surroundings. Several rivers such as the Kreo River, Kripik River, Garang River (and many more) have their headwaters on Mount Ungaran. There are protected flora and fauna on Mount Ungaran according to the regulations of the Indonesian Minister of Environment and Forestry (P.106/MenLHK/Setjen/Kum.1/12/2018), including Javanese Edelweiss (*Anaphalis javanica*), Saninten (*Castanopsis argantea*), Kupu-kupu Raja (*Troides helena*), Julang Emas (*Rhyticeros undulatus*), Kijang (*Muntjac muntjak*), Lutung Jawa (*Trachypithecus auratus*), Trenggiling (*Manis javanica*), Macan tutul (*Panthera pardus*), Paok Pancawarna Jawa (*Hydromis guajanus*), Sikepmadu Asia (*Pernis ptilorinchus*), Cerecet Jawa (*Psaltia exilis*), Serindit Jawa (*Lorichulus pusillus*), Alap-alap Capung (*Microhierax fringilanus*), Elang-ular bido (*Spilornis cheela*), Elang Jawa (*Nisaetus bartelsi*).

These flora and fauna are now decreasing in number and will soon likely become extinct due to the extent of environmental problems occurring on Mount Ungaran, especially in the Gempol area, where illegal logging by people from outside the Gempol area is known to occur. The targets for illegal logging are always the largest trees, which illegal loggers seek out as a source of wood for the furniture industry. Members of local communities do not dare to reprimand these illegal loggers, because they often carry weapons, and have threatened that, if the Gempol community report their activities to the police or government, the entire village would be destroyed, according to Simon, and people are afraid of losing their homes. In fact, Simon has previously reported these activities to the local village government officials, but their response was muted at best. Illegal logging has reduced the health of forests in the Gempol area, which now possess fewer large trees and more extensive barren areas. Apart from that, there is also illegal hunting of orchid species in an exploitative way. On this mountain there were once 167 species of orchids, but based on Simon's research, because of this illegal collection of wildflowers, there are now less than 50 species of Ungaran orchids remaining.

Seeing this, Simon felt it was important for him to protect and maintain the sustainability of this area while developing Omah Sawah. According to him, despite their lack of efficacy, many legal regulations regarding forest conservation are already written in forestry laws, gubernorial regulations, and laws. Simon's background knowledge is in culture and the arts, and he therefore believed that a cultural approach would be the right way to strengthen a local conservation movement, being better integrated within

the many traditions of local communities which inhabit the Ungaran Mountain belt area. To this end, he sought out existing community traditions closely related to the conservation of forests and water sources, meeting with various communities to hold discussions, many of which would later join his research team. Among these meetings, one traditional leader identified the Javanese maxim of *'Ananing Banyu Amarga Ananing Alas'*. This motto struck Simon as having a powerful conservation message, reinforcing the idea that, if forests are well cared for, with their heterogeneity and biodiversity maintained, they will provide a wide range of critical resources, most important of which could be said to be fresh water. Since then, *'Ananing Banyu Amarga Ananing Alas'* has become the main ideology or inspiration for the conservation movement in Omah Sawah Kendal, continuing over the subsequent two years of research, during which time Simon visited 22 villages across Mount Ungaran to catalogue other local traditions, not all of which are directly related to forest conservation.

"For example, in Gondang Village (Limangan, Kendal), there is 'Grebeg Alas', and there is also Susuk Wangan (together cleaning the surrounding environment). The community only cleans the water sources, then slaughters the chickens, and does the funeral, it's still just a celebration, not yet involved in conservation. Our ancestors couldn't have made things so instantaneous like that" (Interview with Simon).

In 2017, Simon and the research team initiated a cultural event entitled 'conservation in Gondang Village.' He and his team want these cultural traditional events not to just stop at celebrations, but to be fully appreciated by participants, and manifest in daily life as an enhanced understanding and awareness of how to manage local forest ecosystems. One event entitled 'Grebeg Alas' was organized by the community itself, and they contributed materially and non-materially to its operation. The event was packaged interestingly, via a cardboard puppet show with a theme of forest conservation, *Soren* dance (a dance with the theme of struggle and soldiering), re-popularization of the 'Watu Belah' site (split rock, in the middle of the rock there is a freshwater spring, which then feeds into the local rivers).

"So, in this Grebeg Alas event, there is cultural content, tradition as well as conservation. We also invited community figures (ulama), since usually the community will obey the ulama. Apart from that, we also

invite academics and the governor, so that if he makes a promise to the community, we will note it down, will make it into a draft agreement. But the governor didn't come at that time" (Interview with Simon).

The community was very enthusiastic, and the event was considered a success. Simon believes that the cultural approach is a highly effective pairing with more traditional conservation efforts. Simon and his friends are bringing back the essence of these local traditions, so that people will understand the importance of protecting forests.

About Omah Sawah Kendal

Omah Sawah Kendal is located in Gempol, Ngesrepanjang, Limbangan, Kendal, Central Java. It is located on the northwestern slopes of Mount Ungaran. It has a height of 524-1437 meters above sea level and is also located within the protected forest area of Mount Ungaran itself. The most important commodities from this village are forest and plantation products, such as tea, coffee, palm sugar, avocados, and several varieties of vegetables. Its location at a relatively high altitude makes the air cool, and clean from pollution when compared to lower elevations. The local community is comprised mostly of farmers who cultivate their own land directly, and is also considered to possess high levels of tolerance and social harmony.

Omah Sawah Kendal was established in 2013-2014 (physical construction of the studio) by Munashikin, then known as Simon. Then, in 2015, their activities in the local area started. Omah Sawah Kendal is a Javanese name. 'Omah' means house and 'Sawah' means paddy field. This was chosen because the area was previously the site of Simon's rice fields. Omah Sawah Kendal was deliberately used by Simon as a space for studying, meeting, and 'srawung' (socializing). Simon was the founder and first initiator of the program, who then married one of the Omah Sawah volunteers, Dania Sindi Qistina (Sindi), who now helps manage, research, and develop programs based on culture, education, and conservation. Subsequently the principles of ecofeminism have sublimated, spread, and become a new motivation to empower society, especially the women, Mothers and girls of Gempol. Omah Sawah Kendal practices as a non-governmental foundation based on culture, education, and forest conservation in Ungaran. Sources of funds come from Simon and Sindi themselves, the community, and donors.

“The main idealism was actually due to my anxiety seeing village children grow up far away from Javanese ethics and manners, even though they were originally Javanese. I want children to use Krama Alus (the traditionally formal or polite register of Javanese language) towards older or respected people. Javanese is also our important identity. If it is not used and preserved, it will become extinct” (Interview with Simon).

Omah Sawah Kendal’s first educational class was the Javanese Culture class, consisting of Javanese Language, Javanese Dance, and Javanese Songs and Poems, which are packaged casually, but must be used in everyday life. Children immediately practice both in class and outside of class. Omah Sawah Kendal then developed and hosted several educational programs, such as batik classes using natural dyes, eco-print classes, herbal drink (jamu)-making classes, tea and coffee processing classes, palm sugar processing classes, ‘Saba Alas’ classes (education-exploration classes in private groups), traditional dance classes, Javanese language classes, and bamboo flute classes. Omah Sawah Kendal’s classes are open to anyone who wants to learn, from all groups including small children to adults, from the general public to institutions, from private classes to large classes, with various prices. These classes are available in various time periods: one day, short (7 days), medium (14 days), and extended periods (a month). So far, participants in the Omah Sawah Kendal education class have come from various groups across Central Java Province, with additional students from all around the world.

The Integration of “*Ananing Banyu Amarga Ananing Alas*”

In the previous chapter, I wrote the Javanese maxim ‘*Ananing Banyu Amarga Ananing Alas*’. So, how is this motto integrated into the practice of the ecofeminist movement? I will attempt to describe several practices that Omah Sawah has carried out related to this movement.

Iriban

Iriban is a traditional cultural procession related to caring for and protecting water. Sindi said that, according to history, in the 1980s, the water sources of Gempol were claimed by PDAM (a public water utility) with the help of the local government. At that time, the community submitted a request to obtain three water springs, which was granted, but had to pay a levy.

Mbah Tambari (the head of Gempol hamlet at that time) spearheaded the movement to build pipes delivering clean water to the community. They collectively applied for funds to buy the pipes, so that local communities could enjoy access to affordable clean water, despite the initial payment. The hope is that the inspirational story of the communities actions, led by their elders, will provide an example for future generations, who will then take up the mantle of responsibility for the resources their ancestors helped secure.

The essence of *Iriban* is the manifestation of gratitude expressed in action. Human beings are not separate entities from nature, as without nature we cannot live. This interdependency should be a reminder that humans cannot dominate nature, an increasingly pertinent concept in the context of our worsening climate crises and ecological degradation.

Gempol hamlet celebrates this gratitude through the *Iriban* tradition. In other villages, Sindi knows very similar traditions by different names, such as ‘*Susuk Wangan*’, ‘*Sadran Banyu*’, ‘*Grebeg Alas*’, ‘*Resik Banyu*’, and so on. It is thus clear that this tradition is deeply embedded in the culture of Ungaran Mountain slope-dwelling communities, with the same essence of protecting and caring for water sources. However, in the last few years, Simon felt that *Iriban* was limited to community service activities focused on cleaning water sources, after which lunch would be eaten together, but with no further festivities or cultural events Sindi added that there should be a narrative regarding the essence of traditions from ancestors related to *Iriban*, for example the planting of trees that support the hydrological system, Banyan trees, or spreading endemic fish eggs in rivers. Their desire to reconceptualize *Iriban* into a sacred and philosophical ceremony began in 2019, but the COVID-19 pandemic meant that these efforts were put on hold in the interests of community safety. Then, in 2023, the *Iriban* ceremony was held based on Simon and team’s ideas for the first time, following extensive consultations with members of the local community

The community took part in the wearing of traditional clothing and headwraps, bringing four free-range chickens or *ayam kampung*, which would later be consumed together at the location, as well as bringing food which would later be used for the celebratory meal together at the ceremony location, and bringing dozens of banyan tree seeds to be planted in the forest. People were also required to pack food using environmentally friendly bags (without plastic). *Iriban* is held twice a year (usually on ‘*Kliwon*’ Sunday), with the ceremony led by the traditional leader, *Mbah Rori*. He would burn incense under a tree, and sacrifice the *ayam kampung* near a water source. The village head and coordinator also help with the procession, by conveying

a message to the local community regarding the importance of *Iriban* for the sustainability of water and community life. The younger generation must maintain this procession so that the water-forest is maintained, and the benefits can be enjoyed by future generations. This abundance of water does not just spontaneously exist, there are tree roots that help store water reserves in the soil. Therefore, the enthusiasm to protect springs must be tied to an enthusiasm for protecting forests.

Forest Conservation with Sanggem(s)

Far before Omah Sawah existed, in early 1999 Simon and his colleagues began to take over land use rights from Perhutani (state-owned forestry company). The land use rights are then returned to the residents to be managed. This land use right is called ‘*Sanggem*’. It is from these *Sanggems* that water resources are often discovered and can then managed, too. Simon wants to have as many *Sanggems* as possible, so that access to maintaining water resources will be easier. He guards these water sources by planting dozens of Banyan trees, believing that the Banyan tree is the one that provides the greatest support to the natural water reservoir system. Then, society can plant intercropping plants in between. The main thing is that these Banyan trees are planted with the function of returning the forest to its proper function, as opposed to a production-oriented commodity forest.

“The challenge is, that this conservation is against the thoughts of people who adhere to practicality, economics, and certain beliefs. What is also difficult is that Perhutani and the government think that communities around the forest must be empowered, and Perhutani must have income from the forest. Even if we talk about Mount Ungaran, “The forest here has the status of a protected forest, not a production forest” (Interview with Simon).

According to Simon, Mount Ungaran is facing a state of degradation (apart from what I wrote previously: illegal deforestation and illegal orchid hunting). The increasing popularity of coffee is driving increasing deforestation and degradation of natural habitat. Some communities use their *Sanggem rights* to plant production crops such as avocados and coffee. Moreover, the government is encouraging the expansion of production forests, not protected forests. Simon said that when people are faced with this level of demand, they automatically cut down large trees which are very

important and have a hydrological function. The original function of protected forests is very important, whether in terms of protecting the water system, preventing flooding, controlling erosion, or protecting soil fertility.

“First, they cut the branches one by one, then it is killed using various methods, for example given poison, or the bark is removed after a long time, and the tree dies. Then, they plant productive plants. That will destroy the original function of the protected forest. Common people understanding is that the important thing is that the forest has plant. They can’t differentiate between forests and gardens. This is dangerous. Even if there is Iriban, if the government policy is like that, it still won’t help the forest” (Interview with Simon)

The degraded forest is also due to the large amount of land planted with Sengon (*Albizia chinensis*) homogeneously. What surprised Simon was that Perhutani raised no objections to this practice, despite the obvious threat these expanding plantations pose to the heterogeneity of Ungaran’s forests. For this reason, Simon has been motivated to spread the spirit of forest conservation by purchasing as many *Sanggem*s rights as possible.

“I dream of buying as many Sanggem as possible, turning them into a customary forest, spreading knowledge about the proper function of forests so that the function of forests as protectors of water and biodiversity returns again” (Interview with Simon).

According to Simon, *Sanggem* is not as expensive as ordinary land. Simon started buying *Sanggem* ten years ago, in 2014. Until now, he has owned 1.25 hectares of *Sanggem*. *Sanggem* prices are not based on area and sometimes are uncertain. Simon once bought *Sanggem* for IDR 4 million per 300 square meters. Some residents also have *Sanggem*. Simon also invited all the people to buy *Sanggem* or to donate for helping others to buy *Sanggem*. Having a *Sanggem*, it means that Simon and the society will have their own policies, and of course in accordance with Simon’s mission to restore the function of forests as supporting hydrology and biodiversity. Fortunately, *Sanggem* rights are not constrained by specific time limits, which means that, as long as the land is not sold it can be passed on to younger generations to continue the work of forest habitat conservation.

Women's Involvement and Empowerment in Omah Sawah Kendal

In Omah Sawah Kendal's education classes, such as batik classes using natural dyes, eco-print classes, herbal drink-making classes, tea and coffee processing classes, and Aren sugar processing classes, women are actively involved as tutors. They are *Bu Tri Setyoningsih*, *Mak Ani*, *Mak Rom* (Khaeromah), *Bu Rifah* (Arifah), *Bu Yulikah*, *Bu Karni*, and many more. Also, many Gempol girls join in making batik and eco-print, including Sheris, Nuris, Irsha and Reka.

Coincidentally, on this occasion, I had the opportunity to take part in a class on making eco-print fabric. Mothers of Gempol will come at 09.00 in the morning. They brought their children along with preparations made for lunch, because the activity of making eco-print fabric would take all day until the afternoon. They will start their activities with a joint meeting led by *Bu Tri* and *Sindi*. They will check the inventory again, confirm how much fabric will be used, what natural colors they will prepare, how much money is left over and will be collected, and so on. Eco-printing is a technique of printing patterns on fabric using leaves and other natural materials. Usually, Simon has already searched for and prepared the leaves that will be used the base materials for the as eco-prints. Simon gets leaves from his yard, along the streets of the Gempol neighborhood, and in his neighbors' yards. Simon also uses waste from the local sawmill industry, such as mahogany tree bark, which when processed into a natural dye produces a reddish-brown color.

Sindi said that the special feature of the Omah Sawah Kendal eco-print is that the leaves and flowers used for the patterns come from their gardens. That is the uniqueness and strength of Omah Sawah Kendal's eco-print practice, *they don't need to buy materials for eco-printing!* The leaves, flowers, tree bark, and roots needed for coloring are available in the immediate environment. So, Simon and *Sindi* have prioritized planting trees that can be used as eco-print patterns and natural dyes. They have been planting these plants since 2014 to conserve natural fabric dyes. These trees or plants are listed below in Figure 1.

Species	color results
<i>Strobilanthes cusia</i> (<i>Nila Assam</i>)	blue indigo
<i>Indigofera tinctoria</i> (<i>Tarum</i>)	blue indigo

<i>Bixa orellana</i> (Kesumba)	orange to red
<i>Swietenia mahagony</i> (Mahoni)	reddish brown
<i>Terminalia mantaly</i> (Ketapang Kencana)	yellowish brown-dark brown
<i>Vernonia amygdalina</i> (Saman)	green
<i>Terminalia bellirica</i> (Joho)	grey-black
<i>Morinda citrifolia</i> (Mengkudu)	yellow-red
<i>Eucalyptus cinerea</i>	Dark orange, dark red, brown
<i>Tectona grandis</i> (Jati/Teak)	Dark red, purple, dark brown

Figure 1. Trees and plants used for eco-print patterns and natural dyes.

Meanwhile, the leaves that are often used for Omah Sawah Kendal eco-print patterns include Teak (*Tectona grandis*), Jarak (*Ricinus communis*), Adas (*Foeniculum vulgare*), Lanang leaves (*Oroxylum indicum*), Suren (*Toona sureni*), Asparagus leaves (*Asparagus officinalis*), Mindi Leaves (*Melia azedarach*), Saman (*Samanea saman*), Eucalyptus sp, *Tabebuia rosea*, and wild plants.

Once the tools and materials are ready, they will lay out the fabrics that they had previously mordanted. The mordant process is the initial process of treating the fabric that will be colored with natural dyes, to clean any dirt from the fabric which remains on the fabric, open the fabric fibers so that they can easily absorb natural dyes and produce sharp results, and prevent the color pigment from shrinking. What is often used as a mordant is a solvent of *Tawas*, *Kapur Tohor* or $\text{Ca}(\text{CO}_3)_2$, and *Tunjung* $\text{Fe}(\text{SO}_4)_3$, or the result of a chemical reaction of metal corrosion with water. Although the formula is not certain (the color results are sometimes unpredictable), the general guidelines are as follows, *Tawas* will produce a lighter color, *Kapur Tohor* will produce a medium color (between dark and light), *Tunjung* will produce a sharp dark color (Kusumaningtyas and Urip, 2021).

The fabrics are from textiles using natural fibers, such as organic cotton, local traditional Tenun from Jepara and Badui, also silk. Sindi has previously said that synthetic fabrics cannot be used for natural colors. The fabric is spread out on a wide table, and one by one the leaves are arranged on top of it. Sindi said, in eco-print, creators are free to determine the pattern of the arrangement of the leaves they place on the fabric.

“That’s why eco-prints are very unique, each individual work will definitely be different from other individual works. Moreover, our strength lies in the foliage materials that are available in our gardens and yards. “It also provides a touch of distinctive and original identity from the local environment of Omah Sawah Kendal, This also makes the product expensive, because it is full of sincerity” (Interview with Sindi).

The smiles and laughter of the mothers when arranging the leaves on fabric made the atmosphere even warmer and more intimate. Even so, they were very careful in arranging the leaf patterns on the cloth. After the surface of the cloth is covered with leaves, the fabric is then covered with another fabric (we call it the blanket) that has also gone through mordant. After covering it with a blanket, we covered it again with plastic until all the top surface was covered, then we rolled it up, with the help of a pipe inside to ensure the roll retains its straight shape. The plastic used is a multi-use material, and will be reused after each dyeing. This process is repeated until the last sheet of fabric, with each wrapped in plastic to protect the dye and textile process. The eco-print rolls are then placed into a large steamer, capable of handling 6-8 rolls at a time, although the total produced in one session is highly variable. The steaming process takes about two hours, at which point the fabrics are removed, drained, and dried to reveal the newly imprinted colors. The entire process is usually concluded before dusk, although the drying will continue for up to 7 days, to enhance the absorption of color and quality of print. The finished products will then be sold online, or offline to specific clients and art lovers at variable prices, depending largely on the size, fabric quality, print quality, specific dyes used, and sometimes the preferences of a specific buyer.

For ten years, Sindi has been researching natural colors. The first thing she researched was *Tarum* (*Indigofera tinctoria*) which produces a blue color spectrum. She got *Tarum* seeds from the Lerep area, West Ungaran District. She found the seedlings in a resident’s garden which was in bad condition. In line with the growth and development of Omah Sawah Kendal, their collection of natural dye plants has increased, and now includes species such as *Strobilanthes cusia* (*Nila Assam*), *Indigofera tinctoria* (*Tarum*), *Bixa orellana* (*Kesumba*), *Swietenia mahagony* (*Mahoni*), *Terminalia bellirica* (*Joho*), *Terminalia mantaly* (*Ketapang Kencana*), *Morinda citrifolia* (*Mengkudu*), *Tectona grandis* (*Jati/Teak*), *Bawang Dayak* (*Eleutherine bulbosa*), *Eucalyptus cinerea*, *Vernonia amygdalina* (*Saman*), *Pachira*

aquatica), *Kayu Manis* (*Cinnamomum verum*), *Temulawak* (*Curcuma zanthorrhiza*), *Kenikir* (*Cosmos caudatus*), and so on. Right at the entrance to Omah Sawah Kendal, *Kesumba* (*Bixa orellana*) was planted in a row by Sindi, which now grows beautifully and bears red ripe fruit as if welcoming guests upon arrival.

Sindi and the Gempol women started a nature conservation campaign through natural colored batik and eco-prints in 2014, through an exhibition of Ungaran's endemic flora and fauna. This theme was raised as an act of concern about the state of the Mount Ungaran ecosystem, which is threatened with extinction. In 2018, they held an art exhibition with an 'Earth' theme, which conveyed a message to the public about humans caring for and preserving our one and only planet.

“Through the touch of art, natural dyes have the power to speak. They have the power to say that conservation can be wrapped up elegantly. Talking about environmental issues is not only in formal forums attended only by academics but also through art. Conservation can also speak through art” (Interview with Sindy).

Even though it was stopped due to COVID-19, Sindi, the Mothers of Gempol and their girls carried out batik and eco-print activities again after the pandemic, by experimenting with other natural colors that have the potential to have good color pigments. They visited the herbal medicine shop, looking at the various spices and rhizomes, because some natural dyes have herbal properties. Herbs such as *Temulawak*, Cinnamon, *Jambe*, *Gambir*, and Mangosteen rind have a quite strong pigmentation but are expensive (except ginger).

“We realize that we cannot do the maintenance and sustainable use of nature alone, we need help from Gempol women. We need those who have a passion for caring for nature and traditions. So far, the women have been walking hand in hand with us. Elements such as air, trees, soil, and air are inherent in women's daily lives. It doesn't matter where they work, fields or houses, offices or roads. In our place, women are used to helping find food for livestock, be it cows or goats, grass or leaves. “Women are also used to planting. Just planting elephant grass for their livestock, planting vegetables for their food needs, planting flowers in front of their houses, and helping plant trees along village road access, our lives are completely supported by nature” (Interview with Sindi).

Sindi told me the story of Mothers of Gempol and their girls, whose daily activities are taking care of the household, school, and community duties in the village, setting aside more time to study and create with us, including through fabric art and natural dyes. Their concern for nature became a consideration for Sindi to accompany them in creating literary works. From initially only 4 people, now there are dozens more.

“We try to continue to provide space for them to work. We realize that making change requires a strong team. And women have that energy, the energy to nurture, the energy to share, the energy to support each other. Even though on average they only have a middle-school education, their enthusiasm for learning cannot be doubted” (Interview with Sindi).

Natural dye plants remind Sindi and the Gempol women that these biological assets are priceless treasures. This plant not only beautifies parks and gardens but is also used as a fabric dye and herbal remedy. This is important because our area is on a slope, at the foothills of Mount Ungaran.

“Indeed, our business in terms of monetary output is still not large compared to others. Starting from the use of natural colors to empowering mothers through Wastra art, we hope that what we do, apart from having a positive impact on nature, can also help the economy of women Gempol” (Interview with Sindi).

Sindi hopes to continue exploring various other dye plants, as well as cultivating natural dye in Omah Sawah Kendal, and also across the village’s residential and forest areas. Without replanting, over time the number of dye plants can decrease or even disappear, with clear negative repercussions for the nascent eco-print industry. Sindi wants to convey this message to the next generation, so that the diversity of our biological assets and cultural heritage does not become extinct, and continues to be maintained: “through *Wastra* art and natural dyes, we hope to be able to voice conservation issues more meaningfully” (Qistina 2023).

Apart from joining the batik and eco-print fabric tutor team, Omah Sawah Kendal also empowers Mothers of Gempol as a tutor team for making traditional herbal drinks or *jamu*, tea and coffee classes, and palm sugar processing classes. In the class on making traditional herbal drinks, the ladies will introduce participants to traditional *jamu* used by their ancestors as the key to a healthy and long life. Usually, mothers of Gempol use

ingredients such as turmeric, palm sugar, and tamarind to make '*Kunyit Asam*'. Ginger and Palm Sugar for '*Jahe Wangi*', believed to cure fevers or colds, bloat, improve the immune system, and other traditional recipes for a healthy and beautiful life. In addition, there is classes on processing local tea and coffee. This class introduces participants to how to process tea and coffee in the traditional way in a *Pawon* or a traditional Javanese kitchen. Next is the class on processing Aren sugar. Participants will see the process of harvesting '*air nira aren*' directly from the tree, cooking it using a traditional stove, and seeing how to mold it using coconut shells. Apart from being empowered in these classes, Omah Sawah Kendal entrusts catering services to local mothers. The aim is to improve the economy and utilize existing local resources.

Even though the activities above do not necessarily make dramatic impacts on the local economy, these steps to empower women are nonetheless essential. What Omah Sawah Kendal and local women are doing is actually a form of resistance against exploitative methods towards nature. Batik and eco-prints using materials and dyes from natural sources are a form of slow fashion that fights the ferocity of fast fashion sales. which we already know are very destructive to nature. Batik and eco-prints in natural colors are not made instantaneously, are done manually by hand, contain values or meaning behind the motifs, colors and narratives behind the production process (Hunga, 2023). This process involves thoughts and feelings, which of course require artistic value in an entirely different way to fast fashion products. If we follow the manufacturing process, the message we get will be very closely related to ethical practices of care, where traditionally, women take care of life, protect the ecosystem, and combine it with local culture. Leaves are taken in moderation, natural colors do not damage the ecosystem, even industrial waste is reused for dyes. Additionally, the leaves used are local and endemic leaves, so the patterns on the eco-print fabric actually contain the identity of the local wisdom of the Gempol community, as well as the identity of the plant biodiversity of the Ungaran slopes which must be protected and preserved. In addition, Sindi now has a laboratory at home. She is currently using the laboratory to cultivate endemic orchid seeds, including *Anggrek Ekor Tupai* (*Rhynchostylis retusa*), *Anggrek Kuku Macan* (*Aerides odorata*), and *Anggrek Macan* (*Vanda tricolor*). Next year, these seeds will be planted on the slopes of Mount Ungaran.

Conclusion

In the context of the importance of water and the vital role of forests in the hydrological cycle, conservation practices such as those carried out by Omah Sawah Kendal become very relevant. This movement not only maintains the sustainability of water sources through protecting forests, but also integrates ecofeminist values that reject the exploitation of nature and of women. Efforts such as the *Iriban* procession, forest conservation by planting banyan trees, and women's empowerment in batik and eco-print activities, demonstrate a deep commitment to environmental sustainability and local culture.

Empowering women in these activities not only improves skills and the local economy, but also serves as a form of resistance to exploitative systems. By using natural materials and traditional techniques, Omah Sawah Kendal's batik and eco-print practices prioritize an ethic of care, strengthening local identity and protecting the ecosystem. This activity emphasizes the importance of a harmonious relationship between humans and nature, as well as instilling awareness of the need for environmental protection from generation to generation.

This entire effort is in line with the spirit of *Ananing Banyu Amarga Ananing Alas*, which is the inspiration for the conservation movement in Omah Sawah Kendal. By conserving forests and raising public awareness of the importance of natural resources, they have demonstrated that inclusive and sustainable conservation practices are the key to maintaining ecosystem balance and the sustainability of life.

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***Sedekah Sampah Plastik* Movement at Pesantren Mamba'ul Hikam Jombang: Intersection between Ecofeminism and Eco-Islam**

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Abstract

Indonesia faces a big problem of plastic waste pollution which massively decreases the quality of air, water, and land. Women are among the vulnerable groups who are exposed to plastic products and waste due to their traditional domestic roles. Women are also well-known for their agency in environmental issues due to their knowledge and experiences; therefore, benefiting from women's knowledge is pivotal in building a more sustainable life. *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* (plastic waste donation) movement is one of many actions undertaken by the Indonesian community to reduce plastic waste pollution. Through critical discourse analysis developed by Norman Fairclough, this research aims to view a *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement at Pesantren Mamba'ul Hikam Jombang initiated by Ibu Nyai Mustiqowati from the perspective of ecofeminism and eco-Islam. This research reveals the intersection between ecofeminism and eco-Islam in the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement in three underlying features. First, *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* is a kind of resistance, conducted and negotiated through love, respect, and kindness (*ihsan*), against unsustainable industrial entrepreneurship that ignores the negative impacts of plastic waste on gender equality and environmental sustainability. Second, preserving nature is a shared responsibility of all humankind regardless of their background. Third, ecofeminism and eco-Islam both promote new interpretations of humankind's position as God's caliphs or stewards. It does not mean that humans are in a higher position than nature. Instead, as stewards of God and part of His creatures, men and women are responsible to maintain the sustainability of the cosmos.

Keywords: intersectionality, ecofeminism, eco-Islam, *Sedekah Sampah*, sustainability

Introduction

The problem of plastic waste is considered the main environmental issue in Indonesia, as confirmed by its position as the world's second largest contributor of plastic waste in the ocean, and largest per-capita contributor. Plastic waste is attributed as a major cause of water, air, and land pollution, with particularly adverse impacts on the environment due to its prolonged decomposition time, which can stretch into the thousands of years. Moreover, the dangers of microplastics have significant long-term health impacts. Plastic production has not abated despite widespread knowledge and recognition of these facts. Plastic is still considered both convenient and cheap, which incentivizes manufacturers to continue producing and using plastic packaging for their products. This high dependency on plastics is a vicious circle. When demands and profits are the only things that are considered, plastic production will inevitably continue growing. In terms of Indonesian plastic production, the Indonesian Association of Aromatic Olefins and Plastics Industry (INAPLAS) conveyed that the plastic packaging industry will continue to grow and expand up to 85 % at the beginning of 2022 (Masitoh, 2022). This is therefore an emergency that needs an integrated management system to resolve. The role of government policies which control the plastic industrial world and public behavior will be decisive in achieving in the goal of the Indonesian government to reduce plastic waste by up to 70 % by 2025.

In terms of plastic pollution, women are among the more vulnerable groups in terms of exposure to plastic products, significantly more than men due to their traditional gender roles as household keepers. Imbalanced gender roles in some societies force women to work as waste collectors, which means increased exposure to hazardous plastic waste. Furthermore, women's cosmetics and hygiene products also contain a lot of microplastics (Tontoton, n.d.). This market orientation extends the patriarchal tradition which positions the business world as power holders and treats women as objects of production. It ignores plainly high-risk women's health problems including infertility, breast cancer, miscarriage, and hormonal imbalance which eventually lead to endangering human and environmental sustainability.

On the other hand, women are also well-known for their agency in the environmental movement. Their knowledge and experiences enable them to find and build more sustainable ways of managing their life, adapting to the climate crisis, producing food, and accessing clean water, sanitation, and energy sources. Thus, women are often recognized as key figures in community adaptation to any environmental crisis. However, this recognition does not put women in a better position when it comes to gender relations.

This situation bears the risk of actually putting women in a worse position, by instrumentalizing them as unpaid guardians of nature, which only increases their workloads and reproduces gender inequality rather than promoting gender equity. In responding to this situation, integrating women's experiences and knowledge is important in promoting more sustainable and equitable gender relations. According to Leach, et.al. (2016), there are some underlying reasons for integrating gender issues and sustainability. First, establishing equal gender relations that justify the human rights of all women and men and their dignities as well as capabilities, regardless of their class, age, sexuality, race, and circumstances, is a kind of ethical and moral imperative. Second, an integrated approach is pivotal to protecting women from becoming victims of environmental degradation. Third, this integrated approach promotes people's agency in dealing with environmental issues. It opens the opportunity for both men and women to play important roles in improving resource productivity in a more sustainable way.

The Indonesian government issued Regulation no. 75/2019 for companies as part of their roadmap to reducing plastic waste. Some local governments at provincial or district levels also issued regulations banning the use of plastic materials. Bali province, for instance, declared regulation no 97/2018 that bans plastic materials as of January 2019. Bali is the first province in Indonesia to ban single-use plastic. This commitment hopes to reduce the plastic waste that has polluted 70 % of Bali's water (Island, 2018). The province also aims to be plastic-free by the end of 2022 (Louise, 2022). Jakarta and Riau provinces have followed this progressive step by issuing Gubernatorial Regulation no. 142/2019 and 50/2019 respectively. Local governments at district and city levels also demonstrate their active participation in limiting plastic use through regulations. Jombang, the city where this research was conducted, also has issued Regent Regulation no. 56/2022 to regulate plastic use.

However, this top-down regulation will not effectively reduce plastic waste without public awareness and behavioral change. Research undertaken by Greenpeace Indonesia (2021) showed that people have made real action to reduce single plastic by buying larger packaged products, bringing their own cutleries and reusable straws, carrying water tumblers, sorting their domestic waste, and bringing reusable bags for shopping. Nevertheless, there remains about 7 % of the Indonesian population who are ignorant of this problem. It is hoped that education, faith-based and community-based environmental movements will take a lead to influence the 7% of the population to change. The current environmental crises challenge human beings to evaluate their relationship with planet Earth. the conventional Anthropocene

tradition, which historically portrayed humans as dominant entities with control over the Earth, necessitates a paradigm shift towards embracing a fresh concept of eco-mutuality. This revised concept supports human interconnectedness with all creatures in the cosmic ecosystem (Candraningrum, 2023). Altering this paradigm necessitates a collaborative endeavor that commences with fostering consciousness regarding environmental issues. This research reveals how *pesantren* (*Islamic boarding schools*), as educational institutions, play a role in raising public awareness towards environmental issues, especially plastic waste and its dangers.

A number of *pesantren* have been involved in the environmental movement since the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia launched a program called *eco-pesantren* in 2008 in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment. To introduce this program, the ministry published a module on *eco-pesantren* (KLH, 2010). In 2006, the Ministry of Environment in collaboration with the Ministry of National Education initiated an environmental program called *Sekolah Adiwiyata* to encourage formal educational institutions in advancing environmental awareness. According to the release from the Ministry of Environment on its website, the goal of this program is to make these schools as centers for disseminating environmental awareness for all school members including teachers, students, and staff. To achieve this goal, the schools should develop (1) environmental-based policies, (2) an environmental-based curriculum, (3) Participatory-based environmental activities, and (4) environmentally friendly facilities such as water saving, alternative energy generators, and waste management (KLHK, 2020). Some *pesantren* also run formal education through schools and participate in *Adiwiyata* programs.

Pesantren Mamba'ul Hikam is one of the *pesantrens* that are concerned with environmental issues. To increase environmental awareness, the *pesantren* started environmental programs such as installing bio-pores, composting, producing eco-bricks, bags, and dresses from plastic waste, reusing oil waste for biodiesel, as well as promoting reusable menstrual pads. These programs are not only implemented in *pesantren* where the *santri* (Islamic knowledge seekers) reside, but also in schools as formal educational institutions. *Madrasah Tsanawiyah Al-Hikam*, as a formal educational institution in *Pesantren Mamba'ul Hikam*, achieved the *Adiwiyata* award for its environmental programs in 2015 (Jombang district level), 2019 (East Java provincial level), and 2021 (national level). It is worth mentioning that all *santri* in *Pesantren Mamba'ul Hikam* attend their formal education in *madrasah Al-Hikam*, but not all students in this *madrasah* reside in

Pesantren Mamba'ul Hikam. This is because the *madrasah* is accessible to the surrounding areas and not limited to the *santri* of *Pesantren Mamba'ul Hikam*. The environmental movement involved all *santri* and students from both *Pesantren Mamba'ul Hikam* and *Madrasah Al-Hikam*.

Ibu Nyai Mustiqowati is the initiator as well as the person in charge for running environmental programs in *Pesantren Mamba'ul Hikam*. In addition to her role as a caregiver (*pengasuh*) at *Pesantren Mamba'ul Hikam*, *Ibu Nyai* Mustiqowati holds the position of principal at *Madrasah Tsanawiyah Al-Hikam*. She not only serves as the instigator but also assumes responsibility for overseeing environmental initiatives at *Pesantren Mamba'ul Hikam*. The impetus to promote the environmental program in 2015 stemmed from her profound concern regarding unregulated plastic waste. This endeavor is not confined solely to the *santri* and students who receive education at *Pesantren Mamba'ul Hikam* and *Madrasah Tsanawiyah Al-Hikam*. She also fosters community engagement in its environmental programs among the neighboring populace. Workshops on eco-brick making are simultaneously held for the local community, for example. Moreover, through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs, the *pesantren* collaborates with Pacific Paint Company in promoting a community-based environmental movement called 'colorful village,' in which they use colorful murals to promote religious and cultural values regarding education and environmental awareness. It also participates in various environmental initiatives, including river cleanup programs, tree planting, and the installation of bio-pores in government offices and schools.

One of the primary initiatives promoted by the *pesantren* is the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* (plastic waste donation) movement. Under the leadership of *Ibu Nyai* Mustiqowati, the *santri* are encouraged to deposit their plastic waste in the designated containers. The collected plastic waste is subsequently thoroughly cleaned to remove any organic materials. The clean plastic waste is then compressed into bottles, which serves as the foundation for creating eco-bricks. These eco-bricks are then transformed into various products such as tables, chairs, and fences. Moreover, the *pesantren* collaborates with the local environmental office in Jombang (*Dinas Lingkungan Hidup Jombang*) to recycle plastic waste. Beyond managing the plastic waste generated by the *santri themselves*, the *pesantren* positions itself as a hub for community service. It actively encourages the surrounding communities to collect their plastic waste and donate it through the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement. Additionally, this movement involves interfaith communities to actively play roles in raising people's awareness regarding plastic waste issues. It is

worth noting that the disposal of plastic waste into the river is a common practice among these communities, driven by ignorance and resulting in detrimental consequences for their health, environment, and overall quality of life. Thus, *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement serves as a preventive measure to mitigate river pollution and enhance the well-being of both local communities and the natural environment.

This research will analyze the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement through the lenses of ecofeminism and eco-Islam. Ecofeminism emphasizes the interconnectedness of all living beings as part of a unified life chain. Any harm done to one component of this chain will have repercussions on the others (Eaton, 2017). According to ecofeminism, environmental issues are closely linked to women's issues. Warren (2009) provided a clear explanation of the oppressive order that arises from the patriarchal world and highlights the interconnectedness between the domination of nature and the domination of women. This oppressive order perpetuates the subordination of humans based on gender, race, social class, ethnicity, and nature. The patriarchal tradition further reinforces the domination of nature by assuming that humans are superior to nature, thereby justifying the exploitation and subjugation of the natural world. Additionally, the patriarchal world identifies women with nature, which further justifies the subordination of women. Thus, promoting gender equality is essential for enhancing environmental sustainability, and vice versa.

Ecofeminism, as a part of the third-wave feminist movements, emerged from various activism efforts for gender equality, including animal liberation, social justice, peace, anti-war, anti-nuclear, and environmental movements (Birkeland, 1993; Eaton and Lorentzen, 2003; Gaard, 2011). Ecofeminism serves as an umbrella that brings together these diverse voices and forms of action. It acknowledges women's knowledge and experiences in relation to nature. There is no single model of ecofeminism, as it appreciates all forms of critique against the domination and exploitation of women and nature, including published academic works, grassroots movements, poetry, photography, fiction, and other artworks (Carlassare, 1994; Eaton and Lorentzen, 2003).

Islam and other religions have also responded to the pressing environmental issues of our time. The intersection of religion and environmental concerns has led to the development of eco-theology, which contextualizes theology by considering human relationships and experiences with nature (Deane-Drummon, 2008). Within the Islamic discourse, many scholars have shown their attention to environmental ethics, which guide Muslims in their

interactions with other creatures (Ahmad, 2015). The integration of Islamic teachings and environmental ethics has become a significant focus in current environmental knowledge (Gade, 2019). Sayyed Hossein is a pioneering figure in the discourse of eco-Islam (Abdelzaher and Abdelzaher, 2017). Through his book “Man and Nature”, which was first published in 1968, Nasr introduces a spiritual dimension to understand the current environmental crisis and emphasizes the role of humans as stewards of God in ensuring the sustainability of nature.

There is a growing body of research on *pesantren* and environmental issues. Some researchers focus on incorporating environmental issues into the educational process (Saprodi, et.al., 2019; Fawaid, 2016), while others examine waste management and entrepreneurship (Muhdi, et al. 2021). Additionally, some scholars also employ gendered and Islamic perspectives to explore the intersection of *pesantren* and environmental issues (Millah, et.al., 2020; Sa’diyah and Anshori, 2021). This research aims to analyze the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* Movement from the perspectives of ecofeminism and eco-Islam. It will explore how this movement negotiates the promotion of human and environmental sustainability and how ecofeminism and eco-Islam intersect within this movement.

Methods

The theory and method of Critical Discourse Analysis, as developed by Norman Fairclough, is utilized in this research. Fairclough (1992) posited that there exists a dialectical relationship between language and society, as language is a form of social practice. According to this perspective, a text is considered to be a product of societal interaction. In the realm of social interaction, three key elements can be identified in relation to text: the process of production, the process of interpretation, and social determination. It is crucial for analysts to bear in mind these three factors, as they emphasize that text is the outcome of productive and interpretative processes, which are inevitably influenced by society. This is because individuals acquire their knowledge and language from their respective societies. The knowledge possessed by individuals consists of two interrelated aspects: cognitive and social. It is cognitive in the sense that knowledge resides within the minds of individuals. Furthermore, it is also social in nature, as knowledge is shaped and influenced by social relations.

The data utilized in this research was obtained through interviews conducted with *Ibu Nyai* Mustiqowati, several teachers from *Madrasah*

Tsanawiyah Al-Hikam, and a reverend who is also actively involved in the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement. The data is analyzed through three distinct stages of critical discourse analysis: description, interpretation, and explanation. The initial stage focuses specifically on the linguistic features of the text, particularly the choice of words and metaphors. This stage aims to reveal the dominant keywords or metaphors employed, as well as their ideological or political significance. Within the realm of wording analysis, Fairclough introduces two essential terms: overwording and rewording. Overwording denotes a heightened level of concern, while rewording refers to the use of new wordings as alternatives or opposition to existing ones. The second stage, interpretation, places emphasis on discursive practices, specifically intertextuality, which portrays the production and consumption of text. The final stage seeks to explain the societal impact of the text. It is important to note that there may be instances of overlap in conducting these three levels of analysis due to their interconnectedness. Additionally, the perspectives of ecofeminism and eco-Islam will be employed to analyze the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement, with a focus on promoting women's agency and environmental sustainability.

***Sedekah Sampah Plastik* as a Movement and an Educational Process**

Poor river conditions, which are polluted by human and plastic waste, as well as overloaded landfills and the increasingly difficult access to clean water have raised the interest of *Ibu Nyai Mustiqowati* in advocating for the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement. Her choice to use the term *sedekah* caught our attention as researchers. Asked about her preference to use this term, she answered:

“Why sedekah? Because sedekah encompasses the value of worship. We know this concept in Islam. We have to treat all things kindly. For me, plastic waste is sexy if we can creatively turn it into something useful. That is the way we treat plastic. Yes, we treat them with love. The use of the word sedekah is expected to attract public attention and raise environmental awareness. At least by sorting waste and distributing it in the right place. In addition, if this is intended to be sedekah, there will be a reward from God. So, there are two values in choosing this term: preventing plastic pollution, and the reward of sedekah” (Interview with *Ibu Nyai*, 9 February 2022).

A rewording is visible when she points out the word “*sedekah*”, “worship”, “Islam”, “reward”, and “God”. It underlines the knowledge of *Ibu Nyai* Mustiqowati regarding Islamic teaching, which has become the fundamental basis of her decision in using the term *sedekah*. Moreover, the word *sedekah* itself is a metaphor for kindness done by human beings. First intertextuality appears in her reference to *sedekah*. It was inspired by the hadith of the prophet Muhammad PBUH which reads: “Any good deeds undertaken by human beings are considered as *sedekah*” (narrated by Imam al-Suyuthi in *al-Jami’ al-Shaghir*). *Ibu Nyai* therein reproduced a new understanding of *sedekah*. For her, collecting plastic waste in the right place is a kind of *sedekah*, since it has a good impact on the environment. Secondly, when she explains that people will get rewarded for any act of *sedekah*, she was inspired by another hadith narrated by Tirmidzi that reads: “*Sedekah* extinguishes sin as water extinguishes fire”. This hadith is then reproduced in a new meaning in the context of *Sedekah Sampah Plastik*. Humans will get rewards from God for their *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* actions, which will eventually eliminate their sins. The religious voice is dominant in her choice of using the term *sedekah* for her background as a caregiver of the *pesantren*, and the locus of this movement, namely *Pesantren Mamba’ul Hikam* and *Madrasah Al-Hikam*, both Islamic educational institutions.

From an ecofeminist perspective, *Ibu Nyai* Mustiqowati’s choice to use the word *sedekah* in this movement can be seen as a form of resistance against unsustainable industrial practices. These practices prioritize market interests, disregarding the negative impact of their products on gender equality, social cohesion, and environmental sustainability. The mass production of plastic worsens environmental conditions, which in turn affects the equality of male-female relationships. In some rural areas, women who rely on agriculture and clean water resources are forced to work harder to secure these resources and provide for their families due to the poor quality of polluted water sources. Therefore, the use of the term *sedekah* in the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement challenges unsustainable industrial practices and highlights the importance of gender equality, social cohesion, and environmental sustainability.

However, instead of engaging in acts of resistance and protest, *Ibu Nyai* and all participants in this movement choose to resist the unsustainable environmental state and gender imbalance through the practice of *sedekah*, an action that holds a significant spiritual value or worship as it is rooted in the love and care for all of God’s creations. The *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement aims to bring together individuals regardless of their gender, age,

race, or social status in order to collectively address and prevent environmental pollution and degradation, as these issues affect all members of the community.

Moreover, the statement “We have to treat all things kindly” carries an obligatory meaning, emphasizing the moral duty of all human beings to approach everything with kindness or “with love”. The term “sexy” is used metaphorically to illustrate the value of plastic waste when it is transformed into useful items such as eco-bricks, bags, and wall decorations. Through this metaphor, *Ibu Nyai* encourages all the participants, including the *santri* and the students, to view plastic waste from a positive perspective and to tap into their creativity in finding circular economic solutions for its reuse. The resulting products are then sold, with the proceeds benefiting the community. The madrasah recently achieved recognition at a district-level street festival fashion show by creating a party gown out of plastic waste.

Islam recognizes the concept of *Ihsan* which literally means doing good to others. The Quran 28:77 reads:

“Seek through the wealth that Allah has given you to make your abode in the Hereafter, and also do not forget your share from this world, and do good to others as Allah has done good to you, and do not strive to make mischief on the earth, for Allah does not like mischief-makers”
(translation by surahquran.org).

According to Ibn Kathir (1999), the meaning of the highlighted verse is that Allah urges humanity to treat all His creations with kindness, just as He has shown compassion towards them. This command extends beyond interactions with fellow humans and encompasses all living beings, including plants, animals, bodies of water, and even inanimate objects such as stones. But what about plastic waste? Should humans treat it with kindness? Absolutely. Despite being a human-made product, plastic waste is still a part of humans’ environment. Instead of focusing on its artificial nature, humans should acknowledge their creativity in its creation, which is one of the many blessings bestowed upon human by God.

Additionally, the command to “do good to others” is accompanied by a prohibition against destroying the Earth, the only habitable planet for human beings. The destruction of the Earth ultimately leads to the destruction of human existence. Any actions that cause harm and destruction go against the concept of *Ihsan*, which encompasses acts of kindness and excellence. This includes littering and polluting the air, water, and soil with plastic

waste. The concept of *Ihsan* also promotes respect for all of God's creations, human and non-human. From this perspective, the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement serves as a manifestation of the concept of *Ihsan*. By challenging the patriarchal traditions that exploit both women and nature for the sake of economic gain, this movement strives to promote sustainability for both women and the environment.

Moreover, *Ibu Nyai* stated that the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement is not only a movement but also an educational process to raise students' awareness in regard to environmental issues. She said:

"This is what I can do to lock down plastic waste and raise students' awareness regarding environmental issues. Yes, education is the best way to change their behavior. As an educator as well as a mother, I am responsible to do something. Women are the most affected people when the environment deteriorates. However, it is not only the responsibility of women to do the work. It is the responsibility of both men and women. We have to work together" (Interview with *Ibu Nyai*, 4 November 2022).

In line with *Ibu Nyai*, a male teacher at *Madrasah Tsanawiyah Al-Hikam* who is involved in the *sedekah sampah plastik* movement said:

"It is our collective responsibility to keep nature sustainable. We can do that in many ways. Sedekah Sampah Plastik is one of the ways to educate the students, to raise their awareness. I always encourage my students to keep doing this even after their graduation" (Interview with male teacher, 10 February 2022).

Both *Ibu Nyai* and the male teacher mentioned "education", "educator", and "educate" as an overwording which signifies the spirit behind the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement. These words also depict their social position as teachers who are responsible for educating their students. Moreover, they also mentioned "work together" and "collective responsibility" as rewording which underlines the importance of the movement as a collective work. The phrase "change their behavior" and "raise their awareness" is an overwording to indicate the goal of the movement as a kind of educational process. Another salient phrase is "lock down the plastic". It is metaphorically used to refer to other aims and benefits of the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement, i.e. circular economy.

One of the daily activities performed by the students in this *pesantren* is sorting the accumulated plastic waste, which includes food packaging, soap or shampoo bottles, and water bottles. These waste items are thoroughly cleansed of any organic materials and subsequently dried under sunlight. Once dried, they are packed into empty bottles. A 600 ml plastic bottle contains a minimum of 200 grams of plastic waste, while a 1500 ml plastic bottle contains approximately 500 grams. The filled bottles are then grouped according to size and skillfully crafted into tables, chairs, fences, podiums, and various other items as desired. This process effectively “lock down” the plastic waste, preventing it from further polluting the air, land, rivers, and oceans.

According to the OECD Global Plastics Outlook Database (2022), the expanding consumer market has led to a significant increase in plastic consumption, reaching four times the previous levels. Shockingly, only 9% of plastic waste is recycled, resulting in approximately 7.8 million tons of plastic waste contaminating aquatic environments and oceans in 2019. Unrecycled plastic waste also contributes to air and soil pollution. Some individuals still resort to burning and incinerating their plastic waste, which releases toxic particles and gases into the atmosphere. Soil pollution and climate change have detrimental effects on food security, particularly for Indigenous communities whose livelihoods depend on the land and are severely impacted by soil pollution. Water pollution also poses a higher risk to women and children, especially those residing in riverine and coastal areas, as they are more exposed to water for household purposes compared to men (Bush, 2020). These worsening conditions exacerbate the climate crisis. Therefore, the act of “locking down” plastic waste through the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement significantly contributes to reducing environmental pollution and addressing the climate crisis. According to the UN Women organization (2022), women, girls, and children are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis. This is due to the fact that the climate crisis is not gender-neutral, resulting in imbalances in gender relations and additional risks to their well-being, safety, and health. Their limited access to healthcare services and information, caused by disproportionate workloads, further increases the risks related to child and maternal health.

From the perspective of Islam, the primary objective of the education process is to instill noble qualities in students, enabling them to become upright individuals not only in their relationship with God but also with their fellow humans and the natural world. Islam encourages humanity to maintain a harmonious connection with themselves, their fellow human beings, their environment, and their Creator, forming a comprehensive

four-dimensional lattice of devotion as prescribed for believers (Febriani, 2019). The *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement serves as a means to raise awareness by encompassing all these four dimensions of piety. By collecting and reusing plastic waste, individuals are making an effort to mitigate the adverse impacts of plastic on themselves, their fellow humans, and the environment. Additionally, this act is therefore considered an act of devotion.

Regulation Itself will not Work Properly Without Public Awareness

Asked about government regulations regarding plastic waste, Ibu Nyai said:

“Indeed, there is a new regulation regarding plastic waste in Jombang. However, I still see plastic straws and plastic bottled drinks on the desks of district officials at government-organised events. Regulation itself will not work properly without public awareness. Regulation without implementation will not work. This is where our roles as educators come in. We teach them by giving uswah, role models. I started the action by myself and then I invited my family, the santri, and the surrounding community to be involved. Alhamdulillah, I see changes in their behavior” (Interview with Ibu Nyai, 4 November 2022).

On a linguistic level, her use of the phrase “without public awareness” and “without implementation” is a rewording which justifies the importance of both public awareness and implementation to make the regulation work effectively. The word “*uswah*” or “role model” is used as a critique of the situation, wherein the local government itself could not implement the regulation yet. The officials fail to be role models for their town residents in reducing and banning plastic products. Moreover, her reference to the word “*uswah*” is influenced by one of the Quranic verses which read: “Surely there was a good example (*uswah*) for you in the Messenger of Allah for all those who look forward to Allah and the Last Day and remember Allah” (Al-Ahzab:21). The word “*uswah*” in this Quranic verse is used in particular to explain the position of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH as a role model for his ummah. He is an exemplary role model through which Muslims set an example for their life. However, *Ibu Nyai* reproduces this word to explain her position as a teacher and educator. She strives to be a role model for her students. So, “*uswah*” in this context is not a specific attribute to the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, but it may apply to all those who have a duty in changing

people's behavior for the better one, such as teachers, parents, *kiai*, *nyai*, community leaders, as well as government.

The social impact of the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement lies in cultivating a sense of responsibility towards nature among individuals. One of the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH states: "All of you are guardians and are responsible for your wards" (narrated by Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim). *Ibu Nyai* internalizes the concept of responsibility and its long-term influence on behavioral changes. She advocates for environmental awareness within her community, which guides their actions away from any destructive behavior that ultimately harms them as well.

Ecofeminism deconstructs traditional competitive notions and advocates for a vision of mutual interdependence, which in turn reconstructs the social system and its cultural consciousness. To effectively implement this vision and replace dominance with a harmonious relationship between humans and nature, social construction is necessary; otherwise, it will remain merely as normative knowledge. Hard work and collaboration from all sectors of society and stakeholders are required to actualize this promising vision (Ruether, 2005; Phillips, 2016; Warren, 2009). According to this vision of mutual interdependence, humans are an integral part of the ecosystem, and their intellectuality does not separate them or make them superior to nature. Rather, it should be viewed as a gift that enables humans to fulfil their role in maintaining ecological balance.

From the perspective of ecofeminism, regulations issued by the government are a positive tool to reconstruct the social systems and change cultural awareness to build mutual interdependence vision. Humans are part of the cycle of life, and should play their role in preserving ecological balance and sustainability. Any excessive exploitation will not only damage nature but also endanger its fundamental viability. Moreover, the regulations also meet the demands of sustainable development goals which promote 17 goals to be achieved in 2030. Those 17 goals are: (1) no poverty, (2) zero hunger, (3) good health and well-being, (4) quality education, (5) gender equality, (6) clean water and sanitation, (7) affordable and clean energy, (8) decent work and economic growth, (9) industry, innovation, and infrastructure, (10) reduced inequalities, (11) sustainable cities and communities, (12) responsible consumption and production, (13) climate action, (14) life below water, (15) life on land, (16) peace, justice and strong institutions, and (17) partnerships for the goals (UN, 2022).

However, the regulation alone will not be effective without the cooperation of all parties and stakeholders, including the government, industry, religious

and educational institutions, NGOs, and the community. The Sedekah Sampah Plastik movement is a grassroots-level initiative that addresses the issue based on community experiences and knowledge. Consequently, the solution proposed by the movement proves to be more effective and focused. The santri and the local community, regardless of their gender, age, race, religion, or social status, have ceased to litter their waste into rivers. This signifies their active and tangible contribution to preventing climate crises caused by plastic pollution. Rivers are the primary water sources for the Regional-Owned Drinking Water Company (Perusahaan Daerah Air Minum, PDAM) in Indonesia. While some households rely on their own wells, they often dry up during the dry season, necessitating the purchase of water from PDAM. Metaphorically, rivers resemble veins that transport blood to and from the heart in the human body. The demise of rivers equates to the demise of the community, subsequently burdening women with additional domestic responsibilities. The Sedekah Sampah Plastik movement has played a role in reconstructing a more sustainable life for women and the environment.

The Meaning of Being a Caliph as Looking After Nature

The previous explanations show the spirit, motivation, and goal of the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement which involved teachers, students, *santri* and the surrounding community, including the Christian community, in Jombang. Asked about this initiative, the reverend of GKJW (*Gereja Kristen Jawi Wetan – East Java Christian Church*) in Jombang answered:

“We often misinterpret the scriptures. We are higher than the rest of the creatures. Actually, we are in the same position as other creatures. We are part of nature and not the master of nature. The meaning of [humans are] ‘in power’ in the scripture ... is to maintain, to preserve. Unfortunately, it is interpreted differently and [we see] a lot of exploitation of forests, animals, and others” (Interview with Pastor of GKJW Jombang, 12 February 2021).

He starts his statement by pointing out a common situation of human beings and their fault in interpreting the holy books that humans are above nature. He criticizes this situation by noting the human position “we are in the same position with other creatures” and “we are part of nature”. These two sentences are overwording which emphasizes the proper position of a human being among other creatures. He also repeats the word “misinterprets”

and “interpreted” as an overwording which highlights human mistakes in understanding their position and its destructive impact on the environment in the form of “exploitation of the forest, animals, and others”.

In line with the reverend, a male teacher from *Madrasah Tsanawiyah Al-Hikam* also stated:

“The meaning of being a caliph is to be the guardian of the earth, to look after nature ... indeed, we depend on Allah in our life; however, to meet our daily needs we depend on nature. On the other hand, the sustainability of nature depends on us. There is interdependency between us and nature” (Interview with male teacher, 10 February 2022).

The teacher explains his understanding of the meaning of being a caliph. He alternates between “guardian of nature” and “look after nature” as the meaning and responsibility of human beings as caliphs of God. He then differentiates between two kinds of human dependence on “Allah” and on “nature”. According to him, those two dependencies are interconnected. Moreover, he also describes the interrelationship and interdependence between humans and nature.

Both the reverend and the teacher criticize human misunderstanding in positioning themselves among other creatures of God as power holders or caliphs. For them, the correct interpretation of the human position as “in power” or “caliph” is being responsible for maintaining and preserving nature, not only for the sake of sustainability but also for human existence. White (1967) conveyed his critique on religion and its role in environmental degradation. According to him, the deep-rooted anthropocentrism within the Judeo-Christian tradition, which promotes a dualistic view of human-nature relationships, is the main cause of the current environmental crisis. This perspective justifies human domination over nature by emphasizing the human’s power as God’s steward on Earth.

Islam places all creatures on an equal footing. They are all creations of God and receive the same command to glorify Allah (*tasbih*). The Quranic verse Surah 61:1 reads:

“Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth is exalting Allah, the Sovereign, the Pure, the Exalted in Might, the Wise” (translation by surahquran.org).

It is clearly stated that all creatures are exalting Allah in ways that humans cannot fully comprehend. This highlights God's directive for humans to constantly exalt Him, not only through reciting holy words, but also through acting in a responsible manner towards themselves, their community, and their environment. Any destructive actions contradict the command to exalt God and His creations. This understanding aligns with ecofeminism, which seeks to dismantle an anthropocentrism that places humans at the center of the universe and grants them power over other creatures. It promotes a new understanding of the interrelationships between humans and nature, where humans are seen as part of the ecosystem and are obligated to work with nature and ensure the sustainability of all.

Indeed, Islam designates human beings as caliphs of Allah on Earth. However, this does not imply that humans have the authority to exploit nature. God bestows His blessings upon the entire cosmos. Humans are entrusted by God with the responsibility to maintain and care for the Earth (Negus, 1992). As caliphs of Allah, both men and women possess the same potential to fulfil their role in maintaining themselves, their community, and their environment in accordance with God's command (Al-Faruqi, 1992). Although there are Quranic verses that indicate that God has subjected nature to human beings¹, this does not mean that humanity is superior to nature. Furthermore, the position of human beings is situated between two interconnected poles: as stewards of God and as His servants (*abd* of Allah). As servants of Allah, humans are accountable for all their actions. This role should serve as a reminder to humans of their deeds and their responsibility, not only in worldly life, but also in the hereafter. According to Nasr (2005), humans' ignorance of their position as servants of God is highly perilous, as it can lead to satanic destructive power.

Conclusion

The *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement manifests the interplay between ecofeminism and eco-Islam through three fundamental concepts. Firstly, this movement exemplifies the resistance of the community against unsustainable industrial entrepreneurship that perpetuates patriarchal norms and a mechanistic worldview, treating women and nature as mere tools for

1 There are a lot of Quranic verses which state His subjection of nature to serve Human beings. Quran Surah An-Nahl (16:14), for instance, reads: "And it is He who subjected the sea for you to eat from it tender meat and to extract from it ornaments which you wear. And you see the ships plowing through it, and [He subjected it] that you may seek of His bounty; and perhaps you will be grateful".

economic gain. This disregard exacerbates the existing inequalities between genders and further compromises environmental sustainability. It reveals an inherent power imbalance between those with capital, the industrialists, and those without, specifically the local community who suffer the consequences of this unsustainable industry. Their movement entails a non-violent form of resistance, characterized by love, respect, and kindness. In Islamic terms, this concept is referred to as *Ihsan*, which urges individuals to treat all creatures of God with compassion. Secondly, the *Sedekah Sampah Plastik* movement draws from the knowledge and experiences of women and other marginalized groups who occupy the lower rungs of the social hierarchy and bear the brunt of the plastic waste crisis. The community recognizes that caring for and looking after the natural world is a collective responsibility that transcends gender, race, religion, color, and cultural backgrounds. They actively engage in the simplest way they can manage by ‘locking down’ plastic waste to promote sustainability for both humans and the environment. Thirdly, both ecofeminism and eco-Islam advocate for a reinterpreted understanding of humans as caliphs or stewards of God. This does not imply that humans hold a superior position to nature, but rather that as stewards, men and women alike are tasked with the responsibility of maintaining the sustainability of the cosmos.

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PART 2

AGENCY & POWER OF CHILDREN AND PWDS (PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES)

Community Knowledge of Cornelia de Lange Syndrome (CdLS) as a Basis for Socialization, Early Intervention, Reducing Stigma, and Providing Support for Affected Families

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Abstract

Cornelia de Lange Syndrome (CdLS) is a rare genetic disorder affecting 1 in 10,000 to 30,000 people worldwide, characterized by growth retardation, distinctive facial features, and intellectual disability. This study assesses public knowledge of CdLS in Indonesia through a 30-question online survey. Sixty-five participants responded, 36.9% men and 63.1% women, aged 17-62, with most holding a Bachelor's Degree or higher. Results show that 60% have heard of CdLS, while 40% have not. Most (89.2%) do not have family members with CdLS, and 80% do not know anyone with family members affected. All respondents understood the general definition, but only 73.8% correctly identified signs of CdLS. Among women, 96.9% understood the nutritional needs of CdLS patients, though 3.1% did not. Overall, 95.4% of parents grasp the main challenges in caring for children with CdLS. The study concludes that while general awareness of CdLS is good, knowledge about its specific signs, symptoms, and care requirements needs improvement. Although there is no specific dietary program for those with CdLS, supplementation and proper nutrition of natural foods can help overcome some of the symptoms and related health problems. Omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin D, probiotics, and zinc are some important nutrients, while gluten, dairy products, and processed foods should be avoided. Consultation with a nutritionist or doctor is highly recommended to determine the diet that best suits the needs of individuals with CdLS.

Keywords: Cornelia de Lange Syndrome, nutrition, community-based care, families as caregivers

Introduction

Cornelia de Lange syndrome (CdLS) causes physical, cognitive, and behavioral developmental disorders in humans. This disorder was discovered by Dutch pediatrician Cornelia de Lange, who first described the developmental disorder in two infants in 1933 (Kline *et al.*, 2018). This syndrome is likely to occur in 1 in 10,000 and 1 in 30,000 live births. The characteristics of this syndrome are usually longer eyelashes, thick and fused eyebrows. In addition, people with CdLS experience microcephaly, upper limb defects, delayed psychomotor development, hirsutism, small stature, mental retardation and behavioral disorders (Verotti *et al.*, 2013).

People with CdLS are more prone to experiencing seizures in their bodies. It was noted by research by Verotti *et al.* (2013) that seizures in people with CdLS began at the age of 3.6 years to 4 years. The seizures suffered range from focal seizures to epilepsy. Therefore, people with this syndrome must receive special attention so that they can be treated immediately when these symptoms occur. This syndrome is congenital so it cannot be cured through medication.

Some children in Indonesia suffer from CdLS syndrome. However, the knowledge of the Indonesian population regarding CdLS has not been tested to establish whether they already know about it or not. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a knowledge survey of the community regarding this syndrome. The purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which the community is aware of information related to CdLS (Cornelia de Lange Syndrome). This study is important for raising awareness about CdLS, which is important for early diagnosis and intervention, reducing stigma, encouraging research, and providing support to affected families.

Methods

The objective of this research is the public's knowledge (literacy) regarding CdLS experienced by children. The research subject (population) is the general public, while the sample is the part of the population that filled out the questionnaire. Data collection was carried out using an online questionnaire distributed through social media. This questionnaire was open to all members of the public during the period May 5 - June 5, 2024.

The questionnaire contains questions that test public knowledge regarding indications of CdLS, good nutrition for people with CdLS, education, and a review of the behavior of people with CdLS. As far as the research team knows, until now there has been no series of questions (questionnaires)

that serve as the basis for measuring literacy regarding CdLS. The Research Team developed 30 questions covering issues regarding: knowledge of CdLS, signs of CdLS sufferers, parental support for CdLS sufferers, education of children with CdLS, struggle for the rights of children with CdLS, proper nutrition for CdLS sufferers, challenges for parents whose children have CdLS, logistical and financial challenges for parents if their children have CdLS, obstacles in education, and communication with CdLS sufferers.

Furthermore, testing will be conducted using descriptive statistics to determine the level of student knowledge and issues/topics that are still unfamiliar to respondents. Therefore, no complicated statistical methods are needed in conducting data analysis. This study did not conduct validity and reliability testing because it only conducted descriptive analysis.

Results

The results of the survey related to the level of public knowledge about CdLS for 65 respondents. Factors such as age, ranging from 17-62 years, relationship status, occupation (the majority are either lecturers or students), and education (dominated by S1 and S2 higher education) may play an important role in shaping public knowledge and awareness of CdLS syndrome. This study aims to examine knowledge and awareness of CdLS in the general public. This study is important for early diagnosis and intervention, reducing stigma, encouraging research, and providing support to affected families.

The survey results related to public knowledge regarding the definition of CdLS were 100% correct. This shows that all people understand the general definition of CdLS. This result likely occurs because of having provided preliminary background knowledge regarding CdLS to participants. Based on the survey results, most people know the signs of a child with CdLS. The percentage of those who know this is 73%. Even so, the rest of the community does not fully know about the signs of a child with CdLS. The need for education in the community is very important. This is so that the community will immediately report if they know a child with CdLS (see Figure 1).

1. Apa itu Sindrom Cornelia de Lange (CdLS)?

65 / 65 correct responses

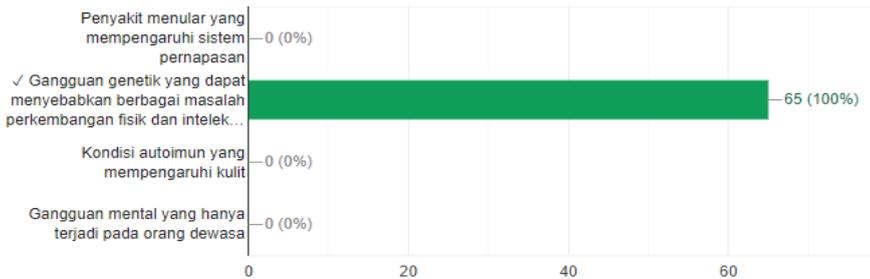


Figure 1. Level of Public Knowledge regarding the Definition of CdLS Syndrome

The survey results show that the community can recognize the early signs of CdLS. In addition, the community also knows how to check a child for CdLS based on general features. All communities also know the first steps if they find out their child has CdLS, how to support CdLS sufferers, support from the community, and self-education about CdLS. However, this result was calculated after we gave respondents a brief background on CdLS. Based on these results, all people know in general what actions women should take if their child has CdLS, but the needs for special treatment may need more explanation from the experts to wider society (see Figures 2, 3 and 4).



2. Tanda-tanda apa yang dapat mengindikasikan seorang anak mungkin menyandang CdLS?

48 / 65 correct responses

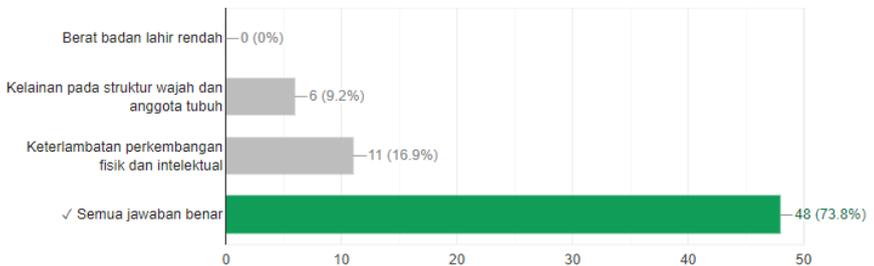


Figure 2. Awareness about signs that may indicate a child may have CdLS

No	Question	Percentage Correct (%)
1	Why is it important for parents to know the early signs of CdLS?	100
2	Who usually makes the initial diagnosis of CdLS in children?	98.5
3	What are the first steps parents should take if they suspect their child has CdLS?	100
4	How can parents support their child with CdLS after diagnosis?	100
5	What is the role of a support community for parents of children with CdLS?	100
6	Why is it important for parents to continue educating themselves about CdLS?	100

Figure 3. Survey results on the role of parents towards children with CdLS

No	Question	Percentage Correct (%)
1	What are the main roles of women as mothers of children with disabilities?	100
2	How can women support the educational development of children with disabilities?	100
3	How is the importance of a support community for women with children with disabilities?	100
4	How can women support the social inclusion of children with disabilities?	100
5	What are the benefits of women getting involved in training programs for parents of children with disabilities?	100
6	How can women ensure access to good health services for children with disabilities?	100
7	What is the role of women in building the independence of children with disabilities?	100
8	Why is it important for women to take care of their own well-being when caring for children with disabilities?	95

9	What can women do to fight for the rights of children with disabilities?	100
10	How can women help children with disabilities develop self-confidence?	100
11	How can women ensure access to good health services for children with CdLS?	100

Figure 4. Survey results on women's actions as mothers if their child has CdLS

The survey also found that most people already know the general nutrition for children with CdLS. However, additional nutrition and nutritional supplementation that are important for people with CdLS are not widely understood (see Figure 5).

No	Question	Percentage Correct (%)
1	Why is proper nutrition important for children with CdLS?	100
2	What nutrients are especially important for children with CdLS to support bone and tooth growth?	96
3	What are good sources of protein for children with CdLS?	100
4	How can dietary fiber benefit children with CdLS?	96,9
5	What are good sources of dietary fiber for children with CdLS?	100
6	What types of fats should be included in the diet of children with CdLS?	98,5

Figure 5. Survey results on nutrition for children with CdLS

The survey also found that the public already knows the general risks they experience if they have a child with CdLS. Therefore, people have to prepare in advance if at any time they have a child with CdLS (see Figure 6).

No	Question	Percentage Correct (%)
1	What are the main challenges parents face in caring for a child with CdLS	95,4
2	What are the common emotional challenges for parents of children with CdLS?	100
3	How do parents typically overcome the challenges of getting the right information about CdLS?	98,5
4	What are the social challenges for families with children with CdLS?	100
5	What are the barriers to educating children with CdLS?	100
6	How can parents cope with behavioral problems that may arise in children with CdLS?	100
7	What are the common logistical challenges for parents of children with CdLS?	100
8	What are the challenges in maintaining the parents' own physical and mental health?	83,1
9	How can parents cope with the financial challenges associated with caring for a child with CdLS?	96,9
10	What are the common communication challenges between parents and children with CdLS?	100

Figure 6. Survey results on challenges faced by parents in caring for children with CdLS

Soegijapranata Catholic University's Multidisciplinary Support for CdLS Sufferers

As a form of support from Soegijapranata Catholic University for younger children with CdLS, the University routinely holds offline and online seminars using electronic media by inviting experts in their fields, such as geneticists, pediatricians, psychologists, nutritionists, and parents of those with CdLS and the general public. The objectives are to spread awareness of CdLS throughout the community, offer affected people inclusive, social, and psychological support so they can access social services and education on

an equal basis, provide medical education and diagnostic tools to parents of survivors, and develop novel, implementable treatment approaches. Along with talks on the nutrition that younger children with CdLS require and the addition of affordable, nutrient-dense food to help those suffering from CdLS (see Figure 7).



Figure 7. Seminar related to “Getting to Know and Caring for CdLS” at Soegijapranata Catholic University Campus, Semarang (SCU)

In addition to seminars and various talk shows, the Food Technology Study Program, SCU, also routinely provides probiotic intake for CdLS survivors (see Figure 8).



Figure 8. Probiotic administration for CdLS sufferers

Discussion

Public Knowledge about the Definition of CdLS

As many as 100% of the people who filled out the questionnaire answered correctly about the definition of CdLS. This proves that the sample community fully understood CdLS. However, education about CdLS to the wider community is still needed so that the community remains vigilant and clearly understands about CdLS. CdLS generally attacks children. Children who suffer from CdLS experience facial deformities and slow growth.

The disorders experienced by CdLS sufferers disrupt the psychological development of children with CdLS. According to Stryjak (2024), disorders can affect many systems, including the cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, craniofacial, genitourinary, musculoskeletal, and central nervous systems, with developmental abilities ranging from severe intellectual disability to average intelligence with learning difficulties. These disorders greatly affect the quality of children's thinking so that children with CdLS may fall behind in their intellectual development. In this position, parents have an important role in the growth and development of children with CdLS.

The Importance of Public Knowledge about CdLS

The importance of public knowledge about CdLS is key to the success of public welfare initiatives. Communities that know about CdLS are able to monitor children who suffer from it. Therefore, children with the syndrome will always be given special treatment so that they receive the same growth and development as children in general. Children with CdLS will get more attention compared to other children.

The community that has filled out the questionnaire stated that all the people who filled out know about CdLS, both physically and psychologically. The high ability of the community to know the type of disease reduces health problems in the community. This is because the community is increasingly aware of abnormalities that cause a person's body condition to be disturbed. In the study by Erika and Fitri (2022), it was stated that a lack of knowledge, and the increasing burden of public health problems today, indicates that health education is urgently needed. This education has a positive impact on society by ensuring that the health of its citizens is maintained.

The Role of Parents in Children with CdLS

Parents must always be vigilant of their children, especially when their children are under 5 years old. Parents must know what their children are

experiencing, such as CdLS. Based on the survey, the public knows the early signs of CdLS, which are important for taking early intervention steps to help the child's development. People who know that there are indications of CdLS sufferers already understand how to be checked by a doctor or geneticist. Treatment for children with CdLS is already widely known by the public. The public need only follow the treatment and intervention recommended by their doctor. The public also knows that if they are parents who care for children with CdLS, how important it is to educate themselves so that they can provide the best and latest care for people with CdLS.

Children with CdLS will have obstacles in verbal communication. Parents must learn about this so that in the future children with CdLS can communicate with others. It was recorded in a study by Susanti *et al.* (2019) showing that children aged 18 months can only speak three words, in example: mama, ayah, and moh. According to Susanti *et al.*, (2019) the solution that can be provided is by collaborating with speech therapists using communication exercises with picture and color media to stimulate the development of children's receptive and expressive language. Parents have an important role in the growth and development of children where children must be able to communicate until they have a degree of independence and functional nerve development. According to Hidayati and Sa'I (2023) parents play an important role in helping their children develop skills in many aspects of life, such as communication skills, independence, mobility, sensory development, fine and gross motor skills, cognitive skills, and social skills. This provides communication development in children with CdLS.

Actions of Parents as Caregivers for Children with CdLS

Children with CdLS need special attention to maintain their development. Emotional and physical support for children with CdLS is important to encourage the success of children in their physical development. Parents can collaborate with teachers to identify and ensure the educational needs of children with CdLS are met. Parents, as the primary caregivers of children with CdLS, provide support and training to develop their children's skills. In addition to these responsibilities as mothers, women must also maintain their own health, so that they are physically and mentally able to care for their children properly. The role of a supportive community is also important, providing the motivation and enthusiasm to care for children, including having access to disability-friendly and high-quality health services. Awareness of these key issues is generally high, as they are fundamental components of the parenting process.

Parenting patterns are important for the growth and development of children, especially for those with CdLS. Dysfunctional parenting patterns have a negative impact on children. Dysfunctional parenting, according to Gea *et al.* (2023), has a negative impact in the form of mental health disorders in children, including behavioral and emotional problems that make children more withdrawn, aggressive, and vulnerable to sexual violence. Therefore, children with CdLS need people around them, especially parents, to appreciate their special needs of care through proper parenting. The right parenting pattern according to Gea *et al.*, (2023) is to maintain children's emotions, fulfill their needs for affection, attention, and security, and foster a sense of mutual respect, tolerance, cooperation, responsibility, and simplicity in positive behavioral patterns and relationships with parents.

The Importance of Good Nutrition for Children with CdLS

Most people know the right nutrition for the growth and development of children with CdLS. The nutrients needed by children include Omega 3, Vitamin D, calcium, Probiotics and Zinc. Lean meat, fish, eggs, nuts, and dairy products are important nutrients as a source of protein for people with CdLS. According to Siwi and Paskarini (2018), protein is a source of energy other than carbohydrates and fats, which can provide a balanced or normal body weight. Therefore, protein is an important source of energy for the body's key metabolic activities. Protein, as a producer of amino acids that function in motor skills and hormones, provides benefits for people with CdLS. In addition, fiber is also an important component in digestion and preventing constipation which comes from fruits, vegetables, grains, and nuts. A good source of fat for people with CdLS is unsaturated fat found in avocados, nuts, and olive oil.

Omega-3 fatty acids found in fatty fish such as salmon, mackerel, and sardines are essential for brain development and cognitive function. Fish oil supplements can also be used to ensure adequate intake. Research shows that omega-3s can help improve cognitive abilities and reduce inflammation. Additionally, Vitamin D is important for bone health and the immune system. Natural sources of vitamin D include sun exposure, fatty fish, and eggs. Vitamin D supplements may be needed if intake from natural sources is inadequate. Probiotics found in yogurt, kefir, and other fermented foods can help improve digestive health. Probiotics help maintain a healthy balance of gut microbiota, which may be beneficial for people with CdLS who frequently experience gastrointestinal issues. Zinc is important for normal growth and development, as well as immune function. Natural sources of

zinc include red meat, poultry, nuts, and seeds. Zinc supplements may be considered to ensure adequate intake, especially in children with CdLS who may have issues with appetite (Children's Hospital of Philadelphia) (Gruca-Stryjak *et al.*, 2024).

People with CdLS may be sensitive to gluten, although there is no proven direct link. Avoiding gluten-containing foods such as bread, pasta, and other wheat products may help reduce digestive issues in some individuals. Furthermore, lactose-free milk is also recommended to avoid digestive problems in some people with CdLS. Furthermore, processed foods that are high in sugar and saturated fat should be avoided because they can worsen general health problems and affect cognitive development. Consuming fresh and natural foods is more recommended (Children's Hospital of Philadelphia) (Gruca-Stryjak *et al.*, 2024).

Challenges Faced by Parents Caring for Children with CdLS

Care for children with disabilities must be carried out carefully so that children can develop optimally. According to Hidayati and Sa'I (2023), parents must be able to understand the characteristics of their children, especially children with disabilities, so that there are no mistakes in providing care that will negatively impact the child's development. Caring for children with CdLS has specific challenges and unique obstacles. For this reason, the public is asked questions about the challenges that will be faced when caring for children with CdLS. Most people already know some of the challenges they will experience if they care for children with CdLS. Finance is the main thing in caring for people with CdLS. This is because children with CdLS will one day require more medical expenditure than other children. The condition of the parents must also always be considered. Parents will feel more tired and stressed because they think about the condition of their children who have CdLS syndrome. Based on research by Hidayati and Sa'I (2023), the challenges faced by parents who have children with disabilities certainly caused negative emotions and stress in themselves. Parents must also frequently update information related to CdLS so that the safety of their children is more guaranteed.

Negative stigma is sometimes obtained by parents when their child has CdLS syndrome. Negative stigma can be formed because the community does not know about the details of the disease. This results in the emergence of bad words that make parents feel embarrassed. Parents also need to be extra careful in choosing the right school. Adequate facilities must always be prioritized by parents considering that their children need a lot of attention,

including needs for psychological as well as physical support. This is also a challenge for parents who must be able to carefully find a therapist for their child. The presence of a therapist at school will provide better conditions for their child because every week their child will receive therapy facilities.

Medical consultation is a challenge for parents. Some parents do not have health insurance, making medical costs excessive financial burden. The existence of government assistance is very helpful for parents regarding finances for medical costs. Apart from the government, financial assistance can also be obtained from non-profit organizations that can provide supporting facilities for the care of children with CdLS. In our experience, we have observed that parents who are caring for children with CdLS sometimes forget about their own needs, and ignore their own needs in order to prioritize care for their children. Caring for their CdLS children also requires overcoming communication barriers, meaning that parents also need support in their important roles as primary caregivers.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the survey leads to the finding that while general awareness of CdLS is good, knowledge about its specific signs, symptoms, and care requirements needs improvement. It found that public knowledge about CdLS Syndrome was high, both from the definition and signs of a child with CdLS. In addition, the public already largely knows how to treat and act if their child has CdLS. Although there is no specific dietary program for those with CdLS, supplementation and proper nutrition of natural foods can help overcome some of the symptoms and related health problems. Omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin D, probiotics, and zinc are some important nutrients, while gluten, dairy products, and processed foods should be avoided. Consultation with a nutritionist or doctor is highly recommended to determine the diet that best suits the needs of individuals with CdLS.

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Legal Certainty for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities Accessing Higher Education: Regulation vs Facts

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Abstract

This paper explores research questions concerning the access of Persons with Disabilities (PwD) to higher education in Indonesia. Indonesia has ratified the International Convention for Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which was stated in UN Resolution Number 61/106 dated December 13, 2006, through Law No 19/2011. Furthermore, Indonesia legalized Law No 8/2018 on Persons with Disabilities (PwD). Through these two instruments, Indonesia complies with its responsibility in providing the legislation in support of the international convention. In accordance with the 1945 Constitution, the implementation of higher education quality assurance is carried out by the government. A series of regulations were revoked by *Permenristekdikti* Number 53/2023 concerning Quality Assurance of Higher Education, which stated that the responsibility lies the National Accreditation Agency for Higher Education (BAN-PT) and the Independent Accreditation Institutions (LAM). Thus, the guarantee for PwD access to higher education can be seen through some indicators of accreditation, either nationally or internationally, which require universities to provide facilities and infrastructure for students with special needs. This chapter finds that though there are regulations which guarantee PwD equal access to higher education, there is still a lack of facilities and infrastructure provided by universities, faculties, and even study programs. The chapter concludes with recommendations that policy makers at each level of higher education adjust their regulations, budget availability, and education plans to ensure the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities to access higher education.

Keywords: PwDs (Persons with Disabilities), Higher Education regulations, access to education, discrimination

Introduction

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 was adopted and promulgated by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1948, through resolution 217 A (III).¹ It states that the UDHR is a common standard of success for all nations and all states. Furthermore, article 2 reads “Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration without distinction of any kind, such as distinction as to race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other position. Furthermore, this non-distinction is also guaranteed without being based on the country or region from which a person originates”. The guarantee of Human Rights as proclaimed in the UDHR is further regulated in two Conventions ratified in 1966; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights/(ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights/(ICESCR). The UDHR, ICCPR and ICESCR are known as “the international Bill of Human Rights”.²

In addition to these three international legal instruments, there are several other key UN international human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 13, 2006, through Resolution No. A/61/106. The Convention imposes obligations on state parties to realize the rights contained in the Convention, through adjustments to the legislation, laws and administration of each state, including changing laws, customs and practices that discriminate against persons with disabilities, both women and children, ensuring the participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of life such as education, health, employment, politics, sports, arts and culture, as well as the use of technology, information and communication.³

The Indonesian government signed the CRPD on March 30, 2007 in New York, but then took almost 4 years since the initial signing to ratify the Convention through Law 19 of 2011 on the Ratification of the CRPD. As a state party, Indonesia is certainly bound by a responsibility to realize the rights stated in the Convention. One measure which should be taken is any

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- 1 Rosmalinda, dkk. 2018. “Pendampingan Hukum Bagi Penyandang Disabilitas di Kota Medan dan Binjai”. *Jurnal Talenta Publisher*. Vol. 1. No 1. accessed at <https://talentaconfseries.usu.ac.id/lwsa/article/view/163>
 - 2 Satriaji, I. (2022). Eksistensi Konvensi Internasional Hak Asasi Manusia Dalam Sistem Hukum Indonesia Berdasarkan Peristiwa Hukum Paniai 2020. *Sosio Yustisia: Jurnal Hukum Dan Perubahan Sosial*, 2(1), 81–106. <https://doi.org/10.15642/sosyus.v2i1.153>
 - 3 Bagian Umum No 2; Penjelasan Atas Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 19 Tahun 2011 Tentang Pengesahan Convention on The Rights Of Persons With Disabilities pada <https://jdih.kemenkeu.go.id/fulltext/2011/19TAHUN2011UUPenjel.htm> last accessed 19 Juli 2024

adjustments to legislation, law and administration in the form of amending laws and regulations.⁴ In April 2016, Indonesia passed Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities (PwD).

In the consideration section of Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning PwD stated that Indonesia guarantees the survival of every citizen, including persons with disabilities, who have the same legal status and same human rights as all Indonesian Citizens.⁵ Article 5 paragraph (1) of Law No 8/2016 on PwD states that persons with disabilities have the right to life; freedom from stigma; privacy; justice and legal protection; education; employment, entrepreneurship, and cooperatives; health; politics; religion; sports; culture and tourism; social welfare; accessibility; public services; protection from disasters; habilitation and rehabilitation; and concessions.⁶ The right to education mentioned in Article 5 paragraph (1) of Law No 8/2016 on Persons with Disabilities is not further explained in the Elucidation of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No 8/2016 on Persons with Disabilities, for this reason the author further refers to Law No 20/2003 on the National Education System or commonly called the National Education System Law. This law is the legal basis for the management of education in Indonesia, both in curriculum development and the implementation of education in the formal education sector (primary-elementary- junior high school / equivalent, secondary education - senior high school / equivalent, and higher education - university).

Universities are specifically regulated in Law Number 12/2012 concerning Higher Education. In the consideration section, this Law states that the purpose of its existence is to realize affordability and equitable access in obtaining quality higher education, relevant to the interests of society for progress, independence, and welfare. It is necessary to arrange higher education in a planned, directed, and sustainable manner by taking into account demographic and geographical aspects. The words “realizing affordability and equitable distribution in obtaining higher education” must interpret as the principle of Non-Discrimination which mentioned in CRPD and the Law on PwD.⁷ One important point in this paper is the existence of the Law on Higher Education which was legalized in 2012, a legal product that existed before the Law on PwD of 2016. This situation requires adjustments to legislation, laws and administration, customs and practices that discriminate against persons with disabilities, including both women and children.⁸

4 Ibid.

5 Rosmalinda,dkk. 2018. Op.cit

6 Undang-Undang Nomor 8 Tahun 2016 tentang Penyandang Disabilitas Pasal 5 Ayat (1).

7 Undang-Undang Nomor 8 Tahun 2016 & Convention on The Rights of Persons With Disabilities

8 Bagian Umum Nomor 2; Op.cit

Persons with Disabilities (PwD)

The CRPD is a human rights treaty designed by representatives of the international community including persons with disabilities, government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations and others, intended to change the way persons with disabilities are viewed and treated in their communities. The CRPD is important because it is a tool to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to the same rights and opportunities as other people.⁹ The CRPD was adopted by UN Resolution 61/106 of December 13, 2006, on the International CRPD. The Convention and its additional Protocols define persons with disabilities as individuals who are unable to fully or partially meet the needs of their individual or social lives because of a disability, whether congenital or acquired, in terms of physical or mental abilities.¹⁰

The CRPD covers many areas for PwD, such as physical access to buildings, roads and transportation, and access to information through written and electronic communication. The Convention also aims to reduce stigma and discrimination, which are often the reasons why people with disabilities are denied access to education, employment, health and other services. For the first time, there is now a legally binding international instrument to ensure that ratifying countries will promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities. These countries will then work to pass their own national civil rights laws to improve the lives of persons with disabilities.¹¹

Indonesia, as mentioned above, is a state party that has ratified the CRPD in Law No 19/2011 on the Ratification of the Rights of PwD. As an international legal instrument used in a country, the definition used is the same, namely people who experience physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory limitations for a long period of time so that they encounter obstacles in participating fully and effectively in their social environment. The definition of persons with disabilities further refers to Law No 8/2016 on PwD. Article 1 Paragraph (1) states that PwD are people who experience physical, intellectual, mental, and/or sensory limitations for a long period of time, who, in interacting with the environment, may experience obstacles and difficulties to participate fully and effectively with other citizens based on equal rights.¹²

9 Elif Celik, "The Role of CRPD In Rethinking The Subject Of Human Rights", *The International Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 21, No 7, (2017), p. 995.

10 Affah, Wiwik, and Syofyan Hadi. "Hak Pendidikan Penyandang Disabilitas Di Jawa Timur." *DiH: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* Vol. 14, No 28 2018, p. 370.

11 World Health Organization, "Disability: The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities", diakses dari <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/why-is-the-convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-important>, last accessed on 30 April 2024

12 Undang-undang Nomor 8 Tahun 2016 tentang Penyandang Disabilitas

Legal arrangements for PwD in Indonesia have been previously regulated both specifically and in other legislation, such as, (a) Law Number 39 Year 1999 on Human Rights. In this Law, PwD are a vulnerable group of people and are entitled to special treatment and protection given the specificity of their condition.¹³ (b) Law No 11/2009 on Social Welfare. The definition of PwD is stated to be included in the group of people who face a life that is not worthy of humanity and has social problems.

Furthermore, Law No 8/2016 on PwD divides into 4 (four) categories, namely persons with physical, intellectual, mental and sensory disabilities:¹⁴

- a. Persons with physical disabilities, which include various movement disorders such as amputations, quadriplegics, paraplegia, cerebral palsy (CP), stroke effects, leprosy effects, and dwarfism. This group also includes several sub-categories, such as the quadriplegics who have impaired movement due to neuromuscular or bone structure abnormalities that are congenital, due to illness, or organ loss such as in the case of polio or organ loss due to an accident. The visually impaired are individuals with visual impairments, which can be divided into two categories: blind and low vision. Then, there are the Deaf who are hearing impaired, either permanently or not, so they are often called speech impaired because of their difficulty in speaking. There is also speech impaired, which are individuals who have difficulty in expressing thoughts through verbal language, possibly due to disorders in the speech organs or motor disorders related to speech.
- b. Persons with intellectual disabilities or mental retardation, who have impaired thinking due to below-average intelligence levels. Examples include slow learning, intellectual disability, and Down syndrome.
- c. Persons with mental disabilities, who have impaired functioning of the mind, emotions, and behavior. These include psychosocial disorders such as schizophrenia, bipolar, depression, anxiety and personality disorders. In addition, there are developmental disabilities such as autism and hyperactivity that affect social interaction skills.
- d. Sensory disabilities, where one of the five senses is impaired. This includes visual disabilities, hearing disabilities, and/or speech disabilities. With these various groups, the Law on Persons with Disabilities identifies and recognizes the broad spectrum of needs of individuals with disabilities.¹⁵

13 Al Faruq, Assad. "Hukum Dan Ham Bagi Anak Dan Disabilitas." *Al-Syakhsiyyah: Journal of Law & Family Studies* Vol. 4, No 1, 2022, p. 12

14 Widinarsih, Dini. "Penyandang disabilitas di indonesia: perkembangan istilah dan definisi." *Jurnal Ilmu Kesejahteraan Sosial* Vol. 20, No 2 (2019), p. 127

15 Arie Purnomosidi, Skripsi: Konsep Perlindungan Hak Konstitusional Penyandang Disabilitas di Indonesia, (Surakarta: Fakultas Hukum Universitas Surakarta, 2017) p. 164

Statistics indicate that about 15% of the global population is disabled, meaning that more than one billion people are considered to experience various disabilities.¹⁶ They are often the poorest of the poor. The stigma and discrimination they experience is common in all societies. PwD are often denied opportunities to work, attend school and fully participate in society, thus creating barriers to their welfare and wellbeing. The condition of persons with disabilities and associated limitations often violates the principle of Non-Discrimination mentioned in the International CRPD and the Law on PwD.¹⁷

In the field of education, including higher education, it is not uncommon for bullying to be imposed on children with disabilities. Research conducted in the United States found that children with disabilities are two to three times more likely to be bullied than their peers without disabilities.¹⁸ Almost the same research findings were also presented in a policy recommendation report entitled “Review of Improving Access and Living Standards of Indonesian PwD: Socioeconomic and Juridical Aspects”.¹⁹ The report states that “the education and employment aspect covers the level of education of persons with disabilities and its implications in obtaining decent work. As many as 29.61% of PwD are primary education graduates and 27.74% did not even complete primary education. It was further mentioned that only 24.51% were able to complete junior and senior secondary education. The participation rate in education is even smaller when looking at higher education which only reaches 5.12%”.²⁰ In addition, there are other barriers experienced by PwD in education, such as the stigma that disability is a punishment or a curse, teaching practices by staff that do not provide for the specific needs of students with disabilities, textbooks that are inadequate for those with disabilities, and school environments and facilities that do not support access for students with disabilities.²¹ One irony found in relation to PwD and the right to education, especially higher education, is that the

16 Liputan6, “Jumlah Penyandang Disabilitas di Indonesia Menurut Kementerian Sosial”, diakses dari <https://www.liputan6.com/disabilitas/read/4351496/jumlah-penyandang-disabilitas-di-indonesia-menurutkementeriandsosial#> last accessed 29 Desember 2023.

17 Undang-Undang Nomor 8 Tahun 2016 & Convention on The Rights Of Persons With Disabilities, Op.cit

18 Pacer.org, “5 Important Facts Students with Disabilities and Bullying: Top five things for parents, educators, and students to know”, diakses di <https://www.pacer.org/bullying/info/students-with-disabilities/> last accessed 14 Juni 2024.

19 Yulaswati, V., Nursyamsi, F., Ramadhan, M. N., Palani, H., & Yazid, E. K. (2021). *Kajian Disabilitas Tinjauan Peningkatan Akses dan Taraf Hidup Penyandang Disabilitas Indonesia: Aspek Sosio-Ekonomi dan Yuridis*. Jakarta Pusat, p 4.

20 Ibid.

21 Hi.org, “Children with disabilities still excluded from school”, diakses di <https://www.hi.org/en/news/children-with-disabilities-still---excluded-from-school> last accessed 14 Juni 2024.

provision of disability services in colleges or universities is not maximized.²² An article titled “Survey of universities that have a Disability Service Unit” on the website of the Directorate General of Higher Education, Research and Technology of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology states that only 65 (sixty-five) universities already have a Disability Service Units (*Unit Layanan Disabilitas/ULD*).²³ In the attachment to the letter regarding “survey of universities that have a disability service unit dated May 24, 2024 as seen on the website of the Universitas Sumatera Utara is one university that is not in the list entitled “Universities that already have a Disability Service Unit”.²⁴

Legal Certainty Theory and the Educational Rights of PwD

The theory of legal certainty as proposed by Gustav Radbruch is a standard priority teaching which explains that there are three basic ideas in the purpose of law, namely justice, certainty, and legal benefits. Justice is the main principle between of the three ideas, but the essence and existence of the other two ideas in fulfilling the essence of legal objectives are of equal importance and cannot be ignored. The law must be able to synergize these three elements to achieve public welfare and prosperity.²⁵

Legal certainty, according to Radbruch, is a condition in which the law can function as a rule that must be obeyed. Legal certainty refers to the clarity of legal norms and their enforcement in society. This principle is interpreted as a situation where the law is certain because there is concrete power for the law concerned to protect the justice seekers against acts of arbitrariness, which means that a person can get something that is expected under certain conditions.²⁶ Legal certainty can be obtained if there are

22 <https://dikti.kemdikbud.go.id/pengumuman/survei-perguruan-tinggi-yang-memiliki-unit-layanan-disabilitas/> last accessed 3 Agustus 2024.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid; *Unit Layanan Disabilitas* (ULD) is mandated in Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities Article 42 Paragraph (3) which states that every higher education provider is required to facilitate the establishment and strengthening of Disability Service Units. This provision is reinforced by the Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 48 of 2023, Article 15 states that every university is required to facilitate the establishment of Disability Service Units. Currently, Universitas Sumatera Utara has a ULD as seen in the link <https://www.usu.ac.id/id/kantor-layanan-disabilitas> with the name Disability Service Corner atau Kantor Layanan Disabilitas. It is located in the Rectorate Building of the Universitas Sumatera Utara. The purpose of the Office is to provide services to every student and lecturer with disabilities.

25 Theo Huijbers. *Filsafat Hukum dalam Lintasan Sejarah*. (Jakarta: Kanisius, 1982), p. 162

26 Mario Julyano and Aditya Yuli Sulistyawan, “Pemahaman Terhadap Asas Kepastian Hukum Melalui Konstruksi Penalaran Positivisme Hukum,” *Crepido* 1, no. 1 (2019): 13–22, <https://doi.org/10.14710/crepido.1.1.13-22>.

elements of legal substance, legal structure, and legal culture with the aim of providing a strong legal basis for state administrators, in this case the executive, legislative, and judiciary, when carrying out their duties and functions in maximizing legal protection for persons with disabilities in Indonesia. Another legal certainty theory was expressed by Jan Michiel Otto. He defines legal certainty as a possibility that in certain situations there are rules that are clear, consistent, and easily obtained by the community, as well as issued by the state and recognized because of state power.²⁷ Moreover, Sudikno Mertokusumo wrote that legal certainty is a guarantee that the law will be implemented properly. Legal certainty requires efforts to regulate the law in legislation made by the authorized and authoritative parties, so that the rules have a juridical aspect that serves to guarantee the existence of definite law as a rule that must be obeyed. Thus, legal certainty explains the condition that legal rules are consistently applied by the authorities (government), subject to, and obedient to them. Citizens therefore adjust their behavior to these rules.²⁸

The previous section mentioned that the CRPD is an evolving concept. As an instrument of international law, the Convention is a source of international law that contains general legal principles and international customs concerning persons with disabilities.²⁹ The Convention states that every person with a disability shall be free from torture or cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment, free from exploitation, violence and arbitrary treatment, and shall have the right to respect for their mental and physical integrity on an equal basis with others. This includes the right to receive protection and social services in the context of independence, including education, and in emergencies, which are the rights of persons with disabilities.³⁰

Indonesia is a state party to the CRPD. Before the Convention came into force, the Indonesian government took steps in accordance with Law Number 24 of 2000 concerning international treaties. Research by Tambajong, G. G., Rumokoy, D. A., & Obaja Voges, S. states that Law No 24 of 2000 on international treaties describes two obligations of the Government of Indonesia

27 J.M Otto, A.W Bedner, et.al. *Real Legal Certainty in Developing Countries*. (Bali: Pustaka Larasan, 2012), p. 119.

28 Soeroso. *Pengantar Ilmu Hukum*. (Jakarta: Sinar Grafika, 2011), p. 23

29 United Nations, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, diakses dari <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-Persons-with-disabilities.html>. last accessed 15 Mei 2024.

30 Repindowaty, Rahayu. "Perlindungan hukum terhadap penyandang disabilitas menurut convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (CRPD)." *Inovatif Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* Vol. 8, No 1, 2015, p. 124

after ratifying a Convention.⁵¹ First, the Government of Indonesia must ensure the Convention's harmony with the 1945 Constitution and Second, the Government of Indonesia transforms international agreements into national law. This second obligation has the substance of "law making treaties", that is, state parties such as Indonesia must translate the provisions in the convention into its laws and regulations.⁵² In other words, the ratification process of the CRPD Convention is subject to national law and creates rights and obligations for Indonesia as a state party.^{53, 54}

Indonesia has ratified the CRPD through Law No. 19/2011 on the Ratification of the CRPD. This action is a good step in international relations, and shows Indonesia's willingness to protect, respect, promote, and fulfill the rights of persons with disabilities.⁵⁵ Typical of international legal instruments adopted by the UN as an International Organization, the CRPD also has a mechanism to ensure its implementation called Treaty based mechanism.⁵⁶ In this human rights mechanism, Indonesia as a state party must make an implementation report that provides information on the progress of CRPD implementation through UN treaty bodies. Indonesia has become a state party to 8 main instruments and 2 additional UN international human rights instruments including the CRPD, thus providing an obligation for Indonesia to submit periodic reports in accordance with Article 35 paragraphs (1 and 2) concerning State Party Reports:

1. Each State Party shall submit to the Committee, through the Secretary-General of the United Nations, a comprehensive report on the measures taken to implement its obligations under the present Convention and on the progress made in that regard, within 2 (two) years after the entry into force of the present Convention for the State Party concerned.

51 Tambajong, G. G., Rumokoy, D. A., & Obaja Voges, S. (2024). Tinjauan Yuridis Ratifikasi Perjanjian Internasional Berdasarkan Undang-Undang Nomor 24 Tahun 2000. *Lex Privatum*, 13(4).

52 Ibid.

53 Situngkir, D. A. (2019). Perjanjian internasional dan dampaknya bagi hukum nasional. *Kertha Wicaksana*, 13(1), pp. 19-25.

54 In the consideration section of Law Number 24 of 2000 concerning International Agreements, it is stated that "the making and ratification of international agreements between the Government of the Republic of Indonesia and the governments of other countries, international organizations, and other subjects of international law is a very important legal act because it binds the country in certain areas, and therefore the making and ratification of an international agreement must be carried out on a clear and strong basis, using clear legal regulatory instruments."

55 Puspaningtyas Panglipurjati, "Sebuah Telaah Atas Regulasi Dan Penetapan Pengampuan Bagi Penyandang Disabilitas Di Indonesia Dalam Paradigma Supported Decision Making", *Jurnal Paradigma Hukum Pembangunan*, Vol. 6, No 2, (2021), p. 83.

56 https://kemlu.go.id/portal/id/read/87/halaman_list_lainnya/mekanisme-ham-pbb dan <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-and-mechanisms>, last accessed 3 August 2024 stated that there are two UN human rights mechanisms, namely Charter based mechanism dan Treaty based mechanism.

2. Thereafter, the State party shall submit periodic reports at least every four (4) years and further whenever requested by the Committee.

Based on the description above, the theory of legal certainty as proposed by Gustav Radbruch, Jan Michiel Otto, and Sudikno Mertokusumo is seen in the process of enacting an international convention in Indonesian jurisdiction, as a subject of International Law, by applying the norms in Law Number 24 of 2000 concerning international treaties. The next question is, when a situation has shown the legal validity of the CRPD as law in Indonesia through Law Number 19 of 2011 concerning the Ratification of the CRPD., is the ratification of the CRPD enough to protect a person, and allow them to be able to obtain something that is expected in certain conditions, such as higher education?³⁷

Nursyamsi et.al (2015) stated that the state's responsibility can be elaborated into three key aspects: first, the making of regulations or laws aimed at protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, including adjustments to various provisions or terms that were previously used to refer to persons with disabilities; second, the provision of facilities and infrastructure that support the removal of barriers for persons with disabilities; and third, the implementation of human rights research and training to change society's view of persons with disabilities.³⁸ This responsibility can be analyzed using the theory of legal certainty proposed by Jan Michiel Otto where the availability of certain rules must be clear, consistent, and easily obtained by the public, as well as issued by the state and recognized due to the power of the state.³⁹ Since 2016, Indonesia has instituted Law No 8/2016 on PwD. See Table 1 for comparison of CRPD and this law.

37 Mario Julyano and Aditya Yuli Sulistyawan, *op.cit.*

38 Fajri Nursyamsi, Estu Dyah Arifianti, Et Al., *Menuju Indonesia Ramah Disabilitas, Kerangka Hukum Disabilitas Di Indonesia*, (Jakarta: Pshk, 2015), p. 61.

39 J.M Otto, A.W Bedner., et.al. (2012), *Op.cit.*

No	Description	The CRPD	Law No. 8/2016 on PwD
1	Purpose of Legal Arrangement	Promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities.	Ensure the fulfillment of rights for persons with disabilities.
2	Definition of disability	Definition of disability; A physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory limitation that prevents full and effective participation in society.	Definition of disability; A physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairment that prevents full and effective participation in society. Any person with a long-term physical, intellectual, mental, and/or sensory impairment who in interacting with the environment may experience obstacles and difficulties to participate fully and effectively with other citizens based on equal rights.
3	Right to Education	Section 6; Article 10 Right to Education: 1. to receive quality education at educational units in all types, pathways, and levels of education inclusively and specifically; 2. to have equal opportunities to become educators or education personnel at educational units in all types, pathways, and levels of education; 3. to have equal opportunities as providers of quality education at educational units in all types, pathways, and levels of education; and	Article 24 1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right, States Parties shall ensure, without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning aimed at: (a) to (c)... 2. In realizing this right, States Parties shall ensure that: (a) Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded on the basis of disability from free and compulsory primary education or from secondary education; (b) Persons with disabilities have access to inclusive, quality and free primary and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the community in which they live; (c) Reasonable accommodation for individual needs is provided; (d) Persons with disabilities receive the necessary support, within the general education system, to facilitate effective education; (e) Effective individual support is provided in an environment that maximizes academic and social development, consistent with the goal

	<p>4. to receive adequate accommodation as students.</p>	<p>of full inclusion.</p> <p>3. States Parties shall enable persons with disabilities to learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education and as members of society. To this end, States Parties shall take appropriate measures, including: (a) Facilitating the learning of Braille, alternative scripts, augmentative and alternative forms, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills, and facilitating peer support and mentoring systems for persons with disabilities; (b) Facilitating sign language instruction and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community; (c) Ensuring that the education of persons, including children, who are blind, deaf or deafblind, is delivered in the language, form and means of communication most appropriate to the individual and in an environment that maximizes academic and social development.</p> <p>4. To ensure the realization of this right, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in sign language and/or Braille, and to train professionals and staff working at various levels of education. Training shall include awareness of disabilities and the use of augmentative and alternative forms and formats of communication and educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.</p> <p>5. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities have access to general secondary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. To this end, States Parties shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities.</p>
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Table 1. Comparison of CRPD and Law No 8/2016 on Persons with Disabilities (Source: CRPD and Law No 8/2016)

Based on Table 1 above regarding the rights of PwD to education, especially higher education, it is clear that the provisions in the Law on PwD require further adjustment so that they are in line with the norms regulated in the CRPD, as ratified through Law Number 19 of 2011 concerning the Ratification of the CRPD.⁴⁰ Currently, the legal regulations on higher education in Indonesia still refer to Law No 20 of 2003 on the National Education System and Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 12 of 2012 on Higher Education. Furthermore, these two laws are Indonesian legislation that was enacted before the enactment of the CRPD and the presence of Law Number 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities.

Research by Hikmah et al. (2021) found that the existing conditions at the study location showed that the campus had provided a policy on inclusive education that provided specifically for students with disabilities. This regulation refers to Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities and Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture (*Permendikbud*) Number 3 of 2020 concerning National Standards for Higher Education, Article 39 paragraph 1 which reads “Higher Education must provide facilities and infrastructure that can be accessed by students with special needs”.⁴¹ The research results written in the article further explain that there has been no support for empowering disabled students by campuses because their numbers are not many. Expert opinion states that the form of policy is through inclusive education which is able to accommodate disabled students.⁴²

Research findings show that higher education, in this case universities or colleges, have not implemented “Inclusive Education” according to the mandate of the CRPD and Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities. This situation is caused by the “non-use” of these two laws as the legal basis for *Permendikbud* 3 of 2020 concerning National Standards for Higher Education. The laws and regulations that are the legal basis for this *Permendikbud* are (1) Article 17 Paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution

40 Ibid., pp. 91-92.

41 Permendikbud No 3/ 2020 tentang Standar Nasional Pendidikan Tinggi is the Regulation that replaces and revokes the Old Regulation on National Standards for Higher Education, namely: (1) Regulation of the Minister of Research, Technology, and Higher Education Number 44 of 2015 concerning National Standards for Higher Education (State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia 2015 Number 1952); and (2) Regulation of the Minister of Research, Technology, and Higher Education Number 50 of 2018 concerning Amendments to the Regulation of the Minister of Research, Technology, and Higher Education Number 44 of 2015 concerning National Standards for Higher Education (State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia 2018 Number 1496).

42 Hikmah, T. L., Yusuf, M., & Sianturi, R. S. (2021). Kriteria Pengembangan Kampus Ramah Disabilitas di Universitas Airlangga. *Jurnal Teknik ITS*, 9(2), C147-C153. <http://dx.doi.org/10.12962/j23373539.v9i2.55409>

of the Republic of Indonesia; (2) Law Number 39 of 2008 concerning the Ministry of State (State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia 2008 Number 166, Supplement to the State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Number 4916); (3) Law Number 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education (State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia 2012 Number 158, Supplement to the State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Number 5336); (4) Government Regulation Number 4 of 2014 concerning the Implementation of Higher Education and Management of Higher Education Institutions (State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia 2014 Number 16, Supplement to the State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Number 5500); (4) Presidential Regulation Number 82 of 2019 concerning the Ministry of Education and Culture (State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia 2019 Number 242); and (5) Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 45 of 2019 concerning the Organization and Work Procedures of the Ministry of Education and Culture (State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia 2019 Number 1673). Furthermore, *Permenristekdikti* (Policies of the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education) Number 53/2023 concerning Quality Assurance of Higher Education is in effect today through revoking several previous *Permenristekdikti*: (1) No 5/2020 concerning Accreditation of Study Programs and Higher Education, (2) No 3/2020 concerning National Higher Education Standards, and (3) No 56/2022 concerning Teacher Education Standards, also does not use the CRPD and Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities compiling the recent *Permenristekdikti*.

Based on the description above, it is clear that legal certainty as theorized by Radbruch by referring to the clarity of legal norms and their implementation in society because of the concrete power of the law in question to protect the just (seekers of justice), in this case people with disabilities, is not yet realized and seems difficult to realize. The rights of people with disabilities to higher education are still hampered by legal regulations that do not or have not yet referred to the needs of people with disabilities as beneficiaries. This finding is in line with the findings of research conducted by Almahdi, P. (2024) which states that until now there is still a large gap between people with disabilities and non-disabled people in accessing higher education.⁴⁵

45 Almahdi, P. (2024). Analisis Pasal 24 Ayat 5 Konvensi Hak-Hak Penyandang Disabilitas Terkait Pemenuhan Hak Atas Pendidikan Tinggi Bagi Penyandang Disabilitas. *UNJA Journal of Legal Studies*, 1(3), pp. 340-353. Retrieved from <https://online-journal.unja.ac.id/jols/article/view/34471>

Universitas Sumatera Utara: A Disability-Friendly Campus?

In the previous section, it was mentioned that there must be a Disability Service Unit (ULD) as mandated in Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities Article 42 Paragraph (3) which states that every higher education provider is required to facilitate the establishment and strengthening of a Disability Service Unit. This provision is reinforced by the Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 48 of 2023, Article 15 states that every Higher Education Institution is required to facilitate the establishment of a Disability Service Unit.

Currently, Universitas Sumatera Utara has a ULD (*Unit Layanan Disabilitas-Disability Service Unit*) as stated on the website under the name Disability Services Corner (*Kantor Layanan Disabilitas*).⁴⁴ This change is quite significant, considering that previously Universitas Sumatera Utara was not a university whose name was listed on the list of universities that had a Disability Services Unit.⁴⁵ In the attachment of the letter regarding “survey of universities that have disability service units dated May 24, 2024 as seen on the website entitled “Higher Education Institutions That Already Have Disability Service Units” and signed by the Director of Learning and Student Affairs.⁴⁶

The low number of higher education providers that are friendly to people with disabilities could be due to the lack of clear criteria or standards. A study published in 2021 stated that until the study was conducted, there were no campus criteria corresponding to the needs of students with disabilities-blindness.⁴⁷ It is further explained that the absence of these criteria is inversely proportional to the number of blind students who are the largest in the city of Surabaya, so that the study concluded that blind students with disabilities need a campus that can fulfill the principles of usability, convenience, comfort, and independence as well as institutions. The development of disability-friendly campus criteria also includes both physical and non-physical aspects.⁴⁸

An article on the official website of Universitas Sumatera Utara entitled “*USU Komitmen Memberikan Akses Layanan Penyandang Disabilitas (USU’s Commitment to Providing Accessible Services to People with Disabilities)*” stated that Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU) has expressed its commitment to provide access and empower people with disabilities. This commitment

44 <https://www.usu.ac.id/id/kantor-layanan-disabilitas>, last accessed 3 August 2024

45 <https://dikti.kemdikbud.go.id/pengumuman/survei-perguruan-tinggi-yang-memiliki-unit-layanan-disabilitas/> last accessed 3 August 2024

46 Ibid.

47 Hikmah, T. L., Yusuf, M., & Sianturi, R. S. (2021), op.cit

48 Ibid.

was marked by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Disability Commission (*Komisi Disabilitas Nasional/KDN*). The MoU states that universities are expected to provide facilities and conveniences for people with disabilities. These facilities are realized in the formation of Disability Service Units in every university in Medan.⁴⁹ Furthermore, the article states that the basis of Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 13 of 2020 concerning Appropriate Accommodation for Students with Disabilities states that the Disability Service Unit in higher education should be organized independently by each Higher Education Institution and has the following tasks: 1. conducting needs analysis; 2. providing recommendations; 3. conducting training and technical guidance; 4. providing assistance; and 5. carrying out supervision, evaluation, and reporting.

The research findings conducted at Airlangga University above are a description of many other universities in Indonesia, including the Universitas Sumatera Utara as one of the oldest universities outside Java. The USU Faculty of Law is the second oldest faculty at the Universitas Sumatera Utara which was founded on January 12, 1954, under the auspices of the Universitas Sumatera Utara Foundation. Having a long history in managing higher education and the status of a State University with Legal Entity (PTN BH/*Perguruan Tinggi Negeri Badan Hukum*) makes Universitas Sumatera Utara continue to strive to achieve indicators related to the needs of people with disabilities.⁵⁰ An article states that universities make plans every year to achieve targets from the implementation of the *Tri Dharma* of Higher Education which is expected to be able to boost the quality of education. Work programs related to teaching, research and community service as planned under the instructions of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia are implemented according to the conditions of each campus, with ongoing programs of activities from one semester to the next.⁵¹ Everything done by universities such as the University of North Sumatra is part of the accreditation requirements that must be carried out at both the national and international levels.

At the international level, accreditation is carried out by the Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA)⁵², an

49 <https://www.usu.ac.id/id/berita/usu-komitmen-memberikan-akses-layanan-penyandang-disabilitas>, last accessed 19 July 2024

50 <https://fh.usu.ac.id/id/tentang-kami>, last accessed 12 July 2024

51 Nasution, M. K. (2025). Urgensi percepatan penjaminan mutu perguruan tinggi melalui akreditasi perguruan tinggi. *Ulasan Kinerja*, 1(2).

52 FIBAA is a leading industry organization Switzerland, Austria and Germany founded FIBAA in

accreditation achievement that is expected to be owned by the faculty on an international scale. Furthermore, this accreditation achievement is in line with the assignment of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology on the Main Performance Indicators (IKU) of State Universities (PTN). Where in the Main Performance Index (IKU) number 8 which states that the indicator of an advanced campus is an international standard study program.⁵³ The needs of students with disabilities are an indicator that must be met and this is a challenge for University and Faculty managers such as the Faculty of Law, University of North Sumatra, which is currently heading towards FIBAA accreditation regarding the availability of facilities and infrastructure for students with disabilities.⁵⁴

Conclusion

The conclusion of this article is that the availability of regulations to guarantee equal access rights to higher education for people with disabilities does not yet have legal certainty, considering that the legal basis for implementing regulations does not refer to the Law on Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities or the Law on Persons with Disabilities. Furthermore, the availability of facilities, advice and infrastructure required to meet the indicators for achieving quality assurance in higher education requires higher education providers starting from the Study Program, Faculty and even university levels to continue to strive and identify difficulties in meeting the availability of facilities and facilities for people with disabilities. Thus, it is hoped that policy makers at each level of higher education can adjust regulations, budget availability and education plans in line with ensuring the fulfillment of the rights of people with disabilities to access higher education.

the fall of 1994 as an international foundation. From day one, its goal was to develop a rigorous Assessment Guide for quality assurance in higher education accessible from link <https://www.umn.ac.id/yuk-kenali-apa-itu-akreditasi-internasional-fibaa/> dan <https://www.fibaa.org/en/accreditation-certification/> pada 3 August 2024

53 <https://law.unja.ac.id/siap-bersaing-tingkat-internasional-fh-unja-raih-akreditasi-internasional-fibaa/>, last accessed 3 August 2024.

54 <https://fib.usu.ac.id/id/berita/persiapan-monitoring-dan-evaluasi-akreditasi-internasional-fibaa>, last accessed on 3 August 2024, in this article it is stated that "For the Faculty leaders, in order to support the success of the accreditation, attention must be paid to the facilities available in the faculty. For example, classrooms should have two exits, have APAR and sprinkler systems. Learning facilities can be accessed by students with disabilities".

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Shadow Refugees: The Risk of Sexual Violence Against Children

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Abstract

Different perspectives on refugee issues contribute significantly to ensuring legal protection for refugees. This chapter identifies key perspectives through an analysis of Indonesian regulations for refugees while in Indonesia as a transit country. While Indonesia did not ratify The International Convention on Refugees of 1951, it is a State Party to the CRC (Convention on the Rights of the Child) and must comply with the principles and norms stated therein, such as the principle of non-discrimination. This chapter discusses how children, either as minor refugees or irregular migrants, who are vulnerable to becoming victims of sexual violence, are being protected. The research used normative methods with statutory, case and conceptual approaches related to minor refugees in Indonesia, with analysis supported by primary data obtained from field research with refugees in immigration detention centers (*Rumah Detensi Migrasi - Rudenim*), community houses (CH), and temporary shelters. The research found that: (1) Indonesia is obliged to use its national law to ensure protection for minor refugees from sexual violence; and 2) the placement of refugees either in *Rudenim*, CH or temporary shelters is risky for minors, exposing them to being victims of sexual violence by adults/other minor refugees due to cramped conditions and other causes. The chapter recommends that national and/or local governments increase their collaboration with UN agencies such as the UNHCR (United Nations Human High Commissioner for Refugees) and IOM (International Organization for Migration) to ensure the protection of child rights and prevent them becoming victims of sexual violence.

Keywords: minor refugees, sexual violence, discrimination, child rights, community houses

Introduction

Gender-based violence presents a significant risk for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) due to conflict or natural disasters, transnational immigrants and/or refugees/asylum seekers.¹ Indonesia has not ratified the Refugee Convention 1951 in Geneva and its protocol in 1967, however there is Presidential Regulation Number 125 of 2016 concerning the Handling of Refugees from Abroad as a form of regulation governing responsibility for refugees from abroad.² Furthermore, Indonesia has been applying the principle of non-refoulement - a *Jus Cogens* or basic norm in international law.³

The International Refugee Convention 1951 has defined refugees abroad in article 1 regarding the status of refugees, as persons who have a real threat of persecution because of race, religion, nationality (identity), belonging to civil society or political opinion, outside the community of their own country and inability, or because of fear, that the person does not want to use the security of his country, or a person who does not have a country and because he/she is outside the country where he/she lives, because of the fact of that, or because he/she cannot, fears to, or does not want to return to his/her homeland.⁴ The definition of refugees stated in the International Convention on refugees is adopted in Indonesian law. However, the term used adapts to the local understanding “refugees from abroad”. The regulation on refugees is regulated in Presidential Regulation (*Perpres*) Number 125 of 2016 as an implementing regulation of Article 27 paragraph (2) of Law Number 37 of 1999 on Foreign Relations. The *Perpres* defined refugees are limited to “foreign”, since the definition as foreigners who are in the territory of Indonesia due to a well-founded fear of persecution on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, membership of certain social groups, and different political opinions, and thus do not want protection from their country of origin and/or have received asylum seeker status or refugee status from the United Nations through the High Commissioner for Refugees in Indonesia. It concludes that the approaches to the definition of refugees in Indonesian regulations refer to foreigners who are in Indonesian territory

1 Triputra, A. A., & Handayani, I. (2021). Analisis perlindungan Hukum Bagi Pengungsi Perempuan Sebagai Kelompok Yang Rentan Dari Kekerasan Seksual. *Khatulistiwa Law Review*, 2(1), pp 216-230.

2 Novianti, “Implementasi Perpres No. 125 Tahun 2016 tentang Penanganan Pengungsi dari Luar Negeri”, *Negara Hukum*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (2019), p 281.

3 Rohmad Adi Yulianto, “Integrasi Prinsip Non-Refoulement Dengan Prinsip Jus Cogens Pada Kebijakan Penanganan Pengungsi di Indonesia”, *Jurnal Ilmiah Kebijakan Hukum* Vol. 14, No 3 (2020), p 497.

4 1951 Convention on Relating the Status of Refugee, Article 1

- the immigration perspective – and “restrictions” for Indonesia’s treatment of refugees while in its territory as a transit country.^{5,6,7}

Refugees and asylum seekers arrive in Indonesia in various ways. Some are victims of human trafficking, people smuggling, and some enter through unofficial sea routes by sailing the Andaman Sea and the Malacca Strait until they are finally stranded on the North or East Coast of Sumatra Island as ‘boat people,’ usually from Bangladesh or Myanmar.⁸ The number of refugees in Indonesia from 2021 to 2023 can be seen from the data of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In the end of November 2021, UNHCR registered refugees in Indonesia reached 13,175 with 9,973 refugees and 3,202 asylum seekers. Although Indonesia has not ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention, it has long been a host to refugees and vulnerable people, which Indonesia does on the basis of humanitarian principle. Mostly, refugees in Indonesia came from Afghanistan (57%), Somalia (10%), Iraq (5%) and the rest come from various conflict-prone countries. Furthermore, UNHCR stated that the number of minor refugees is quite high, at 27%.^{9,10}

There were 12,616 refugees and asylum seekers in Indonesia in November 2022. There are 9,746 refugees and 2,870 asylum seekers (9,336 male and 3,280 female) and around 27% children. Moreover, refugees and asylum seekers in Indonesia are distributed across 6 cities; Jakarta, Medan, Banda

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- 5 Rosmawati, R. (2015). *Perlindungan terhadap Pengungsi/Pencari Suaka di Indonesia (sebagai Negara Transit) menurut Konvensi 1951 dan Protokol 1967*. *Kanun Jurnal Ilmu Hukum*, 17(3), 457-476.
 - 6 *Komitmen Kemanusiaan Negara Terhadap Pengungsi Internasional pada link website*<https://www.kemenkumham.go.id/berita-utama/komitmen-kemanusiaan-negara-terhadap-pengungsi-internasional>, last accessed on 5 August 2024
 - 7 *Women's Chamber Press Release Commemorating World Refugee Day 2024 "Strengthening Regulations for the Protection and Treatment of Foreign Refugees by Integrating Human Rights and Gender Justice"*, Jakarta, 20 June 2024 at the website link <https://komnasperempuan.go.id/siaran-pers-detail/siaran-pers-komnas-perempuan-memperingati-hari-pengungsi-sedunia-2024> Noting that the existence of such oppressors has changed the way the Indonesian Government from the outset considered all refugees as illegal immigrants, then recognized asylum status as a force so that refugees from abroad are no longer subject to detention or detention., last accessed on 5 August 2024.
 - 8 Heru Susetyo, “Urgensi Penanganan Pengungsi dan Pencari Suaka di Indonesia”, *Humas FH UI*, (2022).
 - 9 Ningsih, Y., Fitria, K. S. ., & Arisandi, M. R. . (2022). *Upaya UNHCR dalam Mencegah Terjadinya Sexual Gender Based Violence terhadap Pengungsi Perempuan di Indonesia*. *Aufklarung: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial Dan Humaniora*, 2(3), 276–283. Retrieved from <http://www.pijarpemikiran.com/index.php/Aufklarung/article/view/260>
 - 10 *Siaran Pers Komnas Perempuan Memperingati Hari Pengungsi Sedunia: Penting Integrasi Perspektif Keadilan Gender dan Penggunaan UU Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Seksual dalam Penanganan Pengungsi Luar dan Dalam Negeri pada website* <https://komnasperempuan.go.id/siaran-pers-detail/siaran-pers-komnas-perempuan-memperingati-hari-pengungsi-sedunia-penting-integrasi-perspektif-keadilan-gender-dan-penggunaan-uu-tindak-pidana-kekerasan-seksual-dalam-penanganan-pengungsi-luar-dan-dalam-negeri>, last accessed on 1 August 2024.

Aceh, Tanjung Pinang, Pekanbaru, and Makassar. Approximately 71% of the total refugees and asylum seekers in Indonesia are from three countries; Afghanistan (55%), Somalia (10%), and Myanmar (6%), while the remaining number are from other countries, including stateless persons.¹¹ UNHCR recorded that at the end of 2023, there were 12,295 refugees, 69% adults (72% males and 28% females) and 29% children.¹²

Refugees and asylum seekers who are in transit countries such as Indonesia, will be protected and given temporary protection such as providing shelter, participating in meeting food needs, healthcare, and protection from violence and oppression that can occur to them.¹³ Indonesia cooperates with international refugee agencies such as UNHCR and IOM (International Organization for Migration), which are engaged in migration processes including assistance for the welfare of refugees and asylum seekers while in Indonesia before departing to third countries, which in this case are Australia, Canada and the United States.

Research examining sexual violence that often occurs against vulnerable minority groups found that refugee women are particularly vulnerable. They are vulnerable to sexually violent behavior due to their dual identity as women and refugees, which leads to compound discrimination. Refugees' vulnerability to discrimination is due to their limited rights, in this context women also become more vulnerable to gender-based violence because of the lack of physical protection and the absence of effective protection mechanisms for them, leading to what some have termed 'double discrimination.' Furthermore, both of these categories are listed as vulnerable minority groups.¹⁴

A situation that requires urgent attention is the lack of clear data about sexual violence against refugee women in Indonesia. This is because the conditions of refugee centers in Indonesia are almost entirely under government management and have closed bureaucratic procedures, meaning they cannot be entered by the public. Based on this, Indonesia as a transit country certainly needs to establish a legal framework that can protect refugee women from sexual violence, especially the practice of sexual violence such as the

11 UNHCR Indonesia, "Sekilas Data", <https://www.unhcr.org/id/figures-at-a-glance>, last accessed on 20 May 2023.

12 Sekilas Data pada link <https://www.unhcr.org/id/sekilas-data>, last accessed on 5 August 2024

13 Kemenkumham RI, "Komitmen Kemanusiaan Negara Terhadap Pengungsi Internasional", <https://www.kemenkumham.go.id/berita-utama/komitmen-kemanusiaan-negara-terhadap-pengungsi-internasional>, last accessed on 21 May 2023.

14 Triputra, A. A., & Handayani, I. (2021). Analisis perlindungan Hukum Bagi Pengungsi Perempuan Sebagai Kelompok Yang Rentan Dari Kekerasan Seksual. *Khatulistiwa Law Review*, 2(1), 216-230.

phenomenon of “survival sex”.¹⁵ The research concludes that refugees such as Somali women in Indonesia must be careful to avoid violence and rape.

The reason why they become victims of sexual violence is particularly distressing: this group of refugees was reported to exchange sex for food.¹⁶ This phenomenon, which is often experienced by refugee women, is recorded as “survival sex”. Changing Lives research conducted in 2015 revealed that survival sex is the practice of exchanging sex to fulfil immediate needs on a regular basis.¹⁷ Furthermore, this research also discusses changes in refugee behavior based on Murray Bowen’s (1913-1990) developed a natural systems theory of human behavior, which explains that survival sex in this group of refugee women is related to both desperation and deprivation.¹⁸

Child Refugees, Sexual Violence, and Legal Protection in Indonesia

Afifah, W. et al., in an article which is the result of a discussion in community empowerment, states that migrants or refugees lack even minimal knowledge about aspects of preventing sexual violence in Indonesia, including the legal definition of violence, forms of violence, the impact and prevention of sexual violence against children and women, protection measures and other influencing factors.¹⁹ This condition increases the vulnerability of refugee immigrants to sexual violence, especially children and women. It is concluded at the end of the paper that community empowerment programs are needed to increase the understanding of immigrants in community houses funded by IOM on the Prevention of Sexual Violence against Children and Women.²⁰ The findings of Afifah, W. et al confirm that refugee women living in Community Houses are vulnerable to a life of isolation in a strange land, with restricted access to information, services, legal support, and an

15 Ibid.

16 Komnas Perempuan, “Seminar Nasional Perlindungan Terhadap Perempuan Pengungsi Dari Kekerasan Berbasis Gender Pada 5 Desember 2018” (Jakarta, 2018) dalam Triputra, A. A., & Handayani, I. (2021). Analisis perlindungan Hukum Bagi Pengungsi Perempuan Sebagai Kelompok Yang Rentan Dari Kekerasan Seksual. *Khatulistiwa Law Review*, 2(1), 216-230.

17 House of Commons, Universal Credit and “Survival Sex”: Second Report of Session 2019–20 (London, 2019) dalam Triputra, A. A., & Handayani, I. (2021). Analisis perlindungan Hukum Bagi Pengungsi Perempuan Sebagai Kelompok Yang Rentan Dari Kekerasan Seksual. *Khatulistiwa Law Review*, 2(1), 216-230.

18 Ibid.

19 Afifah, W., Ayu Atika, N., Pangeran Jaya, A., Khartika Suryanis, A., Lailatul Maghfiroh, A. ., Dewi Pratiwi, N., & Fikri, S. (2024). Sosialisasi Pencegahan Pelecehan Seksual Pada Anak Dan Wanita Bagi Imigran Di Community House Of Iom Puspa Agro Sidoarjo. *Jurnal Penyuluhan Dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat*, 5(1), 31–37. <https://doi.org/10.59066/jppm.v3i1.613>

20 Ibid.

uncertain future.²¹ This situation makes refugee women in Indonesia feel “frustrated” and “helpless”, and many of them are even vulnerable to violence, but it is difficult to get the protection and assistance they need. The reason given by a refugee woman regarding their response to the situation is simply that there are no institutions or services that can protect them. Furthermore, they have to work alone to survive gender-based violence such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, verbal violence, and online bullying, being isolated from support systems and community networks. The cruel irony is that 99% of the perpetrators of this violence are also fellow refugees, whether husbands, family members, or other members of the refugee community.²²

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) conveyed the development of data on the presence of refugees in Indonesia. Currently, for example, UNHCR states that there are around 12,295 refugees registered at the UNHCR office. As many as 29% of the total number of people registered with UNHCR Indonesia are children. Furthermore, 227 children came alone or separated from their families. UNHCR also gave an overview of the country of origin of the refugees, stating that until the end of December 2023, most refugees in Indonesia came from Afghanistan (48%), Myanmar (16%) and Somalia (9%).²³ UNHCR also stated that of the refugees in Indonesia, 69% are adults (72% male and 28% female) and 29% are children.²⁴ Refugees and asylum seekers in Indonesia are housed in 6 cities, namely: Jakarta, Medan, Aceh, Tanjung Pinang, Pekanbaru, and Makassar.²⁵ This paper specifically analyzed a case on sexual harassment at the community house of refugees in Medan.

Defining Child Refugees

Indonesia is not a State Party to the 1951 convention on refugees and its 1967 Protocol. As a consequence, there is no refugee status determination system for Indonesia. UNHCR is the mandated organization in Indonesia to ensure protection for refugees. It stated clearly on the UNHCR website: “Asylum seekers and refugees in Indonesia are not permitted to work and receive no social benefits from the Government of Indonesia. The Government

21 Kami harus berjuang sendiri' - Jalan berliku para pengungsi perempuan di Indonesia ciptakan ruang aman, pada website link <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/articles/cy6v3xvjzgx0>, last accessed on 5 August 2024

22 Ibid

23 Pengungsi di Indonesia pada link website <https://www.unhcr.org/id/>, last accessed on 5 August 2024.

24 Sekilas Data pada link <https://www.unhcr.org/id/sekilas-data>, last accessed on 5 August 2024

25 UNHCR Indonesia, “Sekilas Data”, <https://www.unhcr.org/id/figures-at-a-glance>, last accessed on 20 May 2023.

of Indonesia allows them to stay here while they receive registration documents from the UNHCR”.²⁶

The definition of refugees was developed previously in the 1951 Geneva Convention on Refugees, approved at the UN Conference on 28 July 1951, mentioning “There is a well-founded fear of persecution either on account of race, religion, nationality, membership of a social organization or because of his opinion and he is unwilling to accept the protection of the country to which he belongs”. Then, according to the 1967 Protocol, refugees are defined more broadly, which includes all refugees who are existed both before and after 1951. The definition of refugee is not only stated in those two regulations but also defined in the UNHCR Statute, Article 6B; “a person who is outside his or her country or place of habitual residence. Therefore, refugee boundaries have relevance to cross-border issues. The basis for being called a refugee can be linked to the 1951 Convention that a person or group of people can be called a refugee when there is a fear for their safety caused by ethnicity, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. And it should be noted that they do not receive protection from their country of origin”. There are three important points which describe on refugees: (1) A person is outside the jurisdiction of their country; (2) Threats to their safety, such as persecution; and (3) There is a demonstrable condition of being unable or unwilling to entrust the protection of the country of origin.

The definition of a refugee in regard to distinguishing the status of a refugee and an asylum seeker refers to the status obtained through stages of the asylum-seeking process outside the refugee country. A refugee is also someone who seeks asylum. Meanwhile, asylum seekers are people whose formal status has not been recognized.²⁷ In daily life, the terminology of asylum seekers and refugees is often confusing for members of the public. Simply, an asylum seeker is someone who identify her/his self a refugee, however their request for protection has not yet been fully considered. In other words, to obtain refugee status, an asylum seeker needs to require protection which will be evaluated through the refugee status determination procedure (RSD). When an asylum seeker is not recognized as a refugee, the asylum seeker does not receive any international protection, and may be resettled to his/her country of origin. By obtaining refugee status, the refugee

26 Riadhussyah, M. (2016). *Perlindungan Hukum Bagi Pengungsi Anak Di Indonesia Menurut Hukum Internasional* (Doctoral dissertation, Brawijaya University).

27 Rosmawati, R. (2015). *Perlindungan terhadap Pengungsi/Pencari Suaka di Indonesia (sebagai Negara Transit) menurut Konvensi 1951 dan Protokol 1967*. *Kanun Jurnal Ilmu Hukum*, 17(3), pp 457-476.

accepts the obligations imposed on him/her, as well as the rights and protections from international and national law.²⁸

International human rights law is shared by all persons including refugees who are entitled to the same respect as citizens of asylum granting countries.²⁹ The enjoyment of rights and protection of rights for refugees is not limited to adult refugees, but also includes minor refugees. As an individual, a minor refugee subject to international law. Therefore, minor refugees also have inherent dignity, inalienable, endurable and inviolable rights.³⁰ Theoretically, when a person possesses these rights, they will be able to make a choice independently, including if they are children. From another perspective, age for example, people will assume that minors tend not to have the competence to make such choices. Therefore, there will remain significant questions as to the suitability of children to have these rights. However, rights could be analyzed from a different perspective through the 'interest rights' theory. This theory assumes that a person has a right when it is in his/her interests, for example the right to protection. A society recognizes that children need care and protection in general, making it imperative to establish rights based on that foundation.³¹

The UNHCR statute specifically defines a refugee as stated in Article 6B; "Any person who is outside the country of his nationality or, if he has no nationality, the country of his former habitual residence, because he/she has or had well-founded fear of persecution by reason of race, religion, nationality or political opinion and is unable or, because of such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of the government of the country of his nationality to the country of his former habitual residence".³² Discussing the limitations and definitions of refugees, it must be agreed that a refugee is an individual or group of people who have good reason to leave their country of origin or are deliberately forced to leave their country of origin due to fear of safety as a result of ethnicity, religion, nationality or differences in political views.³³

The UNHCR statute does not mention minor refugees explicitly. Although "any person" can be explicitly interpreted to include children. Furthermore, the existence of different treatment for children and adults should apply to

28 Ibid

29 Ayub Torry Satriyo Kusumo, "Perlindungan Hak Asasi Manusia Pengungsi Internasional", *Yustisia*, vol.1 no. 2, 2012, p 175.

30 Riadhussyah, M. (2016), *Op.cit*

31 Trevor Buck, *International Child Law*, Cavendish Publishing, Great Britain, 2005, hal.25.

32 Riadhussyah, M. (2016), *Op.cit*

33 Ibid

minor refugees as well as to refugees in general. Although there is no specific provision on child refugees, a scholar, Jill Rutter, in her book that specifically analyses child refugees in the United Kingdom, described child refugees as follows:³⁴

*“...Can be drawn from trying to define refugee children? It is important to realize that refugee children are not a clearly demarcated group and that there are no clear distinctions between refugees and non-refugees, between voluntary and forced migrants, or the proactive and reactive migrants of migrants of Richmond’s system. Demarcation is often imposed by the states, as a legal status such as Convention refugee status, or a bureaucratic status, for example a group in receipt of the European Refugee Fund. but, when it still under 18 ages and labelling “refugee”. Then... it is a child refugee.”*³⁵

It can be concluded that the definition of a child refugee refers to a person or group of people who are carried or born in the process of displacement who are under 18 years of age or are in the womb - the age provision that states the maximum age limit of 18 years for children is based on the provisions of CRC which states that a child is a person under 18 years or who is in the womb of the mother who becomes a refugee. As a consequence, parents could define their children as a minor refugee following his/her refugee status.³⁶ UNHCR verified the number of minor refugees as around 2,507, of which 798 are unaccompanied children. Children who migrate unaccompanied require specific and appropriate protection.³⁷ They are in a particular state of vulnerability due to age, distance from home, and separation from their parents or carers. They are vulnerable to specific risks and may have witnessed extreme forms of violence, exploitation, trafficking, physical, psychological and sexual abuse before and/or after their arrival in a state or region. They may also potentially be at risk of being marginalized and drawn into criminal activity or radicalization. Moreover, unaccompanied minors, as a vulnerable group, are more easily affected by forced and early

34 Rutter, Jill. (2006). *Refugee Children in the UK. Education in an Urbanised Society*. Open University Press. In Riadhussyah, M. (2016)

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid.

37 Komisi Eropa, Komunikasi dari Komisi kepada Parlemen Eropa, Perlindungan anak-anak dalam migrasi, 12 April 2017, COM(2017) 211final dalam Kerentanaan Anak-Anak Tanpa Pendamping, pada website link https://euaa-europa-eu.translate.google/guidance-reception-unaccompanied-children/vulnerability-unaccompanied-children?_x_tr_sl=en&_x_tr_tl=id&_x_tr_hl=id&_x_tr_pto=tc#5

marriage as their families in their homes countries or other countries may encourage their daughters to marry to protect them from further sexual violence.³⁸

In some cases, unaccompanied girls also already have the responsibility of caring for their own children. Additionally, those with disabilities are particularly vulnerable; they are at high risk of becoming victims of violence. Unaccompanied children may also be particularly vulnerable due to their sexual identity, sexual orientation or gender expression. Therefore, protecting migrating children, and in particular unaccompanied children, and ensuring that their best interests are respected, regardless of status and at all stages of migration, is a priority for the EU.³⁹ This treatment should not invalidate the strength and resilience shown by minor refugees. The necessary focus on vulnerability should not limit the development of policies, support and care practices that are appropriate to the needs and capacities of unaccompanied minor, while at the same time enhancing their resilience.⁴⁰

There are a limited number of programs designed to protect child rights in Indonesia, especially for minors who need special protection (article 59).⁴¹ Law Number 23 of 2002 states that Indonesia has responsibility to provide special protection to children in various categories, including minors in emergency conditions as stated in article 60⁴² point a. Unfortunately,

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid

40 Björklund, Unaccompanied minors refugees in Finland – challenges and good practices in the Nordic context, 2015, available at the link <https://nordicwelfare.org/integration-norden/en/fakta/unaccompanied-refugee-minors-in-finland-tantangan-dan-praktik-baik-dalam-konteks-nordik-2/>; Vervliet, Lintasan pengungsi anak di bawah umur tanpa pendamping: Aspirasi, hak pilihan dan kesejahteraan psikososial, 2013, tersedia di <https://biblio.ugent.be/publication/4337248> dalam Kerentanaan Anak-Anak Tanpa Pendamping, pada website link https://euaa-europa-eu.translate.google/guidance-reception-unaccompanied-children/vulnerability-unaccompanied-children?_x_tr_sl=en&_x_tr_tl=id&_x_tr_hl=id&_x_tr_pto=tc#5

41 Article 59 of Act No. 35 of 2014 amending Law No. 23 of 2002 on the Protection of Children; (1) The Government, the Regional Government, and other State institutions are obliged and responsible to provide special protection to children. (2) Special protection for children as referred to in paragraph (1) is granted to: a. Children in emergency situations; b. Children facing the law; c. Children of minority groups and isolated; d. Children exploited economically and/or sexually; e. Children who are victims of abuse of narcotic drugs, alcohol, psychotropic substances and other addictive substances; f. Children becoming pornographic victims; g. Children living with HIV/AIDS; h. Children victim of kidnapping, sale, and/ or trafficking; i. Children suffering from physical or/ or psychological violence; k. Children from sexual crimes; k) Children from terrorist networks; l. Children with disabilities; m) Children of ill-treatment victims and traffickers; and persons who are associated with social stigmatization and stigma. Article 59A Special protection for children as referred to in article 59, paragraph (1) shall be provided through the following efforts: a. prompt treatment, including medical and/or physical, psychological and social rehabilitation, as well as the prevention of diseases and other health disorders; b. psychosocial support during treatment until recovery; c. social assistance to children from families who are incapable; and d. protection and assistance in any judicial process.

42 Article 60 of Act No. 35 of 2014 amending Law No. 23 of 2002 on the Protection of Children reads: "Children in emergency situations as referred to in Article 59 (2) letter (a) consists of: a. children

Indonesia does not yet have a written legal instrument to protect the rights of children who need special protection as refugees, since Indonesia is not a state party to the 1951 Refugee Convention.

Child Refugees in the Shadow of Sexual Violence

The existence of minor refugees in Indonesia has also been discussed by Listiarani (2020), who analyzed Indonesia's foreign policy in accepting Rohingya refugees in Indonesia. The research found that Indonesia has an open foreign policy towards these refugees because the approach used in the design process is Human Security.⁴⁵ This approach positions Indonesia's foreign policy view as being human-centered. The acceptance of a group of people such as the Rohingya as refugees is important because their experience of security threats. Rohingya refugees generally experience political security threats because their human rights are not being respected in their home country, and they are under political pressure from their own government.⁴⁴

This is in accordance with the definition of refugees in *Perpres* No 125 of 2016, namely, "Foreign Refugees, hereinafter referred to as Refugees, are foreigners who are in the territory of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia due to a well-founded fear of persecution on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, membership of certain social groups, and different political opinions and do not want protection from their home country...". The political security threat to Rohingya refugees also causes other security threats such as economic, health, food, etc. Furthermore, they face many health problems due to having being at sea for several months.⁴⁵

Referring to some literature which stated that the Rohingya refugees in Indonesia were in Cox's Bazar refugee camp, Bangladesh, where the Rohingya were forced to live in poor conditions. According to Wahana Visi data, Rohingya refugees live cramped together and do not have enough space for daily activities. In Cox's Bazar, there are 40,000 people living within a radius of 1 square kilometer. These conditions also make women and children vulnerable to sexual violence. More than 540,000 children are in need of psychological assistance due to sexual violence and stress from the conditions in the refugee camps.⁴⁶

who become refugees; b. children victims of riots; c. children of natural disasters; and d. children in situations of armed conflict.

43 Listiarani, T. (2020). Analisis kebijakan luar negeri Indonesia dalam menerima pengungsi Rohingya di Indonesia. *Jurnal PIR* Vol, 5(1).

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid.

Wahana Visi's data is reinforced by the findings of The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) on the potential for Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in every stage of disaster response, as observed in refugee locations in the form of:⁴⁷ a) Sexual assault or exploitation perpetrated by authorities, fellow refugees, or humanitarian workers; b) Child sexual abuse, including child marriage; c) Domestic violence; d) Sexual assault while fetching water and assistance to latrines, seeking food, accessing basic services, etc.; e) Sexual transactions for survival, including forced marriages; f) Harmful traditional practices that may arise; g) Discrimination in the form of neglect of special needs (reproductive health, discrimination in distribution of assistance, role engagement, and decision-making).

Ningsih et al. (2022) conducted a study that aims to identify the efforts of UNHCR in dealing with female refugee victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in Indonesia.⁴⁸ UNHCR defines SGBV as violence perpetrated against a person because of their sex or gender. This violence compels another person to do something against their will through force, coercion, threats, deception, trickery, cultural expectations, or economic means. While most victims and survivors of SGBV are girls and women, boys and men can also be harmed by SGBV.⁴⁹ They found that female refugees are particularly vulnerable to gender-based sexual violence behavior because of their identity as women and refugees, and therefore may experience double discrimination.⁵⁰ The researchers concluded that the efforts made by UNHCR to address the violence and sexual abuse of women refugees by raising awareness about a problem is one of the simplest ways to help prevent the occurrence of SGBV against asylum seekers and refugees, aimed at making women refugees in particular able to protect themselves from various forms of sexual harassment.⁵¹ The findings demand urgent follow-up, since the refugees and asylum-seekers who came to Indonesia to gain their right to self-protection are primarily women. Gender-based violence also occurs against children and adolescents,

47 UN Women-UNFPA, Integrasi Pencegahan kekerasan Berbasis Gender dalam Situasi Bencana, -pada link https://indonesia.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/integrasi_pencegahan_dan_penanganan_kbg_dalam_situasi_bencana.pdf, UNFPA merupakan Dana Kependudukan Perserikatan Bangsa-Bangsa (UNFPA) mewujudkan dunia yang menginginkan setiap kehamilan, setiap kelahiran aman, dan potensi setiap generasi muda terpenuhi, pada website link <https://indonesia.unfpa.org/> last accessed on 3 August 2024.

48 Ningsih, Y., Fitria, K. S. ., & Arisandi, M. R. (2022). Upaya UNHCR dalam Mencegah Terjadinya Sexual Gender Based Violence terhadap Pengungsi Perempuan di Indonesia. *Aufklarung: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial Dan Humaniora*, 2(3), 276–285. Retrieved from <http://www.pijarpemikiran.com/index.php/Aufklarung/article/view/260>

49 Sexual and gender-based violence pada website link <https://help.unhcr.org/turkiye/social-economic-and-civil-matters/sexual-and-gender-based-violence/>, diakses pada 3 Agustus 2024.

50 Ningsih, Y. . ., Fitria, K. S. ., & Arisandi, M. R. . (2022), Op.cit

51 Ibid

who may be sexually assaulted and do not have access to a service to report such incidents to the authorities, or because of pressure from the perpetrators.⁵²

Another study conducted by Maulida (2022) discussed the urgency of the settlement of the criminal offence of sexual violence. A solution is necessary to the issue of sexual violence, particularly given that victims consider the existing Penal Procedure of Sexual Violence in the Indonesian Criminal Code is insufficient in the protection against certain parties or races. Thus, the approval of the Law No. 12 of 2022 on the offence of sexual violence on April 12, 2022 by the National Representative has become an important piece of regulation on the treatment and responsibility of the state to prevent and deal with cases of sexual abuse, and rehabilitate victims comprehensively. It contains a number of mechanisms intended to prevent all forms of sexual violence, to deal with, protect, and rehabilitate victims, to prosecute perpetrators, as well as to guarantee the fulfilment of the obligations and roles of all parties involved, the coverage of sexual violation offences.⁵³

In reality, the legal protection afforded to refugee victims of sexual violence has limited jurisdiction since Indonesia is not a party to the 1951 Convention.⁵⁴ The limitations of the legal protection ignore the needs of victims of sexual violence, especially children, and women as vulnerable minority groups.⁵⁵ This chapter does not discuss the case Rohingya as refugees in Indonesian territory with regards to their stateless status, and instead focuses on a case of sexual violence as reported to have occurred in a community house in Medan. The key question regards precisely how Indonesia protects minor refugees in cases of sexual abuse (see Table 1).

Table 1. Brief Description of Sexual Violence involving
a Minor Refugee (October 2020)

Children refugees who in conflict with the law (A, Male, 12 y.o)
Roghinya tribe/Myanmar nationals; sexually harassed children
refugee-Victim (B, Female, 5 y.o) Somali nationals, born in Indonesia.

⁵² Ibid

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ Primadasa, C. P., Kurnia, M. P., & Erawaty, R. (2021). Problematika Penanganan Pengungsi di Indonesia Dari Perspektif Hukum Pengungsi Internasional. *Risalah Hukum*, 44-51

⁵⁵ Triputra, A. A., & Handayani, I. (2021). Analisis perlindungan Hukum Bagi Pengungsi Perempuan Sebagai Kelompok Yang Rentan Dari Kekerasan Seksual. *Khatulistiwa Law Review*, 2(1), 216-230.

The criminal acts committed by the minor client do not contain the elements of diversion enforcement as stipulated in Article 7 (2) of Law No 11 of 2012 on the Child Criminal Justice System. As for the asylum crimes perpetrated by a child on the basis of the News of the Investigation Events (BAP), the police are threatened with a criminal sentence of imprisonment for 15 (fifteen) years as provided for in the Asusila/Article 81 (1) of the Act No. 35 of 2014 on the Protection of Children.

Important points

1. Children who conflict with Law (Anak yang berkonflik dengan Hukum/AKH) and the victim and his family together with other foreign nationals with refugee status live together in the same community-place House
2. Residence condition is a room rented by UNHCR and IOM for a while. Each room has 1 (one) bathroom that is inside the house, with ceramic floors, has zinc roofs and ceilings. The power facilities of the State Electric Company (PLN) and the water source for bathing, drinking, cooking, washing and washing came from the Tirtanadi DAM installation.
3. The community around the hotel where the client lives is the same refugee, consisting of refugees from Somalia and Myanmar.
4. Many of the children who live in the community house are not in school and only learn English lessons (learning is completed at 21.30 PM)
5. Refugees are not working because they are not allowed.
6. The neighbors on the left and right side of the hotel room where AKH resides do not respond well to AKH's acts of asylum.
7. The inhabitants of the community House hope that the crime does not happen again because it annoys and harms others.

The judgment of PN Medan with the result: (1) the child is legally proven and convicted of committing a criminal offence "with the guilt of fraud"; (2) the AKH is sentenced to formal education and/or training for 6 months at the UPT Social Services for Children and Adolescents (PSAR) at the Social Services of the Province of North Sumatra in Tanjung Morawa Medan. (3) Statement of proof; 2 (two) long pants of grey colour, returned to the child of the victim; (4) Burdening the child to pay the cost of the matter of Rs 5,000 (Lima Ribu Rupiah)

(Source: Litmas for siding program and Decision No 6/Pid.Sus-Anak/2021/PN Mdn)

Legal Protection for Child Refugees in Cases of Sexual Violence

How does legal protection apply in Indonesia for child refugees in cases of sexual violence conducted in the territory of Indonesia? The discussion in this sub-section begins with questions about the form and sovereignty of Indonesia as a state party to the CRC.

Article 1 (3) of the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (UUD1945) states that the State of Indonesia is a State of law.⁵⁶ As a state based on law (*rechstaat*) and not on power (*machstaat*), Indonesia also applies the concept of Rule of Law as listed in Article 1 paragraph (3), Article 27 paragraph (1), and Article 28D paragraph (1) UUD 1945. In addition, Ashiddiqie explained that the content of the formula indicates the fulfilment of the concept of rule of law in Indonesia, namely: (1) there is recognition of the principle of the supremacy of law and the Constitution; (2) there is the principles of separation and limitation of power; (3) there is guarantee of human rights; (4) there is a free and non-partisan judiciary that guarantees the equality of citizens before the law, and ensures justice for everyone including against abuse of authority by the authorities. Thus, one of the existences of rule of law in Indonesia can be seen from the application of legislative regulations as the foundation of the role of state institutions and their administrative servants in Indonesia.⁵⁷

The idea of the state and the ideals of the rule of law is one of the principles to be realized in the maintenance of the State, which is addressed in Article 1 paragraph (3) of UUD 1945. Further, by the organizing power of the country, both the constituent, executive, and judicial, and other powers of state that compile and design strategies of maintenance, preparation, and enforcement of the law based on the fields of law necessary to realize the ideology of the Rule of Law on the basis of the legal fields necessary for the realization of the ideological state of law.⁵⁸

Indonesia as a State party to CRC is to ensure the implementation of the convention on the rights of the child in accordance with article 4 KHA.⁵⁹

56 Undang-undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945 (Risalah Rapat Paripurna ke-5 Sidang Tahunan MPR Tahun 2002 sebagai Naskah Perbantuan dan Kompilasi Tanpa Ada Opini) pada link <https://www.dpr.go.id/jdih/uu1945>, last accessed on 2 August 2024.

57 Ibid

58 Mokhammad Najih, "Politik Hukum Pidana" (Malang: Setara Press, 2014) p 5

59 Pasal 4 Konvensi Hak Anak berbunyi "States Parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention. With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, States Parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international co-operation" pada link <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>, last accessed on 3 August 2024.

In general, the question of the protection of the rights of the child is contained in the CRC ratified on 20 November 1989 by the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN). On 26 January 1990, Indonesia signed the CRC in New York, United States, and the Indonesian government subsequently promulgated it through the Presidential Decree (*Keputusan Presiden/Keppres*) No 36 of 1990 concerning the ratification of CRC on 25 August 1990.⁶⁰The CRC is one of nine major human rights instruments.⁶¹ Human rights law can be divided into several sections, firstly, the general human rights law that applies in normal circumstances to all people. Secondly, human rights laws are applied in war situations, or better known as the term “humanitarian law”. Thirdly, Human rights laws apply in special circumstance, as applied to refugees in connection with being outside their country without protection.⁶² Refugees are individuals subject to international law, and since Indonesia is a member of the UN, refugees may be treated as well as other nationals, given that human rights are part of the international guarantees of the UN Charter.⁶³

Indonesia has four regulations in order to protect children from being the victim of violence. First, the Basic Laws of the Republic of Indonesia of 1945 (UUD 1945). Article 28B (2) states that “Every child has the right to survival, growth and development and to protection from violence and discrimination”. Second; Law No. 39 of 1999 on Human Rights. Article 58 (1) states that “every child has the right to legal protection against all forms of physical or mental violence, transfer, ill-treatment, and sexual harassment while in the care of his or her parents or guardian, or any other person responsible for the child’s care. Article 58 (2) states, “in the case of a parent, guardian or caregiver of a child who commits any form of bodily or mental assault, transfer or sexual abuse, including rape, and or murder of the child who should be protected, the punishment shall be suspended”. Thirdly, the Act No. 23 of 2002 on the Protection of Children, in particular in Article 1, paragraph 2, as stated above. Article 2 of the UUPA also contains the content of human rights values, especially children, which states that “the guardianship of child protection is based on Pancasila and based on UUD1945 and the basic principles of CRC include (1) non-discrimination; (2) the best interests

60 Rosmalinda. *Perlindungan Khusus Bagi Anak Korban Kekerasan Seksual Sesuai Konvensi Hak Anak (KHA)*. (Pasuruan: CV. Penerbit Qiara Media. 2021).

61 The Core International Human Rights Instruments and their monitoring bodies, pada website link <https://www.ohchr.org/en/core-international-human-rights-instruments-and-their-monitoring-bodies>, last accessed on 2 August 2024.

62 Wagiman, *Op.cit.*, p.104-105.

63 *Ibid.*

of the child; (3) the right to life, survival, and development; and (4) respect for the opinion of children.⁶⁴

In the explanatory section it is stated that the best interests of the child are based on the principle that in all actions concerning the child taken by the government, society, legislative bodies and judicial bodies, the child's best interest is the primary consideration. Similarly, the fundamental right to life, survival and development is the most fundamental right of the child to be protected by the state, government, society, family, and parents. Further implementation of the Law on child protection then established the *Keppres* No. 77 of 2003 on the Commission for the Protection of Children. Fourth; Law No 23 of 2004 on the Elimination of Domestic Violence (*Undang Undang Penghapusan Kekerasan dalam Rumah Tangga/UUPKDRT*). Article 5 reaffirms that "everyone shall not commit domestic violence against any member of his household by means of: physical violence, psychological violence; sexual violence; or removal from a household."⁶⁵

Article 64 of Law No 35 of 2014 amending Law No. 23 of 2002 on the Protection of Children; Special protection for children facing the law as referred to in Article 59, paragraph (2) (b) is carried out by: a. humane treatment taking into account the needs of their age; b. separation from adults; c. the provision of legal assistance and other assistance effectively; d. the implementation of recreational activities; e. release from torture, punishment, or other cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment; f. avoidance of the death penalty and/or life sentence; g. avoiding arrest, detention or imprisonment, except as a last attempt and within the shortest time possible; submission to trial before an objective, inhumane and disqualified court of the child, in a public secret court of law; i. avoidance of public identity. j. the provision of support for parents and guardians of the child; k. social advocacy; l. private life; m. accessibility, especially for children with disabilities; n. education; o. health care; and p. other rights in accordance with the provisions of the legislation.

The results of M. Riadhussyah's research aimed at studying the legal protection of child refugees in Indonesia under international law found that, firstly, that legal protection for child refugees under national law refers to the Act No. 23 of 2002 on Child Protection, i.e. according to section 60 which states that the child to be protected and obtain special protection is a child in an emergency situation as referred to in article 59, one of whom is a refugee

64 Somaliagustina, D., & Sari, D. C. (2018). Kekerasan seksual pada anak dalam perspektif hak asasi manusia. *Psychopolytan: Jurnal Psikologi*, 1(2), 122-131.

65 Ibid

child. Second, that the protection of refugee children under international law is in accordance with article 22 of CRC, and in accordance with international customary law, if a State protects the principle of human rights, it indirectly also obliges it to protect the rights of child refugees.⁶⁶

On 22 October 2002, Indonesia adopted Law No. 23 of 2002 on the Protection of the Child which focuses on the rights of the child as set out in CRC, as subsequently amended to Act 35 of 2014 on the Amendment of Law No. of 2002 on the Protection of the Child.⁶⁷The identified vulnerable groups are the groups of individuals who are more vulnerable to disaster situations, namely: a. babies, young children and children; b. mothers who are pregnant or breastfeeding; c. persons with disabilities; d. elderly persons; e. men and women who are poor; f. people of ethnic or religious minorities; g. people with different sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or gender characteristics referring to the chronology as stated in the box cases above, the legal protection for child refugees facing the Law (*Anak yang Berhadapan dengan Hukum/ABH*) is not limited to the victim but also to the perpetrator who is a child. As a responsibility of the state, the Government of Indonesia has issued Presidential Decree No. 125 of 2016 on the handling of refugees from abroad. Under article 27 of the Convention, refugees with special needs, such as the sick, pregnant, disabled, children and elderly, are provided with special treatment according to their needs. This is in accordance with Government Regulation No. 59 of 2019 on Maintenance of Coordination of Child Protection in Article 7 which provides for special protection of children in emergency situations (disaster/conflict).⁶⁸ One important point left in cases of sexual violence involving children is legal protection for victims. This condition is evident in the judgment that does not mention the need of victims to fulfil their rights.

Conclusion

Research and community services found that: (a) to ensure protection for child refugees from sexual violence, Indonesia enforces its national law,

66 Riadhussyah, M. (2016). Op.cit

67 Ibid

68 Women's Chamber Press Release Commemorating World Refugee Day: The Importance of Integrating a Gender-Justice Perspective and the Use of the Penal Code of Sexual Violence in the Treatment of Foreign and Domestic Refugees on the Website <https://komnasperempuan.go.id/siaran-pers-detail/siaran-pers-komnas-perempuan-memperingati-hari-pengungsi-sedunia-penting-integrasi-perspektif-keadilan-gender-dan-penggunaan-uu-tindak-pidana-kekerasan-seksual-dalam-penanganan-pengungsi-luar-dan-dalam-negeri>, last accessed on 1 Agustus 2024.

Act No 23 of 2002, and other complicated rules on children based on the fact that children are a vulnerable minority group in need of special protection, (b) the placement of refugees in immigration detention centers, community houses and temporary shelters risks making children victims of sexual violence due to changes in behavior and living conditions. As a suggestion, it is strongly recommended that the national and local governments which comprise members of the task force on handling refugees work more closely with the UN agencies, the UNHCR and IOM, to ensure that child refugees are protected from sexual violence.

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PART 3

MEDIA AND THE DISCRIMINATED BODIES

Nameless Body: Visualizing Women's Bodies and the Politics of Representation in the Art Exhibition Catalogue *Indonesia Semangat Dunia*

Elok Santi Jesica

Abstract

The art exhibition entitled *Indonesia Semangat Dunia* (Indonesia, Spirit of the World) is an exhibition showcasing a collection of artworks from the Presidential Palace of the Republic of Indonesia. This exhibition was held at the National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, and ran throughout August in 2018. This exhibition attracted public attention and was attended by at least 274,523 visitors over 29 days. This chapter explores the representation of women in the printed catalog that presents the exhibition's curatorial narrative. Using Stuart Hall's (1997) concept of representation and the discursive formation analysis approach, this research reveals that visibility is a politics of representation practiced in and through the catalog in the sub-section *Perjuangan Bangsa yang Bersatu dalam Keragaman* (A Nation's Struggle United in Diversity). This sub-section features 22 art works with images of 10 female figures in 9 paintings. Of these 10 female figures, only 4 are named in the descriptions, and only 1 woman's story is told. Focusing on the visual descriptions, the artists, and additional stories, the narrative regarding the women depicted in the paintings is mostly abolished, leaving only their visual presence to support the narrative of other figures, such as the artists, collectors, or other characters related to the women whose bodily visibility is presented. The curatorial approach is indeed only one of the efforts in the politics of representation; however, by ignoring the curatorial exhibition that marginalizes female figures, we only reproduce the language of violence and bury the ideal of a more inclusive space of representation in fine art.

Keywords: women's bodies, art catalogue, representation, visibility, curatorial diversity

Introduction

In 2018, an art exhibition featuring a series of collections from the Presidential Palace of Indonesia was held at the National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta. A number of artworks that are quite difficult to access, as they have been stored inside the Presidential Palace, were selected and displayed to the general public from August 3 to 31, 2018. This exhibition was titled 'Indonesia, Spirit of the World' (*Indonesia Semangat Dunia*) which is supported and financed by the Ministry of State Secretariat of Republic Indonesia with several sponsors. The timing of this exhibition is also very strategic because in addition to being held in August, which coincides with the anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Indonesia, it also coincides with the implementation of the ASEAN Games in Jakarta.

The Indonesia Spirit of the World Art Exhibition was attended by at least 274,523 visitors (Agnes, 2018). The high number of visitors is understandable because for the public, this is a rare opportunity to witness firsthand works of art that can only be seen if you visit certain rooms in the Presidential Palace of Indonesia, which is certainly not easy for obvious reasons. In addition, the location of the Palace is spread across six regions, namely the Merdeka Palace and the State Palace in Central Jakarta City, the Bogor Palace in Bogor City, the Cipanas Palace in Cianjur Regency, the Yogyakarta Palace or also known as the Great Building in Yogyakarta City, and the Tampak Siring Palace in Gianyar Regency. A total of 45 works are presented in the exhibition, while the Presidential Palace itself has around 16,000 works of art stored and managed (Kementerian Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, 2018).

The exhibition presented various works of art, including paintings from maestro artists that visualize the spirit which in its curatorial is written as "an aspect of the spirit of struggle of a nation which includes: the spirit of resistance/independence, diversity, cooperation, creativity, globalization, and the future" (Indonesia Semangat Dunia, 2018: 8). Through the exhibition catalogue, we can see how the curation of this exhibition divides the artworks displayed into 3 parts. Among others *Perjuangan Bangsa yang Bersatu dalam Keragaman* [A Nation's Struggle United in Diversity]; *Gotong Royong, Bersama Bercipta Karya* [Mutual Cooperation, Creating Together]; and *Menjadi Warga Dunia Menyongsong Masa Depan* [Becoming a World Citizen to Welcome the Future]. Among the divisions, the subheadings A Nation's Struggle United in Diversity brings the narrative of Indonesia's independence struggle, starting from the establishment of the *Boedi Oetomo* organization, the Second Youth Congress with the text of the Youth Pledge (*Sumpah Pemuda*), then the story of the 1945-1949 revolutionary war, which was visualized through

a painting entitled '*Tak Seorang Berniat Pulang, Walau Maut Menanti*' (No One Intends to Return Home Even Though Death Await Us Here, 1963), then followed by presenting paintings of warrior figures, paintings of youth from several regions, paintings of women, paintings about Sinta which was seated as a symbol of colonialism by the colonizers, then the painting '*Perkelahian dengan Singa*' (Fighting with a Lion, 1870), to the statue '*Sang Penombak*' (El Arponero, 1958) and the painting '*Memamah*' (Shooting an Arrow, 1944). In this discussion, 22 works of art were displayed that supported the idea of struggle and diversity.

One fascinating feature about the catalogue of the exhibition *Indonesia Semangat Dunia* in the first reading is that there are several paintings that feature female figures, and these figures are discussed in the curatorial text. In the presentation, 10 female figures are displayed in 9 paintings, and 4 of these figures are mentioned in the title or in a written description of the work. Of the 10 female figures, there are women whose stories are told in curatorial literature, namely a painting by Nasjah Djamin entitled '*Lastri Fardani*' (1958). The figure of Lastri herself in the description was explained as one of the actors in the drama written by Nasjah Djamin who later became the model for his painting. There is also a painting of a female figure made by painter Trubus Soedarsono entitled '*Ny. Tjio*' (Mrs. Tjio, 1955) which is a painting of the collector's wife, Tjio Tek Djien, a friend of President Soekarno. As well as several paintings of female figures discussed in written statements.

The presence of female visuality in fine art is quite common. For a long time, artists have had a tradition of presenting women as the object of their paintings. For example, in the series by Vemeer's women by Johannes Vemeer, which visualizes various Netherlands female figures inside the house, imperial Chinese Painting which presents Chinese female figures from the perspective of male painters, or in Indonesia, with the visual style of Balinese female figures. However, presenting female figures with their stories in curatorial text, and not just making them objects of painting is a form of representation of women that is not widely done in Indonesia, especially if the woman is not from a well-known figure. Curation itself indicates the existence of a logic of value production, self-representation, and performance, based on the conceptualization of how the selection works under the view of experts (Kompatsiaris, 2024: 6). In this context, the practice of presenting women in curatorial text or explanations can show how the views and values attached to women work and become the basis for making choices in paintings.

At a glance, the effort to present women and their narratives in this discussion is a practice of women's representation in the realm of fine arts

that has the potential to open a more inclusive space for representation. Diversity is presented with visual symbols and verbal texts in the catalogue that presents the stories of both men and women. But is that true? According to Rosemarie Buikema (2009: 72), the concept of representation refers to the presentation of what is absent in reality or in language and culture, namely symbolic order. How does this practice work in the curatorial representation of artworks in the exhibition catalogue? When we look at the presentation of artworks, we are guided to arrange, sort, and give meaning to the works we see. This practice can be understood as the production of meaning. At first glance, this practice is an independent and individualistic practice that is not influenced by external factors, that takes place between the giver of meaning and the artwork he sees. In fact, in the politics of representation, meaning is constructed in and through the representation system. It is in this system of representation that the conceptual system operates and connects to the language system (Hall, 1997: 21). Through language, power can be played without having to explicitly show a desire to control or dominate the other party. This is because the structure of language is formed from the motive of pleasure over the desire to master, and the mastery of language represents the desire to regulate the other party by occupying a position of symbolic power (Barker, 2000: 85). Because it can operate on a symbolic level, this power works subtly and in disguise. Power can work through language both in visual and verbal language. This art exhibition catalogue has presented female figures in paintings both visually, and accompanied by written texts that talk about them in a manner of representation. However, what is problematic in the process of representation is how the women painted by these male artists are presented and talked about in the exhibition catalogue itself.

Presenting Female Figures

Studying representation is not only about text or reference imagery, but also rethinking the material context in which text and imagery operate (Buikema, 2009: 78). To understand how the representation of women is presented and discussed, we can start by looking at how the visualization of the female figure is presented. On the discussion 'A Nation's Struggle United in Diversity' (*Karya Perjuangan Bangsa yang Bersatu dalam Keragaman*) in the exhibition catalogue of Indonesia Spirit of the World, it appears that the primary concern is the presence of diversity in the context of art by presenting both male and female figures with various visuals, clothes and narratives.

In terms of visuality, the choice of female figures presented is highlighted first in this discussion. Of the several paintings of female figures selected by the curator, Otto Djayasuntara's painting entitled *Rochani* (1949) is the only female figure in the painting who looks directly at the viewer. The other female figures seem to be looking sideways, in the other direction, staring forward but not looking at each other as the one who sees, while the other's eyes are closed (see Figure 1).

From the eyes and gaze of the female figure paintings presented, we can identify which figures are the object of gaze and which figures are also the subject of gaze. Through eye visualization, we can see which direction the gaze of these painted female figures is directed. But from the eyes we might also consider whether it is true that they are presented only as a satisfaction of the attentive gaze position that we are borrowing?

Being gazed upon can be pleasurable or painful (Walker and Chaplin, 1997: 97). These female figures become objects for the gaze of artists, which we then borrow when we stare at their figures. From this gaze position we can borrow the artist's eyes, certainly what had been imagined by the artist in the process of producing the painting in terms of how a future audience will see this work later. But in this relationship the only thing that can look back at us is *Rochani's* painting. In other words, only *Rochani's* painting returns the gaze directed at him. Meanwhile, the female figures in the other paintings ceases to be the object of gaze.

The position of this object of gaze indicates a position in the broader conversation, as Foucault (in Hall, 1997, 57-61) describes the production of the subject and the social hierarchy in which the subject is placed (in Mirzoeff, 2016: 31-36). The subject of this practice is produced through the process of gaze, while also producing a hierarchy by playing around with what we can see and what we can't see. We can stare at the female figure that is visualized but they cannot stare back at us. This practice also shows how authority in the practice of seeing is practiced, making us inevitably borrow how the eyes of these male artists look at female figures. These women are presented as the center of the painting's visuals, but they are not the subjects. Those of us who are forced to borrow the gaze from the artist's eyes are also not being the subject of this practice, or maybe we can simply pretend to be the subject. Beyond that, the eyes that bear masculine values who feel satisfaction when staring at these female figures are the subjects.



Figure 1. (from left to right) *Gadis Depan Jendela* (1953), *Dua Gadis Memakai Caping* (1957), *Ny. Tjio* (1955), *Rochani* (1949), *Wanita Duduk Berselendang* (no year specified), *Lastri Fardani* (1958), *Penyelamatan Sinta* (1961), and *Perkelahian Antara Rahwana dan Jatayu Memperebutkan Sinta* (no year specified) (Source: Catalogue of the Indonesia Spirit of the World Art Exhibition, 2018).

Through the arrangement of the catalogue and the number of paintings that visualize female figures, we can see that women are shown as the center of representation in several paintings. But does that mean that in this system of representation, women occupy their position as subjects? At a glance from the previous discussion, the position of the subject is not occupied by these female figures. According to Buikema, representation operates both in concrete (physical presence) and at a symbolic level (2009: 72). To be sure, a more in-depth examination of how women are represented in the discussion is necessary to see who the real subjects of this system of representation are.

Among several paintings of female figures, the work entitled 'Girl Sitting by the Window' (*Gadis Depan Jendela*, 1953) is presented in a sub-section entitled Painting of the Revolutionary War 1954-49 and Its Figures. This painting is lined up with other paintings titled 'Fighter' (*Pejuang*, 1949), 'No One Intends to Return Home Even Though Death Await Us Here' (*Tak Seorang Berniat Pulang Walau Maut Menanti*, 1963), 'General Sudirman' (*Jendral Sudirman*, 1954), 'Two Girls in Bamboo Hats' (*Dua Gadis Memakai Caping*, 1957), 'A Lampung Youth in His Native Costume' (*Pemuda Lampung Berpakaian Adat*, 1952), 'Soviet Warrior the Liberator' (*Patung Pejuang Soviet sang Pembebas*, 1956), 'Portrait Painting of Imam Bonjol' (1951), 'Dr. Cipto Mangun Kusumo' (1946), and Husni Tamrin' (1947) (see Figure 2).



Figure 2. (from left to right) *Pejuang* (1949), *Tak Seorang Berniat Pulang Walau Maut Menanti* (1963), *Jendral Sudirman* (1954), *Gadis Depan Jendela* (1953), *Dua Gadis Memakai Caping* (1957), *Pemuda Lampung Berpakaian Adat* (1952), *Patung Pejuang Soviet sang Pembebas* (1956), *Imam Bonjol* (1951), *Dr. Cipto Mangun Kusumo* (1946), and *Husni Tamrin* (1947) (Source: Catalogue of the Indonesia Spirit of the World Art Exhibition, 2018).

The painting of female figures in the work ‘Girl Sitting by the Window’ appears to be in contrast with several male figures who are closely associated with their contribution to the struggle for independence and the revolutionary war of the Republic of Indonesia. This is also compounded by the difference in the background of the figures in the painting ‘Girl Sitting by the Window,’ who is in the room and looking in the other direction (assuming looking out the window or looking far ahead) while some figures are depicted outdoors or in focus as a portrait painting staring directly at the viewer. As part of a sub-division of the painting about the war and the figures in the revolutionary war, the female figures depicted in the room provide an opportunity for the viewer to associate them with the story of a woman waiting for someone to return from the war. In the context of waiting, it can be interpreted that there is “another figure” whose presence is awaited in this painting (see Figure 3).

In the written caption (Indonesia Semangat Dunia, 2018: 30) from the painting ‘Girl Sitting by the Window,’ the atmosphere depicted from the painting is told. In the caption, the information begins by assuming that the background of the painting is not Indonesia, because of the presence of figure statues that are reminiscent of the visuality of Greek mythology. The explanation in the curatorial then continued by explaining how the artist Trubus Soedarsono who painted the work had lived in Czechoslovakia in

1954. The assumption that was subsequently built was the possibility that this work was painted there. The female figure presented in the painting is then questioned. Is there a woman who went with Trubus Soedarsono to Czechoslovakia? In the curatorial writing, it is then explained that the woman in the painting is Samsiah, Trubus' wife. The information came from Monica Sri Daryati, the daughter of Trubus Soedarsono. The painting is also explained to be set in the Kaliurang area, Sleman, Indonesia and not Czechoslovakia. The next explanation states that there was an art historian who had crossed paths with Trubus and saw him carrying a *wool overcoat* even though at that time Trubus Soedarsono was in Indonesia. This was then followed by an explanation that Trubus Soedarsono lived on the slopes of Mount Merapi, which was air-conditioned.

From the explanation in the description of the work 'Girl Sitting by the Window', the female figure presented is indeed mentioned by her name, namely Samsiah. The presence of Samsiah's figure and name in this curatorial is not to explain more about Samsiah herself. Her presence is actually a complement to the narrative of the story of his artist, namely Trubus Soedarsono.



Figure 3. Girl Sitting by the Window (*Gadis Depan Jendela*, 1963) and Fighter (*Pejuang*, 1949), by Trubus Soedarsono (Source: Catalogue of the Indonesia Spirit of the World Art Exhibition, 2018)

The painting 'Girl Sitting by the Window' is not the only painting by Trubus Soedarsono in this sub-discussion. By looking at the description of the work, we can also know that the painting of 'Fighter' at the beginning of

the sub-division is also the work of Trubus Soedarsono. In contrast to the way the painting of the 'Girl Sitting by the Window' is narrated, the written explanation of the painting of 'Fighter' focuses on the explanation of the male figure depicted. It is written that the painting is an officer of the Army of the Republic of Indonesia who is sitting on a car. The painting analyzes in more detail the visual markers that exist to identify the identities of the male figures present in the paintings. For example, in the visualization of the badge that appears in the painting, it is estimated that the figure is the Mataram X Brigade with the rank of Major. This marker was then also associated with the General Attack on March 1, 1949 and it is estimated that the figure was Major Sardjono, who led the troops from the south of Yogyakarta City. The visibility of the *keris* tucked around his waist is also associated with how the figure upholds Javanese traditions, which are part of his background (Indonesia Semangat Dunia, 2018: 24).

The explanatory pattern of the two paintings by Trubus Soedarsono shows how to set different painting figures in constructing a narrative. In the painting 'Girl Sitting by the Window,' the presence of female figures and names is used to construct and complete the narrative about the artist, while in the painting 'Fighter,' the figure depicted is placed as the main focus of discussion in the written explanation without being linked to the artist. Although it does not explicitly place female figures in paintings as a complement to the narrative of the artist, through this comparison it can be seen that the name of the female figure is not presented as the subject of the narrative itself. In the context of the previous discussion where the painting 'Girl Sitting by the Window' was presented in the sub-discussion 'Depiction of the War of Revolution (1954-49) and Its Figures' (*Pelukisan Perang Revolusi 1954-49 dan Tokoh-Tokohnya*), its presence is also to complement the romanticized narrative of the heroic struggle in the revolutionary war, where this can be interpreted as a party waiting for "other figures" to fight on the battlefield. From the two ways of presenting the painting 'Girl Sitting by the Window,' we understand that the presence of women as simply being represented visually within a space is not always sufficient to provide space for the narrative representation of women themselves. This symbolic language work both dominates in women's representation work, and operates subtly. This work is often disguised in titles, explanations, and narratives that seem to give the illusion of inclusivity with the jargon of diversity. Therefore, looking deeply at the signs presented both in terms of visibility and text and simile of both is crucial to be able to understand how meaning is constructed and works in a masculine language that becomes a symbolic order. This is in

accordance with Foucault's explanation of the relationship between visible signs and hidden meanings "..., the distinguishing characteristic within a species was regarded as the visible sign that referred to some hidden depth" (Foucault in Buikema, 2009: 76)

In the sub-discussion entitled 'Various Portraits of Women' (*Ragam Potret Perempuan*) there is another painting by artist Trubus Soedarsono entitled 'Mrs. Tjio' (*Ny. Tjio*, 1955). The description of this sub-discussion begins by explaining the many paintings that feature portraits of female figures collected by the Presidential Palace of the Republic of Indonesia which are also visualized with various artistic streams. Mrs. Tjio's painting is a painting that uses realist-impressionistic techniques that are the mainstay of artist Trubus Soedarsono. It was also explained that Mrs. Tjio, whose figure is depicted, is the wife of Tjio Tek Djien, who is a collector and painting broker who is written in the caption as a "patron" of the painter Trubus Soedarsono. In the statement, it was also explained that Tjio Tek Djien was a friend of President Soekarno (Indonesia Semangat Dunia, 2018: 40) (see Figure 4).



Figure 4. 'Mrs. Tjio's Painting' (1955) (Source: Catalogue of the Indonesia Spirit of the World Art Exhibition, 2018).

The way of explaining 'Mrs. Tjio' painting has similarities to the way she explains the painting 'Girl Sitting by the Window.' Instead of explaining the female figure depicted, the description of the painting actually explains the

visual style of the painter Trubus Soedarsono. The presence of the name Tjio Tek Djien is also not just to explain that the female figure presented in this painting has a husband, but rather to build a narrative about how the figure of Tjio Tek Djien became a very influential person in the career and painting style of the painter Trubus Soedarsono. This explanation is then strengthened by the description of Tjio Tek Djien's closeness with President Soekarno, who is recognized as a 'super-patron' in the practice of collecting works of art, who has the power to drive the taste of art in Indonesia (Dermawan T, 2012: 512). The narrative is formed by presenting the visualization of female figures whose names are replaced by the name of their husbands, to talk about other figures who are not presented in the visuality of the paintings. This female figure is presented as the object of gaze, but at the same time negates narrative conversations about her.

In the sub-discussion entitled 'Paintings Depicting the Salvation of Sinta' (*Lukisan-Lukisan Tentang Penyelamatan Sinta*) two paintings by Sekar Gunung (Ki Heru Wiryono) and Basoeki Abdullah were displayed. Both visualize the fight between Jatayu and Rahwana (or Ravana) characters in the Ramayana epic. In the story, this fight occurs because the character Rahwana kidnaps Sinta, and then Jatayu who is a character in the form of a big eagle tries to save Sinta (or Sita). In the story of Ramayana, most of the stories and conflicts are in the war between Rama and Prabu Rahwana. This war was caused by the beauty of Sinta (Saraswati, 2022: 33). In line with the story of Ramayana, in both paintings, the female figure of Sinta is presented as *center of interest*. This female figure is positioned as the center of the narrative told through the language of painting visualities. The visuality of the striking female figure in the middle of the canvas is visualized with light skin color in accordance with the illustration of Sinta in the Ancient Javanese Ramayana which is said to have a glowing white face and is likened to a full moon (Titib, 1998: 97; Ramayana 225 in Saraswati, 2022: 43). However, as a representation, the visuality of female figures presented in this curatorial arrangement needs to be discussed in more depth.

The female figure who is presented twice in different paintings in this painting is the same figure, namely Sinta. The two paintings are titled 'The Rescue of Sinta' (*Penyelamatan Sinta*, 1961, by Sekar Gunung) and 'Jatayu Fights Rahwana for Princess Sinta' (*Perkelahian Antara Rahwana dan Jatayu Memperebutkan Sinta* by Basoeki Abdullah). The figure of Sinta in the painting 'The Rescue of Sinta' is depicted naked and helplessly closed in the arms of the giant figure of Rahwana, and under the claws of a large bird associated with Jatayu. Meanwhile, in the painting 'Jatayu Fights Rahwana

for Princess Sinta' she is depicted wearing clothes in the form of cloth used as *kemben* with a position similar to the first painting. The figure of Sinta in both paintings is seated as the center of the painting, but is visualized in a helpless state (see Figure 5).



Figure 5. (from left to right) *Penyelamatan Sinta* (1961) and *Perkelahian antara Rahwana dan Jatayu Memperebutkan Sinta* (no year specified) (Source: Catalogue of the Indonesia Spirit of the World Art Exhibition, 2018)

In the description of the two paintings, the story of the fight between Jatayu and Rahwana is explained, along with a brief genealogy of the relationship between Jatayu, Rahwana, and Sinta. Jatayu's struggle and sacrifice to save Sinta is the main emphasis of the narrative presented in the description of the painting. This narrative is then placed as a metaphor for illegitimate possession (of the story of kidnapping) and the struggle to reclaim it (Indonesia Semangat Dunia, 2018: 46). In the explanation of the work *The Rescue of Sinta* (1961, by Sekar Gunung) it is written:

“Sinta is described as unconscious yet holding tightly to the red and white ribbon. Painted in 1961, this painting can be associated with the depiction of the liberation of West Irian (now Papua), which at that time was still a Netherlands colony” (Indonesia Semangat Dunia, 2018: 46).

In the curatorial of the *The Struggle of a United Nation in Diversity* it is also explained:

“Artists also often use myths and legends to express the struggle for independence. This can be seen in the paintings depicting the scene where Sinta is taken by Rahwana, which functions as a representation of colonialism” (Indonesia Spirit of the World, 2018: 11).

In the description of the painting, the presence of Sinta’s name does not appear to tell her story as one of the figures in the painting. The Sinta figure is here to explain the story of the conflict between Jatayu and Rahwana. Continuing from the story, this is then placed as a metaphor arranged with a written explanation so that readers and viewers associate this conflict as part of the heroic struggle of the Indonesian nation in resisting colonialism and territorial conquest. If extrapolated from this explanation, the female figure in the painting becomes a marker of the conflict area. Presenting a female figure as a marker associated with *nature* is not a new thing. Women are often positioned as *nature*, whose existence is always trying to be manifested visually (Udasmoro, 2021: 88). Women as *nature* are seen as a passive feminine figure who wait for a masculine figure to come to her. Sinta characters are presented as visual markers of *nature*, which represents the presence of the territory that is being contested. The visuals that are visualized are helpless and at the same time present as an object that romanticizes and softens conflicts as a form of struggle and rescue. The female figure in this context is also seated as a metaphor for weak, passive, unable to resist, and waiting to be saved. According to Sherry Ortner (in Udasmoro, 2021: 88) when women are placed as *nature*, this will make them easier to subordinate.

Sinta’s helpless visuality as an object of gaze is undeniable among the narratives about the heroism of the conflict that have very masculine nuances. In the catalogue of the exhibition *Indonesia Spirit of the World*, this is actually strengthened by the presentation of a photo showing President Sukarno when he visited the studio of artist Basoeki Abdullah in 1954. In the photo, a man in a *peci* associated with President Sukarno is seen staring at the painting ‘Jatayu Fights Rahwana for Princess Sinta,’ and pointing to the visuality of Sinta’s figure. On the right and left sides, there are also male figures accompanying and also staring at the same painting.

Presenting the female body as the object of gaze in the process of representing women cannot give a position of *empowered representation* to women. Therefore it will not be interpreted as a process of opening up an

inclusive representation space for women, but rather marginalizing it. This is as explained by McCormack (2021) regarding the presence of naked female bodies in public spaces:

“If you are in any doubt as to how men and women’s unclothed bodies are seen differently, just try to imagine a sculpture of a nude woman in a public space in which her body signifies actual, real power, and represents something like government or a revered institution. The language does not exist.”

In the context of Indonesia’s fine art, it is known that Sukarno was a collector who has a great influence. Considering that the work ‘Fight between Ravana and Jatayu Fighting for Sinta’ appears in the exhibition of the Presidential Palace collection, it can be understood that the process of owning and collecting Basoeki Abdullah’s work is also part of the narrative of this photo presented. The appearance of this photo is certainly not to provide a more complex story about the character of Sinta, but to confirm the narrative of the character of Sukarno as a patronist art collector and also an artist who makes works, namely Basoeki Abdullah, whose work has become part of a collection of President Sukarno (see Figure 6).



Figure 6. Photo of President Sukarno staring at the painting ‘Jatayu Fights Rahwana for Princess Sinta’ (Source: Catalogue of the Indonesia Spirit of the World Art Exhibition, 2018)

In curatorial representation *Depicting the Salvation of Sintia*, the female figure of Sintia is seated in a helpless position many times, namely: first, from the visual marker in the form of two paintings presented as helpless women in the Jatayu and Rahwana conflict. Second, in the description and curatorial where she does not appear as a subject, but as a metaphor for the object of the contested area in the war. Third, the figure is seated as the object of the male gaze, not only from the visuality of the painting but also strengthened by the presence of photos that show it.

Conclusion: Women Are Not Present for Themselves

The three above discussions of women's representation in the exhibition catalogue of *Indonesia Spirit of the World (2018)* show that efforts to present women in the realm of fine art are not necessarily a form of inclusivity. Although the art space is indeed closely associated with masculine nuances, the presence of women cannot necessarily be taken for granted as an effort to counter this view. We need to be more careful and observant in seeing how these female figures are presented and discussed. In the previous discussion, we can see how female figures are used many times for the sake of the main narrative that artists want to form, both in terms of visuality, written information, and composition. In terms of markers and language, in the curatorial context, this shows that the position of women in the logic, values, and system of production of the meaning embraced is indeed not presented as a subject. This is in accordance with Laura Mulvey's (2006: 343) criticism of the positioning of women:

“Woman then stands in patriarchal culture as signifier for the male other, bound by a symbolic order in which man can live out his phantasies and obsessions through linguistic command by imposing them on the silent image of woman still tied to her place as bearer of meaning, not maker of meaning.”

However, in the context of this discussion, the position of women is not only used as a carrier of meaning, but what becomes a further problem is the narrative of the female figure itself which is then lost and replaced by the meaning of the main narrative, formed by emphasizing the presence of the names of other figures. For example, to affirm the narrative of the artist or the collector, as well as the heroic narrative formed by the presence of female figures. This is as explained by Julia Kristeva (in McCormack, 2021)

“a woman whose entire body is an emptiness through which the patriarchal world is conveyed”.

McCormack (2021) emphasized in his writing that “Art and culture are not separate to our discussions about the politics of gender, race and representation; they are at its very heart.” Through how artwork is structured, the culture of work becomes the underlying value of the practice of presenting women, we can also learn how gender value and politics of representation are lived. In the catalogue of the exhibition *Indonesia, Spirit of the World* (2018) we can see how women’s values are shown through the complex order of visual language. In the discussion of the previous chapter, we realized that the presence of female figures highlights layers of discrimination. These female figures are presented, but not much is told in the narrative. They are presented as the center of representation but are not placed as the subject of representation. They are presented as the center of visibility but precisely to thicken the narrative of others. Her body is present as the center of attention, but in the name of another person. The bodies are presented in nameless condition. They are presented, but not represented.

Buikema (2009: 79) explained that, in the end, when the ethics of representation are at stake, it is the image that ultimately speaks. In the context of the exhibition catalogue, the visibility presented by the curatorial includes the visual organization and the text which then becomes a spoken language. Although there is no intention to show the female figures presented, the reading of this representation actually shows that there is a lack of representation in the practice of representation. In conclusion, a curatorial approach is indeed only one of the efforts in the politics of representation to continue to compile and re-understand visibility as a visual language as a marker of various values and cultures that people live. However, by ignoring the curatorial exhibition that marginalizes female figures, we only reproduce the language of violence and bury the ideal of a more inclusive space of representation in fine art.

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“No Viral, No Justice” in Cases of Gender-Based Violence in Indonesia: Between Seeking Justice and the Spectacle of Pain in the Digital Space

Ratna Noviani

Abstract

The phrase “No Viral, No Justice” has become a popular adage in the Indonesian digital landscape as a way to draw public attention, including on issues related to gender-based violence. In Indonesia, victims of gender-based violence have turned to digital platforms, such as social media, to speak out and gain public and institutional attention, using the virality of their cases as a means to seek justice. Facing desperation and a lack of institutional support, victims and their support networks often utilize digital platforms to share their emotions and pains with others, with the aim of garnering public support and punishing the perpetrators as a way to “fix it myself”. Many hope that virality and social media pressure could compel perpetrators and authorities to address cases of gender-based violence. However, this level of virality does not always produce the best outcomes for the victims themselves. They often face additional layers of victimization in the digital space, such as being blamed for their experiences, experiencing online harassment, cyberbullying, or doxing rather than receiving the support they need. This article examines how victims of gender-based violence in Indonesia use digital platforms to share their cases and crowdsource emotions with others as mechanisms of speaking out, demanding apology, and seeking justice. The article also highlights the ambivalent nature of the digital space in the context of online gender-based violence in Indonesia, where it serves as both a critical tool for voicing justice and a fertile ground for the reproduction and proliferation of gender-based violence targeting women and gender/sexual minorities.

Keywords: Online gender-based violence, virality, digital spaces, victimization, justice; spectacle; women; gender/sexual minorities

Introduction

The phrase “No Viral, No Justice” has gained popularity in Indonesia, as many cases of sexual or gender-based violence only receive attention and action from legal authorities and related institutions after they gain widespread attention on social media platforms (Ariyani, 2023; Chaterine & Prabowo, 2023; Detiknews, 2023). Cases of gender-based violence, such as sexual harassment, domestic violence, or online gender-based violence (OGBV), often only receive prompt response from the authorities if the victims or their support network speak out about the case on social media platforms like X, Instagram, and Facebook. These posts typically go viral through the process of reposting and resharing, and they may even attract attention and responses from prominent public figures like influencers, politicians, and state apparatus. The case could also gain mainstream media coverage through TV, newspapers, or magazines. It is only after a case becomes a subject of public discourse through this virality that the police or other authorized institutions will intervene and provide the necessary support for the victims.

In Indonesia, victims of gender-based violence often face challenges within the legal system, which lacks sensitivity towards gender issues and fails to adequately support the victims. Numerous cases have shown that the police or authorities neglect or delay the processing of reports on gender-based violence, leaving the victims without the necessary assistance. Both offline and online gender-based violence are frequently improperly addressed or followed up on. This situation compels victims and their support networks to seek justice by publicly sharing their cases and raising awareness through social media platforms. In this context, digital media has become a space that empowers gender-based violence victims to gain public support and pursue justice.

The digital space, however, can be a double-edged sword, providing both opportunities and threats, particularly for women and gender/sexual minorities (Amabel & Putra B., 2023; Mendes et al., 2019; Fotopoulou, 2016). On the one hand, it allows them to speak out about their experiences of gender-based violence and demand justice, given the lack of legal support and protection. On the other hand, the digital space also serves as a fertile ground for sexism, online misogyny, and various forms of OGBV, often leading to the re-victimization of victims instead of providing support. In the Indonesian context, victims and their support networks may even face criminalization under the 2008 Electronic Information and Transactions Law due to the virality of the case. Based on this background context, this article focuses on the practice of speaking out and ‘viralizing’ cases of gender-

based violence by victims and their support networks in the Indonesian digital space. This article positions digital spaces as a platform for amplifying offline gender-based violence cases, as well as a space for the proliferation of OGBV. The article also examines how the digital space is used by victims, particularly women, to speak out, seek justice, and hold perpetrators accountable amidst the lack of the necessary institutional support.

Digital Media and the Deep Mediatization of Violence

In the digital age, human life has become inextricably linked with the use of digital technology. Equipped with portable and feature-rich digital devices, we can now accomplish a wide range of tasks with just a few taps. As John Storey (2014: 109) aptly states, “the everyday has become increasingly mediatized,” as our daily activities are increasingly carried out through and facilitated by various media. Andreas Hepp (2020) suggested that we have entered a phase he calls “deep mediatization,” where digital media technologies are deeply intertwined with and shape social practices and relationships. The concept of mediatization, as described by Hjarvard (2013) and Livingstone (2009), explains the meta-process in which media technologies become an integral part of people’s lives, seamlessly integrating with and influencing their social activities and interactions.

Hepp (2020:5) explained the concept of deep mediatization, which refers to “an advanced stage where all aspects of our social world are intricately linked to digital media and their underlying infrastructures”. This deep mediatization is characterized by digitalization and social transformation, driven by the advancements in digital technology. Social practices in everyday life are not only facilitated by the presence of digital technology but are also shaped and even controlled by the mechanisms of this digital technology. One example is the use of social media platforms that support and encourage networked sociality in the digital space. People are not only able to connect with many different parties, but being connected itself becomes a need that is constructed and controlled by the mechanisms of social media platforms. Social media algorithms work to bring people closer together, encouraging users to follow each other even if they do not know each other personally. A large number of followers is seen as a mark of one’s networked sociality, even though their interactions and connections may be limited to likes and virtual engagement. Furthermore, deep mediatization is characterized by the occurrence of social practices within the scope of multiple media or polymedia. In this case, different media are interlinked and interconnected to each other.

The deep mediatization of violence also occurs in the digital space, where acts of violence and digital technology are intertwined. In this case, violence is not only mediated through digital media but is also carried out by utilizing and adapting to the mechanisms of digital media. OGBV on social media is a clear example of the deep mediatization of violence. According to the Association for Progressive Communications (APC), OGBV refers to “acts of violence that are committed, abetted or aggravated, in part or fully, by the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), such as mobile phones, the internet, social media platforms, and email” (Maundu, 2020). OGBV includes verbal and graphic threats, harassing comments, sexual attacks, and the dissemination of sexual content in the form of photos, videos, and other evolving digital violence facilitated by the growth of digital platforms.

The distribution of Non-Consensual Intimate Images (NCII), for example, utilizes the viral logic of social media to humiliate victims. Perpetrators post hurtful comments about images of victims and even create memes to mock their physical appearance. In Indonesia, derogatory terms like “tobrut” or “brutal tits” [a derogative term for making fun of women with big breasts] and “maghrib aura” [for people, particularly women, with dark skin], are also widely circulated on digital platforms. The anonymity of the digital space allows perpetrators to freely post these harmful comments and share content that body-shames individuals, particularly targeting women and gender/sexual minorities. This deep mediatization of violence marks the double-edged nature of digital space, which can simultaneously empower marginalized groups while also subjecting them to new forms of violence and marginalization. As Fotopoulou states, the digital space is a “space of tensions and contradictions” (2016: 1). On the other hand, digital platforms provide opportunities for women and gender/sexual minorities to voice experiences of violence that were previously hidden. Through these platforms, victims can ensure that their experiences are seen, heard, and validated. However, the digital space can also become a fertile ground for gendered harassment, bullying, and the non-consensual sharing of intimate images, causing further harm and marginalization. Mendes et al. (2019: 12-13) noted that digital platforms have become spaces where the occurrence of mediated sexism and misogyny is widespread. Women and feminist groups often face various forms of online gender-based violence, such as hate speech, sexual harassment, and other forms of hostility. Additionally, these forms of online gender-based violence frequently intersect with other forms of discrimination, including racism, homophobia, and ableism. In this sense, the digital realm

can both enable and constrain opportunities for women and marginalized groups, underscoring the need to address the challenges of digital violence, while leveraging the potential of digital spaces for empowerment and civic engagement.

According to data from UNESCO (2015), the rise of digital spaces has led to various incidents of violence, the majority of which are experienced by women. Additionally, a survey conducted by Amnesty International on 4,000 female respondents across eight countries revealed that at least 1,000 women had experienced online abuse, which made them feel unsafe (cited in Kavanagh & Brown, 2019: 1). While gender-based violence is not limited to women, as men and gender/sexual minority groups also experience it (Amabel & Putra B., 2020; Evans & Lépinard, 2020; Hayes, 2007), data from various countries indicates that the highest number of victims are women, and the perpetrators are predominantly men (Hayes 2007: 2). This trend is also observed in cases of OGBV, where women tend to be the victims of violent practices in digital spaces (see Valle, 2020; Kavanagh & Brown, 2019).

In Indonesia, the digital space is not a safe haven, either for gender or sexual minority groups. The government restricts their freedom of expression by banning websites and applications related to gender diversity. These minority groups are also vulnerable to online gender-based violence, such as harassment, cyberbullying, doxing, and privacy violations (Amabel & Putra B., 2023: 2). Importantly, the abuse experienced in the digital space often extends to the offline world, where people can face persecution and even job loss. This fact demonstrates the interconnected nature of online and offline gender-based violence, which are both rooted in a broader landscape of gender inequality and a deeply entrenched patriarchal culture in society. The impacts of this violence on victims, both women and gender/sexual minorities, do not remain confined to the online realm but continue to manifest in the form of anxiety, trauma, and a sense of insecurity in their offline lives.

Gender-Based Violence in Indonesian Digital Space

Alongside the rapid advancement of digital technology, the prevalence of online gender-based violence (OGBV) has been increasing. According to the Institute of Development Studies, the percentage of women experiencing OGBV in 2021 ranged from 16% to 58%. While men also face online abuse, it is often not directly related to gender issues (Hicks, 2021). The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) report highlights the complex nature of the digital space for women. As mentioned in the earlier part, the digital space provides

a crucial platform for women to express themselves and access opportunities. On the other hand, it has become a space where women are targeted and subjected to violence. A study conducted by the EIU until May 2020 revealed that up to 38% of women, particularly young individuals, have personally experienced online violence. Furthermore, as many as 86% of women have witnessed the perpetration of OGBV against other women (EIU, 2020). This issue has only worsened since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The prevalence of OGBV is also increasing in Indonesia. According to the data provided by the Indonesia Internet Service Provider Association, the internet penetration rate in the country has been steadily increasing over the years, as illustrated in Figure 1.

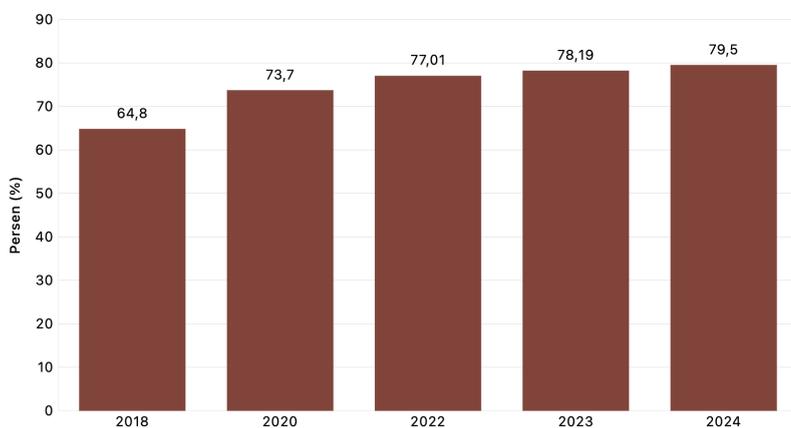


Figure 1. Internet penetration in Indonesia 2018-2024 (Source: Santika, 2024)

At the beginning of 2024, Indonesia's internet penetration had reached 79.5% of the total population, equivalent to 221,563,479 people out of the country's total population of 278,696,200. Additionally, data from We Are Social indicated that in January 2024, social media users in Indonesia accounted for 97.8% of the country's total internet users (We Are Social, 2024). Given the widespread adoption of digital media in Indonesia, the potential for gender-based violence to occur in the digital space is significant. This is supported by The National Commission on Violence Against Women's 2023 Annual Report, which showed that during the year 2023, there were 1,697 reported cases of online gender-based violence (Komnas Perempuan, 2023).

Meanwhile, the Southeast Asia Freedom of Expression Network (SAFENet) 2023 Annual Report revealed a significant increase of 33.65% in reported

cases of OGBV compared to 2022, with a total of 1,052 cases. Data from the first quarter of 2024 (January to March) showed a further rise in the number of reported cases, reaching a total of 480. The victims were predominantly young women, with those aged 18-25 years accounting for the largest group at 57% (272 cases), followed by children under 18 years at 26% (123 cases). More than half of the complaints were filed by women, with 293 reports, while 174 were from men and five were from non-binary individuals (Dyah, 2024). The most common forms of OGBV were threats and the distribution of intimate content (326 cases), as well as sexual blackmail and doxing (104 cases). These statistics clearly indicate that Indonesia is facing an OGBV crisis, particularly targeting women and young people. Although the number of reported cases from non-binary individuals was low (5 cases), this does not necessarily mean that OGBV does not affect gender/sexual minorities. This figure may suggest that there are still many victims from these communities who have not reported their experiences, as recognition and acceptance of their existence remain limited in Indonesia. Furthermore, various studies have shown that LGBTIQ groups in the country often face cyberbullying and online harassment on social media platforms (Amabel & Putra B., 2024; Devi, 2023; Putri, 2015).

The WHO Report 2023 revealed that globally, almost one in three women experience physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime, primarily by an intimate partner. In the context of OGBV, the perpetrators are no longer only those closest to the victims, but also strangers connected through online spaces. Indonesia, despite having the adequate legal instrument of the 2022 Sexual Violence Crimes Law, still struggles with the gender-sensitive implementation of this law. There are instances where efforts to report cases of gender-based violence have instead led to the criminalization of the victim or reporter rather than addressing the issue. An example of this is the case of Meila Nurul, a lawyer involved in a sexual violence case, who was deemed to have committed a criminal act of defamation under the 2008 Electronic Information and Transaction Law by the Yogyakarta Regional Police. This determination was made after the alleged perpetrator reported the lawyer (Dhewy, 2024). The case of a wife from Parungpanjang, Bogor, who was subjected to domestic violence by her husband, serves as another example. Despite filing a report, the police allegedly instructed the victim to return home, where the incident had previously occurred (Mahendra, 2023). These examples demonstrate that gender insensitivity within the state and legal systems results in victims not receiving the necessary protection and support they require.

Furthermore, these problems demonstrate that gender-based violence in the offline and online realms are actually interrelated, with their roots in the power imbalance within the patriarchal structure of society. This imbalance has led to the normalization of various forms of violence against women. Additionally, a culture of excuses has emerged, contributing to the acceptance and tolerance of such acts of violence. Not to mention, in Indonesian society, the notion that sexual violence experienced by women is often viewed as a source of shame and a taboo topic to discuss publicly is still evolving. This perception stems from the belief that openly addressing such incidents can bring embarrassment to the individual and their family (Blackburn, 2004, cited in Puspitasari & Mayangsari, 2002: 97). In the digital age, many women who have faced gender-based violence have utilized online platforms to publicly share their stories. However, the potential for re-victimization of women in the digital realm remains pervasive. This is due to a culture that normalizes such acts of violence, where women may encounter online bullying and harassment, which can deter them from revealing their own experiences due to feelings of shame and disgrace.

Viralizing Violent Cases: Between Seeking Justice and Spectacle of Pain

In early February 2022, a female journalist from the Indonesian online media Geotimes, named IR, disclosed a case of sexual harassment and attempted rape that she experienced from a male co-worker on the social media platform Twitter (currently known as X). The incident occurred seven years earlier, in November 2015. In her publicly accessible posts, IR detailed the chronology of the sexual violence case that she endured and described the pains she suffered as a victim of such violence (see Figure 2).



Figure 2. Screenshot of IR's posts on Twitter (currently X) (2022)

Despite reporting the case to her boss at Geotimes and seeking assistance from the Alliance of Independent Journalists Jakarta (AJI Jakarta) and the Legal Aid Institute for the Press (LBH Pers), IR has not received a clear and fair resolution to her case. As a victim, IR felt that she did not receive adequate protection and support, especially since the alleged perpetrator had not yet faced any consequences from the office. The case then went viral on social media, sparking public criticism and pressure on Geotimes and the editor-in-chief, who had not responded to IR's report in 2015. The virality of the case and widespread public attention prompted AJI Jakarta and LBH Pers to confirm IR's account and indicate that they faced difficulties in meeting with Geotimes' management to discuss the report (AJI Jakarta, 2022). After the case gained viral attention, various parties expressed concern for IR's well-being and trauma and provided support. The day after the case went viral on a social media platform, several Indonesian advocacy institutions such as AJI Jakarta, LBH Pers, LBH Apik, ICJR, YLBHI, and SAFENet collaborated to create a victim support team to seek justice for IR (LBH Pers, 2022). The IR case is one of many instances of sexual violence that have received significant public and institutional attention after gaining traction on social media.

The case shared on the platform X by N somewhat differs from the case of IR. N recounted her experience of being stalked by her former high school classmate, a man named AP (Puspitasari, 2024). For a decade, AP persistently harassed N on social media, creating hundreds of accounts to bombard her with photos, videos, and messages that demonstrated his obsession with her. AP even sent N explicit images of himself and messages that sexually harassed her. Furthermore, AP threatened to harm any man who approached N. N and her family repeatedly asked AP to cease his actions, but he continued to terrorize her with vulgar messages, causing her immense distress. Eventually, N publicly shared her case on social media, which garnered widespread attention and support from netizens, especially on X. Empowered by this response, N finally reported the case to the East Java regional police, who promptly arrested AP the following day.

As victims of gender-based violence, IR and N have gained public sympathy and support after 'viralizing' their cases on social media. Virality has become a part of the political struggle for justice, which is being conducted by IR and N on their own behalf. Both of them have deliberately used social media platforms to speak out to garner support from the public. Virality has become a tool for building activism networks in the digital space, with the aim of putting pressure on the institutions and legal authorities involved.

By doing so, the cases of IR and N can be resolved, and the needs and interests of the victims can be addressed. Virality allows cases of gender-based violence and the suffering of victims to become visible in digital spaces, which can ultimately also spread to non-digital spaces. The visibility of these violent cases and the activism networks that voice the victims' interests are enabled by the interconnectivity and interactivity offered by digital platforms, especially social media. As Andreas Hepp (2020) asserted, in the digital era, various practices and activities occur and are carried out within the scope of polymedia, which means that the virality and visibility of cases voiced by victims via one social media platform will also be easily connected and amplified on the other platforms, which are interlinked to it. The interconnectivity between social media platforms, such as in the case of Instagram and Facebook, allows victims of gender-based violence to share their experiences across multiple digital spaces.

The high visibility and widespread dissemination of the cases, as happened to IR and N, could lead to the formation of "affective solidarity" (Clark-Parksons, 2018: 2129). This term refers to "connections or connectedness that grow as an emotional response to the oppression that someone has experienced". IR and N, for example, have externalized their emotions publicly on social media, enabling netizens to collectively read, engage with, and feel their experiences. In her work entitled *Pain Generation: Social Media, Feminist Activism, and the Neoliberal Selfie*, Saraswati (2021: 73) referred to this phenomenon as the "sociality of emotion," where emotions are processed and practiced through social media as a form of "feeling-with-other-ness." This is a practice where individuals—in this case, victims of gender-based violence—share and recirculate their emotions and mediate how they feel about the emotions. This process enables victims to receive overwhelming support and positivity from the digital community, which can be a valuable resource during their recovery and healing.

The case of N demonstrates that many internet users experienced similar circumstances as victims of online stalking, allowing them to empathize with N's situation. This fostered a sense of solidarity that motivated support for N. Similarly, in IR's case, numerous victims of gender-based violence and their support networks amplified IR's efforts to seek justice, as their own reports had not received adequate responses. This affective solidarity becomes a significant strength when the legal system and victim protection mechanisms are inadequate, as is the case in Indonesia. IR and N are only two of the many gender-based violence victims in Indonesia who leverage the virality of digital platforms to garner public attention and support in

their pursuit of justice. Consequently, the phrase “no viral, no justice” has become a crucial factor in obtaining resolutions and seeking justice for issues, including those related to gender-based violence, in the Indonesian context.

However, this ‘viralizing’ of violent cases may not always aim solely to achieve affective solidarity and demand just resolutions. Many victims of gender-based violence, predominantly women, turn to digital platforms to express their pain and direct their anger towards the alleged perpetrators. They post and share their emotions on social media with the intent of shaming and attacking the alleged perpetrators as a form of punishment. Often, the alleged perpetrators are individuals close to the victims, such as boyfriends, husbands, friends, or acquaintances. Due to this proximity, victims may be reluctant to pursue formal reporting or legal action. Added to that, the lack of institutional support and the problem of gender insensitivity at the structural level also contribute to victims’ doubts about the effectiveness of formal case handling.

Consequently, many victims of gender-based violence choose to expose their cases on social media, believing that the perpetrator must also be harmed. It is not uncommon for victims of online gender-based violence to open their own cases on platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and other social media platforms, confiding in their experiences, sharing their feelings, revealing their personal communication with the perpetrator, or venting their anger through shaming and harassment (see Figures 3 and 4). In this

manner, victims of gender-based violence express their emotions on social media to attract attention from online communities. They may also publicly name and shame the perpetrators in the digital space. Research suggests that venting or disclosing personal information on social media can help individuals reduce stress in some cases (Wendorf & Young, 2015, cited in Saraswati 2021: 75).

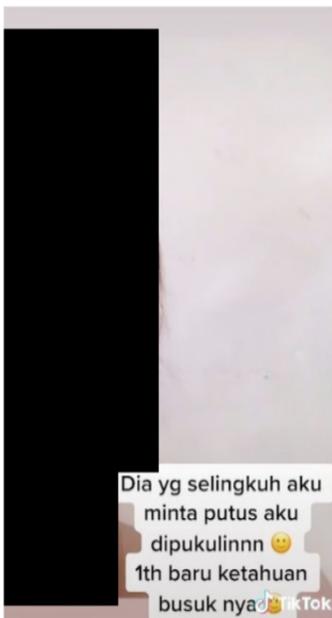


Figure 3. Example of screenshot of video on TikTok in which a young woman shared her experience being beaten up by her boyfriend, who was caught cheating on her. She asked for breakup but ended up being beaten (Source: Twitter (X), 2022)



Figure 4: Example of a post on X by victim support network, revealing the name of a perpetrator of gender-based violence (Source: Twitter (X), 2023)

In her study, Saraswati (2021: 70) highlighted this phenomenon as “crowdsourcing emotions,” where victims of gender-based violence use social media to collaborate with their followers and internalize the feelings related to the violence the victims experienced and, together with their followers, collectively humiliate the perpetrator online. When victims publicly share their experiences and emotions on social media, these messages provoke their followers, who then make efforts to externalize their own experiences and feelings regarding such violence in the digital space. These efforts to crowdsource emotions typically culminate in attempts to condemn and attack the perpetrators. In this way, naming and shaming the perpetrators on social media becomes a technique used by victims and their followers to “punish” them (Saraswati, 2021: 79). This shaming is understood as a social act aimed at administering social sanctions to the perpetrators. This action indicates that the state and its apparatus fail to adequately protect and support victims of gender-based violence. There are cases in which initially victims have come and sought institutional support and justice from the relevant authorities, but they frequently found them unhelpful, as experienced by IR. Some victims also feel doubtful or uncertain that their report will even be processed, especially if the perpetrators are those who are close to power. As a result, victims often decide to choose the mechanism of “fix it myself” by shaming and punishing the perpetrators online. This is done as an effort to confront the perpetrators and enablers who do not empathize with or provide support for the victims.

However, Saraswati also critically emphasized that the effort to crowdsource emotions to shame and punish perpetrators has turned the pain felt by victims into a spectacle with the aim of garnering public attention. Victims often share visual evidence, such as photos, depicting the physical harm they have endured, including bruises on their cheeks, a bleeding nose,

or other parts of their bodies where their abuser struck them. In another case, the victims post a vivid account of the violent acts they endured, including the hair being pulled, the body parts being kicked, and the resulting pain they experienced due to the abusive actions. The pain felt by victims of gender-based violence turns into a public spectacle, being exposed to provoke emotions from internet users. Saraswati also cautions that this dynamic should not overlook the fact that digital platforms themselves are value-laden and serve as arenas where diverse interests, including those of the digital economy, are at play. In this context, the spectacle of victims' pain could be exploited as an instrument to generate economic benefits through the sharing economy of emotions. Public attention and concern towards victims' suffering can be leveraged to increase engagement and individual popularity on social media. Furthermore, the shaming and punishment of perpetrators in the digital space has also become a public spectacle, echoing the disciplinary practices of pre-18th century Western societies as explained by Michel Foucault (in Shapiro, 2002: 4), where punishment—usually in the form of torture and physical pain—was carried out in public as a form of spectacle. In the digital era, the punishment as a public spectacle is facilitated by social media platforms, where perpetrators have their personal information revealed, humiliated, and collectively insulted, leading to social sanctions and the phenomenon of cancel culture.

Mueller (2021: 1-2) defined cancel culture as “the withdrawal of support for individuals who have acted in a way deemed to be unacceptable or problematic related to social media, viewership, or the purchase of products or services.” He asserts that cancel culture can potentially deconstruct anyone's life at any time. Cancel culture is typically aimed at public figures who commit perceived unfair actions such as intimidation, sexism, homophobia, and racism against minority groups. In Indonesia, cancel culture has been widely used as a digital movement to respond to alleged acts of sexism and gender-based violence, particularly against public figures like celebrities, politicians, state officials, or individuals with authority in certain institutions (see Altamira & Movementi, 2023; Anjarini, 2020). Cancel culture is employed as a form of social sanction, which can be effective in “punishing” perpetrators of gender-based violence when the related structures and legal system fail to do so. Furthermore, cancel culture also has the potential to give rise to new gender-based violence, leading to injustice and victimizing certain parties, including the innocent. Additionally, viral information on social media may not always be entirely true and can potentially harm individuals who are not necessarily at fault.

Re-victimization and the Proliferation of Digital Violent Acts

The ‘viralization’ of gender-based violence cases, whether with the intent of building affective solidarity for justice or crowdsourcing emotions to punish the perpetrators, does not always benefit the victims. The digital space can create an unpredictable emotional landscape in the context of viral cases, the results of which are not always predictable. Victims often experience re-victimization in the digital space due to their shared experiences of violence and the emotions that arise. The digital ‘viralization’ of such cases does not always lead to the desired outcomes of support and justice for the victims. Even in cases where victims like IR and N sought justice by making their cases viral, they encountered victim blaming, devaluation, and doubt from many online users rather than support. IR, for example, received intimidating messages in the form of a direct message (DM) containing orders to commit suicide, and was criticized for being delusional, while her digital devices were even hacked after her case went viral (LBH Pers, 2022). Likewise with N, through the comments on her social media account, many online users normalized the perpetrator’s (AP’s) actions and characterized it as a form of dedication in pursuing love (Puspitasari, 2024). Some internet users have even alleged that N would have welcomed and enjoyed AP’s attention if AP had an attractive appearance. There were also those who advised N to forgive AP because the online stalking was conducted in the name of love. These comments demonstrate a disregard for the facts about the violence committed by the perpetrator, and the resulting consequences, such as trauma and mental stress endured by the victims, which cannot be easily resolved. The deeply embedded patriarchal structures and widespread gender insensitivity are the primary factors contributing to the phenomenon of victim-blaming and a culture of excuses, which devalues the acts of violence that have occurred and places the blame on the victims as being partially responsible for the violent acts.

Re-victimization experienced by victims of gender-based violence due to the virality of such cases in the digital space, according to Saraswati (2021: 75), is a consequence of digital media technology. The interactions that occur through digital technologies can cause individuals to overlook the fact that they are communicating with fellow human beings who have their own emotions and sentiments. Additionally, the anonymity and invisibility facilitated by digital platforms enable users to be more open and aggressive in their interactions without considering the emotional impact on the other parties. This makes the digital space a fertile ground for the proliferation of gender-based violence, especially targeting women and gender/sexual

minorities. As a result, victims who speak out to seek institutional support or justice often end up becoming victims of online gender-based violence (OGBV) themselves and are trapped in a cycle of offline and online gender-based violence. The digital space becomes a space where the reproduction and amplification of long-standing problems of offline gender-based violence occur while also enabling OGBV to be practiced in a hostile manner due to the anonymity and invisibility of the perpetrators. Moreover, OGBV's perpetrators are not single layered but experience multiplication due to the virality mechanisms made possible by digital platforms. The primary perpetrator is the one who initiates the violent action. The secondary perpetrators are those who participate in commenting and spreading violent content through reposts and reshares, which can be done simultaneously by many people. As the contents become more viral, tertiary perpetrators emerge, and the cycle continues, leading to a multi-layered and multiplied group of perpetrators. This demonstrates that the digital space could become an increasingly hazardous and unsafe environment, particularly for women and gender/sexual minorities.

Additional concerns arise when one considers that movements to 'cancel' individuals can, of course, be based on misinformation or distortions of the facts. In the case of crowdsourcing emotions, enraged internet users can easily act aggressively without verifying the accuracy of the information they obtain. The sexual harassment hoax involving a student activist in Yogyakarta that went viral on social media is a striking example (Narasi.tv., 2023; DetikJogja, 2023). Internet users were provoked by posts claiming the activist had perpetrated sexual harassment multiple times. They aggressively revealed the activist's personal details, such as his phone number, student ID, photos, and home address, and spread them widely on social media. However, after investigation, it was revealed that the post was a fabricated slander by a party with a grudge against the activist. This action was clearly detrimental to the innocent activist, who was not only embarrassed and harassed on social media but also experienced offline persecution and threats. In this case, the crowdsourcing of emotions can easily provoke the public without having first verified the accuracy of the information, victimizing and causing pain for the innocent. Spreading such violent cases could further incite new violent acts. In the digital realm, efforts to assist victims of gender-based violence may inadvertently lead to virtual acts of cruelty if individuals fail to cultivate critical thinking skills and digital literacy. It is essential to approach this pivotal issue with care and consideration, ensuring that the digital space remains a supportive environment for those in need.

Conclusion

The slogan “No Viral, No Justice,” which ‘viralizes’ acts of gender-based violence, highlights the challenges faced by victims of such violence in Indonesia, particularly the inadequacies in law enforcement and institutional support for the victims. The digital space has emerged as a platform for victims, often women and gender/sexual minorities, to speak out and seek justice or take matters into their own hands through the mechanism of “fix it myself” when the existing structures fail to protect them. However, this double-edged approach has both positive and negative implications. On the one hand, the digital space has enabled consciousness-raising activism, encouraging the state and its apparatuses to provide better protection and justice for victims of gender-based violence. On the other hand, the deep-rooted power imbalances and patriarchal norms in Indonesian society continue to foster a culture of normalization and excuses, perpetuating the cycle of gender-based violence and re-victimization, both offline and online. The spectacle of pain and the practice of crowdsourcing emotions to publicly “punish” perpetrators through the digital space also has its own set of complications. While it may provide a sense of justice for some, it can also lead to new acts of violence and victimizing innocent parties due to the proliferation of disinformation and the viral nature of digital platforms. Despite the promises of freedom and equality in the digital space, this chapter has demonstrated that online spaces remain an unsafe environment for women and gender/sexual minorities, as cases of gender-based violence continue to occur and to be amplified within the digital realm.

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Cinematic Representation of Bugis Women in *Uang Panai*, *Tenri*, and *Silariang*: Between *Siri*, Gender Roles and Challenges in Maintaining Personal Autonomy

Rivi Handayani

Abstract

This paper examines the depiction of Bugis women in the films *Uang Panai*, *Tenri*, and *Silariang: Menggapai Keabadian Cinta*, analyzing how these three narratives reflect and reinforce the complex interplay between gender, culture, and identity within Bugis society. The principle of *siri*—a profound concept of honor and shame—serves as a pivotal element in shaping Bugis cultural identity, dictating social behavior and reinforcing patriarchal hierarchies that often limit women's autonomy. Using Nira Yuval-Davis' framework of 'gender and nation,' this study explores the intersection between gender roles and cultural identity, highlighting how women are portrayed as custodians of cultural continuity and national identity. The films reveal the tensions and negotiations Bugis women must navigate as they strive to balance tradition and modernity, emphasizing their roles in maintaining social cohesion while underscoring the constraints imposed by traditional norms. However, the films often fail to critically engage with women's agency and potential for transformation, suggesting a static portrayal of cultural practices and gender roles. This paper argues that while these cinematic representations provide valuable insights into Bugis culture, they also reinforce existing gender hierarchies, limiting the potential for narratives of resistance and change. By connecting the portrayals to broader discussions on gender equality and cultural transformation, this study aims to foster a more comprehensive understanding of the potential for cultural change and empowerment within the Bugis context and beyond. Future representations could benefit from exploring diverse perspectives and more nuanced portrayals of women's experiences, highlighting the evolving nature of culture and identity in contemporary Bugis society.

Keywords: women in film, *Uang Panai*, *Tenri*, *Silariang*, discrimination, representation

Introduction

Culture is a dynamic construct, not static or homogeneous, but continually reshaped by social, political, and historical forces (Yuval-Davis, 1997). In this context, the fluid nature of culture plays an important role in defining the collective identity of an ethnicity, fostering a sense of togetherness and differentiating one group from others. The Bugis people of South Sulawesi are known for their unwavering loyalty to traditional values and customs. At the core of this cultural framework is the principle of *siri'* (honor and shame), a profound and multifaceted notion that plays a pivotal role in shaping social behavior and Bugis cultural identity (Acciaoli, 2002). Rooted deeply in an ethical and moral framework, this principle is not just an abstract concept, but is actively realized in everyday life and permeates various aspects of Bugis culture. *Siri'* is fundamentally tied to the individual's sense of self-worth and community standing. It governs social conduct, acting as a moral compass that dictates appropriate behavior in various situations (Pelras, 1996). The consequences of violating *siri'* can be severe, often requiring action to restore honor and repair any resulting shame (Abdullah, 1985; Mattulada, 1995).

While *siri'* fosters a strong sense of identity and cohesion, it also reinforces patriarchal hierarchies that limit women's freedom. Despite opportunities for education and career advancement, they often find their personal autonomy limited by social expectations that require them to prioritize *siri'*, especially within the institution of marriage, in order to maintain family honor, collective well-being, and community social cohesion (Alimuddin, 2020; Alfariz, 2020). These deeply ingrained values create a complex web of challenges for women in controlling their personal lives. Women's actions such as rejecting arranged marriages, marrying without parental consent, and conducting marriage ceremonies that deviate from cultural norms—including receiving a small amount of *uang panai'* (dowry)—can damage the concept of *siri'* (Nurlia & Nurashiah, 2018).

To meet these expectations, Bugis women, as daughters, are expected to adhere to the tradition of *Mappasitaro* or arranged marriages, which are typically orchestrated by male authoritative figures, including fathers, uncles, and brothers. A notable example occurred in 2018 when a 70-year-old man married a 25-year-old university student. As reported by Kompas.com (2017), the man provided the young woman with a dowry of Rp 1.4 billion, a house, 100 grams of gold, and a mid-sized car worth Rp 450 million. This extravagant dowry highlights the societal expectations and pressures placed on women in Bugis society, where they are often valued based on financial transactions

rather than personal attributes. These practices not only constrain women by reducing their autonomy, but also create an environment where the pressure to conform can lead to adverse outcomes, such as divorce, *silariang* (elopement) (Israpil, 2015; Anwar, 2020), and even suicide (Niswati et al., 2001). As wives and mothers, women are expected to ensure that such issues do not arise, so arranged marriages and wedding ceremonies proceed perfectly. This expectation reinforces traditional gender roles, placing an undue burden on women to maintain familial harmony and uphold cultural norms at the cost of their own personal desires and well-being.

The pressures Bugis women face are vividly depicted in films like *Uang Panai'* (2016), *Tenri* (2023), and *Silariang* (2018). Although these films are celebrated as representations of Bugis culture and seen as contemporary ways to preserve *siri'* in the ever-evolving landscape of modernity, they, in fact, reflect and reinforce patriarchal values. The first film, "Uang Panai'," follows a couple whose relationship is challenged by the cultural tradition of *uang panai'*, a significant dowry required for marriage. *Tenri* (2023) tells the story of Tenri, a young noblewoman, who struggles to balance personal autonomy with familial duties to ensure the continuity of their noble lineage. In "Silariang," the film portrays the consequences of defying familial honor and societal norms for love.

In engaging with these cinematic texts, this paper aims to explore the complexities of Bugis women finding their place within a patriarchal system embedded in *siri'* while simultaneously navigating societal expectations and challenges to their personal autonomy. Using Nira Yuval-Davis' (1997) conceptual framework of 'gender and nation,' this study aims to uncover the complex intersection between gender roles and cultural identity within the Bugis cultural context. According to Yuval-Davis, gender and nation are deeply interconnected, with national and cultural identities often constructed in ways that reinforce traditional gender roles.

This framework will guide the analysis of the films, focusing on how they depict Bugis women navigating the complex dynamics of cultural expectations, personal autonomy, and patriarchal norms. Specifically, the paper will focus on several key aspects: how do the films portray the role of Bugis women? what messages do they convey about the preservation of *siri'*? And in what ways do the films reflect and reinforce patriarchal norms? Ultimately, this section contributes to a broader discussion on the intersection of culture, gender, and cinema in the context of the Bugis ethnic group and beyond.

Construction of Cultural Identity Through Gender and Nation's Lens

Nira Yuval-Davis' framework of "Gender and Nation" (1997) explored the intricate connections between gender roles and national identity. She argues that women play crucial roles in the construction and reproduction of national identity, often viewed as symbolic bearers of the nation and as being responsible for maintaining cultural continuity by transmitting national values to future generations. Women's biological reproduction is politicized, as their bodies become sites of national interest, with policies around birth rates, motherhood, and family structure linked to nationalistic goals.

Moreover, women are tasked with cultural reproduction, ensuring the transmission of language, customs, and traditions, reinforcing the notion that they are custodians of cultural identity. Yuval-Davis highlights how citizenship is gendered, with women often experiencing different rights and responsibilities compared to men, and nationalistic movements frequently using women's rights as a bargaining tool. This reinforces traditional gender divisions, relegating women to the private sphere while men dominate the public sphere, thus marginalizing women's political and economic contributions.

In periods of national conflict, women may be mobilized as symbols of purity and sacrifice, challenging traditional gender roles while reinforcing nationalistic aims. Nationalist discourses frequently employ gendered imagery, depicting the nation as a feminine entity to be protected by its male citizens, thereby reinforcing embedded gender hierarchies. Yuval-Davis emphasizes the importance of intersectionality, recognizing that women's experiences of nationalism are influenced by their race, class, ethnicity, and other social identities. This framework acknowledges the diverse experiences of women from different backgrounds and highlights the need for an inclusive and intersectional approach. By applying this framework, scholars can analyze how gender dynamics shape and are shaped by national identities, policies, and cultural practices, exploring the impact of nationalism on women's rights and agency, and understanding the complexities and contradictions in national projects where women are central yet marginalized.

In Bugis culture, women's roles are largely defined by their responsibilities within the family, emphasizing duties as daughters, wives, and mothers. These roles align with Yuval-Davis' concept of women being tasked with the cultural reproduction of the nation. In *Uang Panai*, the dowry system (*uang panai*) symbolizes the economic and cultural pressures placed on women, highlighting how they are instrumental in upholding family honor and social expectations.

Synopsys and Context

The three films have different storylines and genres; however, they share a central theme about the obligation of individuals in maintaining *siri'* and familial honor. In *Uang Panai'*, the narrative centers on a man named Anca who returns to his hometown of Makassar after spending four years away in the city, seeking new opportunities and experiences. Upon his return, Anca unexpectedly encounters his former lover, Risna, a reunion that rekindles his long-dormant feelings for her. Driven by his desire to marry Risna, Anca is faced with the cultural obligation to provide a substantial *uang panai'* (bridal dowry). This dowry signifies the groom's ability to support his future wife and family, reflecting the socio-economic expectations embedded in local customs (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. Scenes from *Uang Panai'*

Determined to meet this financial requirement, Anca embarks on a quest to secure employment and amass the necessary funds. However, his plans are thwarted by the arrival of Farhan, Risna's childhood friend, who has returned from abroad. Farhan's father, feeling indebted to Risna's father, proposes a marriage between Farhan and Risna as a means of repaying this familial obligation. This proposed alliance poses a significant challenge to Anca, as he struggles with the insufficiency of his savings for the *uang panai'*.

Anca cannot withdraw and cancel the marriage simply because he cannot afford the dowry, as doing so would damage his dignity and that of his family. The situation becomes increasingly complex as Risna herself grapples with anxiety and uncertainty, fearing that Anca might once again leave her, as he did in the past. This narrative explores themes of cultural tradition, economic pressure, and the intricate dynamics of love and loyalty within a rapidly changing society.

Tenri is a short film that explores the complex relationship between Iksan and Tenri, set against the backdrop of traditional Bugis noble marriage customs. The narrative delves into the challenges the couple faces due to Tenri's family's adherence to aristocratic principles, which demand that matrimonial alliances preserve noble lineage. A pivotal scene in the film features a dialogue between Iksan and Tenri's mother. In this conversation, Tenri's mother stresses the importance of maintaining the family's noble status through marriage, insisting that Tenri has an obligation to marry a nobleman to uphold the family's honor and legacy. She urges Iksan to consider the cultural and familial implications of their relationship (see Figure 2).



Figure 2. Scenes from *Tenri*

Confronted with the weight of these expectations, Iksan agrees to end his relationship with Tenri, recognizing the societal pressures that make their union untenable. This decision underscores the emotional turmoil and sacrifice involved in navigating personal desires within the constraints of cultural traditions. In contrast, Tenri initially struggles with Iksan's decision to break off their relationship, finding it difficult to accept the loss of their connection and the imposition of familial duty over personal happiness. However, ultimately, Tenri comes to accept the situation without resistance, acknowledging the power of cultural obligations over individual desires. Through this narrative, the film explores themes of identity, duty, and the tensions between individual aspirations and collective obligations. It offers a poignant portrayal of the personal struggles faced by individuals who must choose between love and adherence to deeply entrenched social norms.

The narrative of *Silariang* begins with Petta Lolo's family as they prepare to attend a wedding celebration. Their plans are abruptly when they discover their daughter lifeless in her room, having taken her own life due to heartbreak after her lover married another woman. Tragically, the lover was a relative whose wedding the family was intending to attend. As the years pass, Cia, another daughter of Petta Lolo, grows up and falls in love with a young man named Ali. As their relationship deepens, Cia learns that Ali is the brother of the woman who committed suicide because of her former lover (see Figure 3).



Figure 3. Scenes from *Silariang*

This revelation complicates their relationship, as both families disapprove of their union. Faced with familial opposition, Cia and Ali decide to elope, a practice known as *silariang* in the Makassar language. Upon discovering that his daughter has run away with Ali, Daeng Mariolo becomes furious. His family agrees to search for the couple, emphasizing the need to uphold *siri'*, a cultural concept central to Bugis society that embodies honor and dignity. The film seeks to explain the cultural significance of *siri'* in Bugis society, highlighting the importance of commitment and pride in maintaining social order and familial reputation.

Representation of the Bugis Women's Personal Autonomy Challenge

The symbolic role of women as bearers of cultural identity, which often limits their personal autonomy by subordinating their individual agency to the collective needs of the community or nation (Yuval-Davis, 1997), is embodied in the films *Uang Panai*, *Tenri*, and *Silariang*. These films illustrate how Bugis women are expected to fulfill all cultural demands without resistance, emphasizing that the responsibility for preserving *siri'* as the core of Bugis cultural identity primarily lies with them.

In *Uang Panai*, the female character, Risna, is portrayed as a passive agent, waiting for the male protagonist, Anca, to gather the *uang panai'* (dowry) required by her father and male family members. Risna's role exemplifies the expectation that women should uphold cultural practices without challenging the gendered structures that underpin them. The financial burden placed on men to provide a substantial dowry underscores the transactional nature of marriage, where a woman's future is contingent upon her perceived value, determined by her male counterparts. Such cultural practices significantly constrain women's personal autonomy, as their futures are dictated by adherence to these norms, thereby limiting their agency in life decisions. Furthermore, this dynamic reduces women to commodities within the institution of marriage, with their worth assessed based on financial exchanges rather than personal qualities or mutual affection.

Tenri offers a complex representation of the obligations of noble Bugis women. The film portrays women as custodians of cultural identity, tasked with upholding *siri'* through the continuity of noble generations by marrying men of similar social status. This responsibility emphasizes their role in preserving cultural heritage through their reproductive capacities, reflecting how the continuity of the nation or community is embedded in women's bodies (Yuval-Davis, 1997). Moreover, this role imposes limitations on their personal autonomy. The female character's internal struggle between her personal aspiration to marry her commoner boyfriend and her duty to conform to *siri'*, which dictates her behavior and life choices, echoes the reality that women's roles in cultural reproduction often come at the expense of their individual freedoms.

Silariang presents a direct challenge to the cultural expectations placed on women, as the female protagonist's decision to *silariang* (elope) with the man she loves represents a significant act of defiance against the cultural norms that dictate her life choices. This act is an assertion of personal autonomy, challenging the rigid cultural framework of *siri'* that confines women to traditional roles. While the film glorifies the consistency of Bugis

society in preserving and maintaining siri', it also depicts the dangers women face when they attempt to assert their personal autonomy in the face of cultural expectations. The severe social and familial repercussions that follow this act of resistance highlight the high cost of asserting personal autonomy within a society that prioritizes cultural identity continuity over individual freedom. Thus, the film serves as a strong reminder of the ostracism and other forms of social punishment that women may face if they step outside their prescribed roles.

This cinematic representation serves not only as a reflection of the cultural dynamics within Bugis society but also as a broader commentary on the universal struggle for women's autonomy within patriarchal structures. The challenges faced by women in navigating these structures are echoed in the experiences of women in rural Bangladesh, where their empowerment is intricately linked to their ability to navigate and act on societal constraints, highlighting the contextual value of autonomy (Kabeer, 2011). Similarly, the struggle for autonomy is a recurring theme in different cultural and historical contexts, as seen in the societal landscape of 18th-century England, where a young woman's quest for autonomy underscores the necessity of self-empowerment to counter patriarchal oppression (Haroon & Ahmed, 2023). Additionally, the psychological dimensions of this struggle are explored through cognitive behavioral approaches that aim to help women overcome dependency and raise their self-esteem, essential steps in achieving equality within patriarchal societies (McBride, 1990).

The Portrayal Women Bugis's Dual Role

The films also depicted a nuanced portrayal of women's roles, showing how they are both active agents in upholding cultural values and, simultaneously, enforcers of the patriarchal structures that limit their autonomy. This dual role underscores the difficulty of challenging entrenched gender norms in a society where cultural identity and social stability are deeply intertwined with the regulation of women's behavior. The persistence of these gender hierarchies, as portrayed in the films, reflects the broader societal challenge of balancing cultural preservation with the need for greater gender equality and personal autonomy.

In *Uang Panai*', the female protagonist, Risna, follows her father's decisions regarding marriage, demonstrating the expectation for women to adhere to familial and cultural norms. Her mother guides her to accept these decisions, illustrating how women transmit cultural values and ensure adherence to

societal expectations. In *Tenri*, the mother ensures her daughter upholds *siri'* by convincing Tenri's boyfriend to end their relationship, emphasizing that women should prioritize familial obligations over personal desires to maintain noble lineage. Tenri and his mother acceptance of this guidance reflects the cultural norm of compliance without resistance. In *Silariang*, the mother emphasizes maintaining family honor and social cohesion'. Despite initial defiance, the woman character acceptance of cultural norms perpetuates the gender hierarchies that limit women's autonomy, as they are expected to prioritize collective cultural values over personal desires.

By consistently depicting women as key figures in the maintenance of *siri'* and other cultural norms, the films subtly endorse the idea that the stability of the community depends on the regulation of women's roles. This portrayal reinforces the notion that women's worth is intrinsically tied to their ability to uphold these traditions, thereby perpetuating a cycle where gender hierarchies remain unchallenged. The cultural expectation for women to prioritize communal well-being over their own desires suggests that any deviation from these prescribed roles is not just a personal failing, but a threat to the fabric of society itself. Consequently, these narratives highlight the societal pressures that discourage women from seeking personal empowerment, as their autonomy is often sacrificed in the name of preserving social order and cultural identity.

While women are seen as active agents in preserving *siri'*, this role also keeps them within the confines of traditional gender roles. By emphasizing their responsibility to maintain cultural identity, the films subtly reinforce the patriarchal structures that limit women's self-determination. The representation of women as pillar of continuity cultural values underscores the broader societal expectation that they must prioritize communal obligations over individual aspirations, thus perpetuating gender hierarchies and limiting opportunities for personal agency and empowerment.

Critique of *Uang Panai'*, *Tenri*, and *Silariang* for Cinematic Reflection

In examining the films *Uang Panai'*, *Tenri*, and *Silariang*, it becomes apparent that they offer a portrayal of Bugis women that is deeply rooted in tradition. These narratives, although insightful, often depict women within the confines of their expected societal roles. Across all three films, there is a predominant emphasis on women as compliant figures within the traditional gender roles and cultural norms of Bugis society. Women are depicted primarily as daughters and mothers, whose main responsibilities revolve

around upholding family honor and adhering to the principles of *siri'*. This portrayal can reinforce patriarchal structures, potentially limiting the autonomy of women by framing their primary value in terms of their compliance and ability to uphold cultural traditions.

The narratives in these films often lack a critical examination of women's agency and the potential for resistance or change. By focusing on women's acceptance of traditional roles without exploring avenues for agency or transformation, the films may unintentionally suggest that women's roles are static and unchangeable. This omission overlooks the dynamic and evolving nature of women's identities and contributions within society.

Although the films provide insights into the importance of women's roles in maintaining cultural identity and social cohesion, they often focus narrowly on familial roles, such as being dutiful daughters and nurturing mothers. This narrow representation fails to capture the broader spectrum of women's experiences and contributions, such as their involvement in education, employment, and leadership within their communities.

Furthermore, the three films tend to present *siri'* and other cultural traditions as static, portraying them without critically examining their complexities or potential for evolution. This simplification misses opportunities to explore how these cultural practices might adapt or be contested in light of modern influences and changing societal dynamics. A more nuanced portrayal could highlight the ways in which cultural norms evolve and are negotiated by individuals and communities.

A significant limitation of these films is the lack of narratives that explore resistance or transformation within the traditional framework. By not depicting stories of women challenging or negotiating their roles, the films fail to engage with themes of empowerment and gender equality. This absence restricts the potential to showcase how women might actively shape their identities and roles in contemporary Bugis society.

Conclusion

In examining *Uang Panai'*, *Tenri*, and *Silariang*, it becomes clear that these films collectively underscore the profound challenges faced by Bugis women in navigating the rigid cultural framework of *siri'*. Each film, in its own way, reveals how the expectations placed on women to preserve cultural identity often come at the expense of their personal autonomy. The portrayal of women as custodians of cultural continuity, while glorified in the context of *siri'*, also highlights the harsh realities of social and familial repercussions

when these expectations are defied. By examining this cinematic representation through Nira Yuval-Davis' framework of 'gender and nation,' we gain valuable insights into the intricate dynamics that define gender roles and national identity, contributing to a deeper understanding of the cultural and social forces that shape women's lives in the Bugis context and beyond.

While *Uang Panai*, *Tenri*, and *Silariang* offer valuable insights into Bugis culture and women's roles, they fall short in critically engaging with the complexities of gender dynamics and cultural transformation. By reinforcing traditional roles and overlooking narratives of resistance or change, the films limit their potential to contribute to discussions about gender equality and empowerment. Future films could benefit from exploring diverse perspectives and more nuanced portrayals of women's experiences, highlighting the evolving nature of culture and identity in contemporary Bugis society. By doing so, they can provide a richer, more comprehensive understanding of the potential for cultural change and the empowerment of women within this context.

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Shaping the Discussion about Sexual Minorities on Social Media: A Posthumanist Performativity Perspective

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Abstract

This paper analyzes how Karen Barad's posthumanist performativity perspective shapes discussions about sexual minorities on social media in Indonesia. Following Barad's perspective, the research analyzed Facebook users as the human subjects, and the Facebook platform itself as the nonhuman material. Using online ethnography, data was collected from March 2016, when the issue of sexual minorities became a major issue in Indonesia, until July 2018, when sexual minorities were being criminalized by the Draft of the Criminal Code of Indonesia. We compared two different Facebook groups, namely *AILA Indonesia* (anti-sexual minorities) and *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* (pro-sexual minorities) and collected data and conducted online interviews with two active members from each group. Although discussing the same issue, people can have different understandings, as clearly highlighted from the four respondents in this study. As a result, we found different "doings" in understanding sexual minorities: "referring to something", "framing the issue", and "using hashtags", which are performed differently in each group. We can see how both Facebook groups co-produce different understandings of sexual minorities' issues as a result of different patterns of doings. Those patterns are corresponding because both *AILA Indonesia* and *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* are always referring to each other in responding to the issue of sexual minorities. Furthermore, Facebook features that are available, such as links, comment sections, and photos, also help in shaping the different understandings about sexual minorities between *AILA Indonesia* and *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi*. Understanding posthuman performativity can make a positive contribution to media literacy practice.

Keywords: sexual minorities, Facebook, posthumanist performativity, materiality

Introduction

In the wake of the rise of social media, it has become a tool to co-produce and reproduce social conflict. Social media, inherently gives rise to certain values, such as participation and transparency, which play a powerful role in value conflicts that are directly connected to the affordances of social media, such as openness and engagement. The values of participation and transparency are not taken lightly, but actually result in a series of new conflicts (De Graaf and Meijer, 2018). This means that social media not only represents phenomena, but also co-produce them. Online phenomena do not exist without social media and its affordances. As Orlikowski (2007) said, engaging in online interaction is a process in which people's and technologies' affordances are constitutively entangled in particular practices.

Using social media is performative. To view this in a framework of performativity, the establishment and maintenance of a profile is not a representation or biography but a performative act, which constitutes the digital self and stabilizes it over time as an effect of particular choices. Written, selected and revised, this is a performance that requires carefully chosen responses to present an intelligible self with integrity, unification and recognizable coherence (Cover, 2012).

In this paper, we address the performativity on social media by looking at the issue of sexual minorities in Indonesia, which consistently presents challenges for Indonesian society. The issue of sexual minorities became viral in 2016, when The Minister of Research and Technology in Indonesia issued a statement against sexual minorities. He said that groups of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people are not allowed in campuses because they were not in accordance with existing norms (Batubara, 2016). Following that, in 2017, the issue of sexual minorities was also heavily discussed regarding the criminalization of sexual minorities in the RKUHP (Indonesian draft of the criminal code). It began when the Indonesian constitutional court refused to try lawsuits involving sexual minorities and adultery, instead submitting it to the house of representatives and the government to regulate it in law. Then, a member of Commission III in the House of Representatives, Taufiqulhadi, said the law related to sexual minorities and adultery must indeed be included in the Criminal Code, meaning to strengthen the existing laws related to it (Indrawan, 2017).

Since 2017, the 'pros and cons' of sexual minorities have become a hot topic in Indonesia, especially on social media. Although the issues discussed are frequently the same, the discussions that occur can be very different between the Facebook pages that are anti-sexual minorities and those which

adopt a pro-sexual minorities position. As Barad (2003) said, what is needed is a robust account of the materialization of all bodies—“human” and “nonhuman”—and the material-discursive practices by which their differential constitutions are marked. This will require an understanding of the nature of the relationship between discursive practices and material phenomena, an accounting of “nonhuman” as well as “human” forms of agency, and an understanding of the precise causal nature of productive practices which takes account of the fullness of matter’s implication in its ongoing historicity. An example is given in Figure 1 and Figure 2.



Figure 1. AILA Indonesia’s post and its comments



Figure 2. Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi’s post and its comments

Figure 1 is a Facebook post from the *AILA Indonesia*, positioned as an ‘anti-sexual minorities’ group. The screengrab shows how AILA submitted input on the draft of the criminal Code in a public hearing session with the House of Representatives. *AILA Indonesia* sees that ‘free sex’ and ‘sexual minorities’ are harmful and inconsistent with the character of the Indonesian nation. At the end of the post, *AILA Indonesia* invited all elements of the nation to protect or ‘escort’ the discussion of the Draft of the Criminal Code for the safety of the Indonesian family in accordance with the guidance of God Almighty. The comment column under the Facebook post shows a lot of support for this position for moral reasons, and seems to frame the issue as ‘saving’ the Indonesian people, because sexual minorities are not in accordance with religious values.

In contrast to Figure 1, Figure 2 is a Facebook post from *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi*, which positions itself as ‘pro-LGBTQ.’ In the post, *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* writes that they are grateful for the support in their struggle against the oppression of sexual minorities. *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* also stated that the rejection of judicial review by the Constitutional Court is a victory for those who uphold the values of Indonesia, where all are supposedly united in diversity. The comment column in the Facebook post shows support for *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi’s* actions in support of sexual minorities, and also highlights their fears of division in Indonesia.

Both posts show the attitudes of two different patterns by two different groups. Seen from the Facebook posts from *AILA Indonesia*, their patterns are the ‘religious and sexual minorities as a disease’ narrative, while in Facebook posts from *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi*, the patterns highlight the issue of diversity. These patterns performed by both groups are interesting to analyze. When we take Barad’s posthumanist performativity into account, the different patterns are produced in processes of entanglement of technology and practices. For example, *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* used a *hashtag* to give an impression on how important the issue of diversity is, and to make the post easily accessible, meanwhile *AILA Indonesia* only used words to explain their stance on the issue of sexual minorities. As Cover (2012) said, on social networking sites such as Facebook, the tools for performative coherence are supplied in the profile management interface – although one does not necessarily need to utilize them all – and these provide a discursive structure or framework that can be utilized to give performative acts of identity consistency and coherence.

In order to understand these phenomena, this article analyzes how a posthumanist performativity perspective shapes the pattern of behavior

surrounding the issue of sexual minorities on social media in Indonesia. We use an online ethnography to analyze these phenomena. As Mare (2017) said, an ethnography of social media is a negotiated experience whose essence prescribes an understanding of people's perspectives 'from the inside,' while also viewing them more distantly to allow for in-depth analysis. It has dealt with the mechanics of online participant observation on Facebook and various ethical dilemmas.

The Posthumanist Performativity Perspective

In order to understand Barad's posthumanist performativity perspective, an understanding of practice theory is needed. According to Schatzki (2001), in social theory, practice approaches promulgate a distinct social ontology: the social is a field of embodied, materially interwoven practices centrally organized around shared practical understanding. Couldry (2004) also said that the value of practice theory is to ask open questions about what people are doing and how they categorize what they are doing, avoiding disciplinary limitations or other preconceptions that would automatically read their actions as, say, "consumption" or "being-an-audience", whether or not that is how the actors see their actions. Thus, this leads us to media practice. A practice approach to media frames its questions by reference, not to media considered as objects, texts, apparatuses of perception or production processes, but to what people are doing in relation to media in the contexts in which they act (Couldry, 2012).

Barad uses the notion of performativity as a diffraction grating for reading important insights from feminist and queer studies and science studies through one another, while simultaneously proposing a materialist and posthumanist reworking of the notion of performativity. This entails a reworking of the familiar notions of discursive practices, materialization, agency, and causality, among others (Barad, 2003). Furthermore, she introduced agential intra-actions as a specific for the causal material enactments that may or may not involve "humans." It is through such practices that the differential boundaries between "humans" and "nonhumans," "culture" and "nature," the "social" and the "scientific" are constituted. Phenomena are therefore fundamentally constitutive of reality. Reality is not composed of things-in-themselves or things-behind-phenomena but "things"-in-phenomena (Barad, 2003).

Following Barad's perspective, we can see Facebook as the nonhuman material in this study of posthumanist performativity. As Cantijoch, Galandini

and Gibson (2016) said, the collective nature of any form of community engagement appeared to be the key trigger of feelings of efficacy. The value of joining forces to achieve collective goals also emerged in the open-ended diary entries. Feeling close and attached to a specific community and being supported by other people in the area when trying to resolve local issues together, were described as a stimulus for individual engagement and were linked to feelings of satisfaction and efficacy. Such communities mostly act autonomously, organize their own structures and collaboration, and use technology in order to meet particular challenges and problems. In such situations, the community as a whole develops and constructs new knowledge while the community members also individually advance and refine their own knowledge. So individual learning and collaborative knowledge construction are interdependent and occur simultaneously (Kimmerle, Moskaliuk, Oeberst and Cress, 2015).

Finally, to understand Facebook as a nonhuman material, we also need to look at how Facebook groups post on their 'wall' from time to time, because one group will take affordances differently to another. As Bardone (2011) said, the notion of affordance is fundamental for two reasons. First of all, it defines the nature of the relationship between an agent and its environment. Second, this notion may provide a general framework to illustrate humans as 'chance seekers.' Furthermore, he said, the notion of affordances will provide a suitable conceptual framework to illustrate the construction of ever more symptomatic external structures for making decisions and solving problems. Chances are not simply information, but they are "affordances", namely, environmental anchors that allow us to better exploit external resources (Bardone, 2011). According to Boyd (2011), networked technologies introduce new affordances for amplifying, recording, and spreading information and social acts. These affordances can shape public discourses and how people negotiate them. While such affordances do not determine social practice, they can destabilize core assumptions people make when engaging in social life. As such, they can reshape the public both directly and through the practices that people develop to account for these affordances.

Methods and Data

The data in this research was collected using an online ethnography method. Ethnography sits at the point of tension between trying to understand people's perspectives from the inside while also viewing them and their behavior more distantly, in ways that may be alien (and perhaps even objectionable) to

them (Hammersley, 2006). According to Geertz (in Beneito-Montagut, 2011), ethnography analyses human practices in the context of culture, and now the internet is part of our culture, with meanings, symbols, and a 'system of conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about attitudes towards life'. Regarding online communities, Ignacio (2012) said that context is not only tied to the specific listserve, medium, and/or social networking site (such as Facebook, Twitter, or MySpace), rather it is also tied to time and, often, a knowledge of a nonvirtual context to which the participant is responding. These online social groups are constituted by the social networks among members, which create their own distinct culture. This culture provides a set of shared conceptions and representations about the social life developed by the group, as well as clues regarding the 'proper' behavior which frames the way interactions develop (Guimarães Jr., 2005). Furthermore, to conduct an online ethnography, the everyday life of a social media ethnographer involves living part of one's life on the internet and keeping up to date with and participating and collaborating in social media discussions. This is not simply a virtual experience but is connected to the material world in important ways (Postill and Pink, 2012).

We collected the data using observations and in-depth interviews. The observation data was gathered online by looking at *AILA Indonesia* (a group positioning itself as being 'anti-sexual minorities') and *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* (a group positioning itself as 'pro-sexual minorities') Facebook groups' posts, in the period between March 2016, at the beginning of a period in which the issue of sexual minorities became a huge issue in Indonesia, until July 2018, when sexual minorities were being criminalized by the Draft of the Criminal Code of Indonesia. Then, a second round of observation data was gathered by looking at their members' personal Facebook account posts. Finally, an in-depth interview was used to obtain focused and interactive information about the research topic. Before conducting the interview, the respondents were asked to sign a consent form in which they were assured that their data would remain confidential, only the members of the project (researchers, examiners and the reviewers of the scientific housework) have access to the original data. The presentation of the examination results takes place exclusively in an anonymous form and their personal information is changed in such a way that no conclusions can be drawn about the original person.

To analyze the data using Barad's posthumanist performativity perspective, we started by capturing the Facebook posts related to the issue of sexual

minorities from two Facebook groups, and also from our selected respondents' personal Facebook accounts. Then, the data was reviewed to identify any patterns of discussion using online ethnography. After that, examples of the pattern were taken and presented in this paper. Our findings in this paper are only an example of the repetitive pattern of discussion that we identified in our data. In order to do this research, both of the admin of *AILA Indonesia* and *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* gave permission to use their data. Based on that, some members contributing to the sexual minorities discussion in each group became the respondents.

From several private messages, four people (two from *AILA Indonesia* and two from *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi*) agreed to be observed and interviewed, they are Mama, Riza, Dicky, and Bunny. These are not their real names, and the name used has been agreed upon the respondents. The interviews were conducted in Indonesian and translated into English with proofreading. The captured data from social media was also blurred and paraphrased to protect the identity of the respondents, because both social media and interview data are under consent of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) article 6 (a) and (b), that said "processing shall be lawful only if and to the extent that at least one of the following applies: (a) the data subject has given consent to the processing of his or her personal data for one or more specific purposes; (b) processing is necessary for the performance of a contract to which the data subject is party or in order to take steps at the request of the data subject prior to entering into a contract" (GDPR, n.d.).

Viewing the Issue of Sexual Minorities from a Posthumanist Performativity Perspective

From a practice theoretical perspective, the ethnographic field is constructed by the actions and expressions of the people we study and by the ethnographer's decisions about the connections s/he follows and forms; the field constantly evolves as the fieldwork progresses (Cruz and Ardevol, 2015). In this regard, we analyzed how both groups have different understanding of sexual minorities as a social issue. We divided our results into three categories of "doings", they are: "referring to something", "framing the issue", and "using hashtags". We used the concept of "doings" because of Barad's use of the term "doing" in referring to the enactment of boundaries—which always entails constitutive exclusions and therefore requisite questions of accountability (Barad, 2003).

The first category of doing is “referring to something”. When talking about sexual minorities, both groups refer to sexual minorities within the context of their own narratives. As a result, they create different patterns on this matter. *AILA Indonesia* presents sexual minorities as a threat and against religion, which means sexual minorities endanger Indonesia’s next generation, and highlight the fact supposedly no religion in Indonesia accepts sexual minorities. We can see examples in Figures 3 and 4.



Figure 3. *AILA Indonesia* Facebook’s post about adultery and homosexuality being against religion and morality

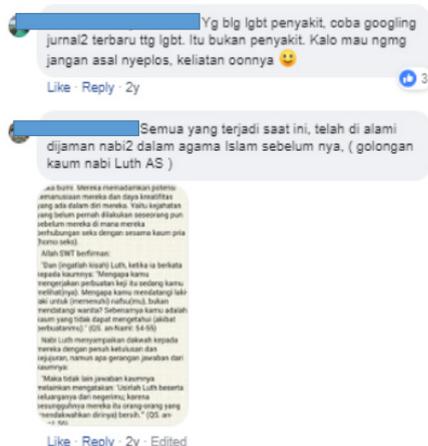


Figure 4. *AILA Indonesia* Facebook’s comment section.

Figure 3 shows *AILA Indonesia*’s post about the perspective of one of the lecturers at the University of Indonesia. This lecturer commented on the concept of the article in the Indonesia’s Criminal Code, based on the argument that sexual obscenity and homosexuality are incompatible with the character of the Indonesian people, and how all religions in Indonesia supposedly prohibit sexual minorities. *AILA Indonesia* consistently builds an anti-sexual minorities narrative by selecting harsh words to refer to sexual minorities such as “perpetrators”, “threats”, “sexual deviations” and other similar terms in their posts. In addition, *AILA Indonesia* has also consistently posted links that show the reason why they resist the recognition of sexual minorities is due to their role as vanguards or symbols of a Western secularism that is itself incompatible with Indonesia as religious country, news of the existence of gay prostitution that endangers the next generation, argumentation about natural disasters as a punishment from God because of sexual minorities, and so on. The selection of these posts builds a narrative so that the members

of *AILA Indonesia* have a common perspective on how sexual minorities themselves are a concern that needs to be addressed because it is contrary to their religion. In Figure 4, we can see a user responded to one of *AILA Indonesia*'s post by including the Qur'anic verses about the story of Prophet Lot and sexual minorities. There are also posts about earthquakes in which they blame the sexual minorities because of this Prophet Lot story in the Qur'an.

Furthermore, *AILA Indonesia* tends to use religion as a key issue in explaining everything on their Facebook posts. Based on our observations, *AILA Indonesia* posts about sexual minorities only when they go viral in Indonesia. When sexual minorities cases are no longer viral, *AILA Indonesia* changes their posting pattern to other recent issues in the public discourse. We can see this phenomenon in Figure 5 below.



Figure 5. *AILA Indonesia*'s post about viral earthquakes news in Indonesia

Figure 5 is an example of *AILA Indonesia*'s post in response to a viral news about a large earthquake that could potentially damage Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia. Although *AILA Indonesia* did not post about the sexual minorities, the pattern of "religious" was still visible from their words "*Saatnya bertobat. Bukan bermaksiat*" which means "It's time to repent. Do not commit immorality."

We also can see how *AILA Indonesia* uses their Facebook group to co-produce an understanding of sexual minorities as an issue to their members. Our respondents demonstrate this both on their personal account posts and in their interviews. Our respondents from *AILA Indonesia* often used religious terminology when talking about sexual minorities. For example, Mama's understanding of the sexual minorities issue is based on the understanding of the religion she receives, as she said in the interview.

“I know that LGBT is a sexual deviation. So, I think lesbian, homosexual, as far as I know, it is indeed a sexual deviation. I understand it (sexual minorities) from the Qur’an. So, my first understanding of religion is from the Qur’an. So, it was about the Prophet Lot, from Al-A’raf verse 80. I knew it from there, but after it developed then, of course, we knew more from the other readings.”

Consistency in viewing the issue of sexual minorities using religious perspectives is also seen in Mama's online media readings. Her online media sources mostly come from *AILA Indonesia*, even though Mama only posted the issue on her wall once when she reshared the post from *AILA Indonesia* (see Figure 6).



Figure 6. Mama re-posted a post from *AILA Indonesia*.

Figure 6 shows Mama re-posting *AILA Indonesia*'s post about public hearings regarding the Indonesian Draft of the Criminal Code, in which there is an article on sexual minorities' potential criminalization. *AILA Indonesia*'s position on this matter is to support the ratification of the Sexual Minorities Criminalization Article as one of the articles to be added to the Indonesian Criminal Code.

Our other respondent from *AILA Indonesia*, Riza, also used religious perspectives in his understanding of the sexual minorities issue. Riza obtained information about sexual minorities from many Islamic articles and from watching a psychological debate in *Indonesia Lawyers Club* (a television talk show in Indonesia). He also read some psychological articles based on that show, such as a book about equality from an Islamic perspective by Ardian Husaini. By learning from those sources, he believed that there is an ideology behind sexual minorities.

“LGBT is actually an abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. For me, it is a deviation from human nature. For me, LGBT is a feminist product and a skepticism toward human creation. That’s basic. So, when someone argues on that aspect, I don’t understand it. Yes, I have concerns because I am scared. I have seven children and follow their progress, and it turns out that LGBT is also involving itself in the domestic arena, for example, there are television shows that support LGBT. I was shocked that there are kid shows promoting LGBT.”

Riza’s view of sexual minorities from a religious perspective is also reflected in his posts on his personal Facebook account. Riza’s fear of sexual minorities and Riza’s reasons for rejecting them due to the fact that it violates human nature, as he revealed in the interview, is also reflected in his posts (see Figure 7).

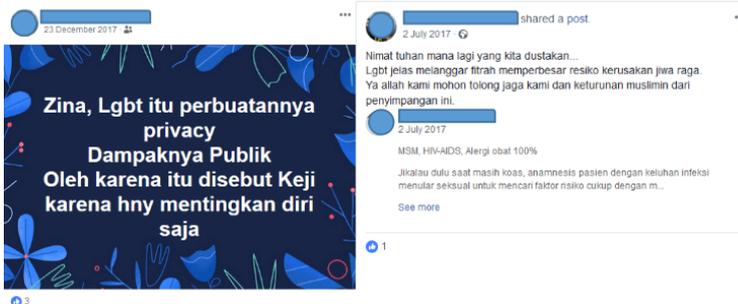


Figure 7. Riza’s posts related to sexual minorities issues

This figure shows Riza's rejection of sexual minorities because of their potential impact on the public. Riza also believed that sexual minorities violate human nature because they inherently violates God's blessings and damages the body and the soul. Riza's rejection of sexual minorities is also based on his online reading materials like what was posted on his personal account below (see Figure 8).



Figure 8. Riza's posts about sexual minorities issues

Figure 8 shows the online media links posted by Riza, which provide an overview of sexual minorities as he understands them. Those links explain the rise of sexual minorities as a transmission movement and also invites parents to be aware of the mode of sexual abuse committed by sexual minorities. The links from those online media provide the basic argumentation for Riza's rejection of sexual minorities.

In contrast, *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* presents sexual minorities as a diversity issue, which means sexual minorities are a part of the fabric of social diversity, and God does not hate sexual minorities. We can see some example in Figures 9 and 10.



Figure 9. *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* Facebook post about understanding sexual minorities



Figure 10. *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* Facebook comment section.

Figure 9 shows how *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* built narratives about sexual minorities, providing explanations about sexual minorities based on principles of gender diversity. They consistently build narratives from positions stating that god does not hate sexual minorities, such as a post about the existence of gay priests in South Africa, how UK government vows to end the practice of gay conversion therapy, an explanation of who views that being a member of a sexual minority is not a disease, and many others. In Figure 10, there is a user reaction to another who stated that sexual minorities are inherently wrong because they do not follow god's rules. The reaction that arose in response to this statement was a refusal, like when other users questioned why god judged others and wrote that god actually taught love and did not hurt others even though they sinned. In addition, the user also prayed that God will always bestow mercy, and suggested that the truth should not be debated because truth can always be accepted by common sense.

Furthermore, in contrast to *AILA Indonesia*, *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* often posts things related to sexual minorities, even when the issue of sexual minorities is not viral in Indonesia. Even though there are some posts that are not related to sexual minorities, the posts still relate to gender or sexuality issues. We can see an example in Figure 11 below.



Figure 11. *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi's* posts about transgender and sexuality

Figure 11 is an example of *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi's* posts. On the left side is a link about the first trans man working in a public office in Japan. On the right side is a link to articles about sexuality from a music composer in Indonesia. Both posts show the consistency of the “diversity” pattern used by *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi*, in this case is the diversity of sexuality. When

we observe our respondents' accounts, this diversity pattern is also shown in their understanding of the sexual minorities issue. We also can see how *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* use their Facebook groups to co-produce an understanding of issues pertaining to sexual minorities to their members. Our respondents show it both on their personal account posts and in their interviews. Our respondents from *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* often use the diversity pattern when talking about sexual minorities. For example, Dicky's understanding of sexual minorities is based on an understanding of diversity, as he said in the interview. Dicky's view of diversity is what underlies Dicky's understanding of sexual minorities.

"There are three important things: sexual orientation, gender and sex. Sexual orientation is different from gender. Sometimes people still think that gender and sex are the same, for example, if the sex is male, then he has a masculine gender, right? But for me, gender is masculine and feminine. So, for most people, It should be reviewed again, be more specific."

From the interview, we can see that Dicky's understanding of sexual minorities refers more to a gender diversity perspective. This was also supported by Dicky's reading material in the form of online journals and articles, as expressed in his interview. Dicky also did not hesitate to voice his support for sexual minorities on his personal account. We can see an example in Figure 12 below.



Figure 12. Dicky's posts about issues for sexual minorities on his personal Facebook account

Figure 12 shows Dicky re-posted information from the *Indonesian Feminist* Facebook page, which denounced the arrest of Atlantis Gym and Sauna visitors (a place associated with sexual minorities) because it was

considered as violent and inhumane. Figure 12 also shows how Dicky supported sexual minorities by thanking the Indonesian Constitutional Court for making a decision not to criminalize sexual minorities, because Dicky argued that sexual minorities are also citizens entitled to legal protection. This was also revealed by Dicky in the interview.

Our other respondent from *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi*, Bunny, also uses diversity perspectives in understanding the issue of sexual minorities. However, Bunny used it in a sarcastic way to explain the sexual minorities analogy.

“I think that LGBT is just a sexual preference, not about sin, not about political rights or anything. It’s like choosing between chocolate cake or vanilla cake, just like that. So, when people want to debate it, it’s like watching a series of “Friends”, it’s just funny.”

Bunny also posted his support for sexual minorities on his personal Facebook account several times, although sometimes Bunny’s form of support for sexual minorities was by re-posting the anti-sexual minorities posts. This is done to show that there are people outside who have different opinions. We can see an example in Figure 13 below.



Figure 13. Bunny re-posting anti-sexual minorities links on his personal Facebook account

Figure 13 shows a link to anti-sexual minorities content that states that homosexual punishment in Islam by being killed, burned and thrown from a height. Figure 13 also shows a link that contains the opinion of a psychiatrist who states that homosexuality is a mental disorder. When re-posting the two links, Bunny did not give any personal opinion because he only wanted to show that there was an opinion opposite him. This was also confirmed by Bunny in his interview.

“I’m the type of person who, for example, when someone posted something on Facebook, I repost it, I just repost it, whether I add a little caption or not. I’m not the type of person who, well, if I don’t like it, I unfollow it or even unfriend them, no. The goal is to share, showing that there are people out there who don’t agree with you, just like that, like putting up billboards.”

The different patterns of “referring to something” can be explained by looking at Barad’s performativity perspective of intra-action. By positioning the issue of sexual minorities as an *intra-action*, we can say that this issue is understood differently, depending on the practice they are situated within. In our case, it depends on how different groups create the narratives on their Facebook posts. As Barad said, queer is not a fixed determinate term; it does not have a stable referential context, which is not say that it means anything anyone wants it to be (Barad, 2011).

The second type of doing is “framing the issue”. When talking about issues related to sexual minorities, both groups tend to put sexual minorities into their own discursive action according to what they believe. In this regard, *AILA Indonesia* frames “sexual minorities as a disease”, which means sexual minorities are dangerous and contagious for humanity. We can see an example in Figure 14.



Figure 14. *AILA Indonesia* Facebook’s post about homosexuality as possibly contagious

Figure 14 shows *AILA Indonesia*'s post about how many "victims" of sodomy become homosexuals, proving that homosexuality is contagious. The post builds a narrative so that the members of *AILA Indonesia* have a common interest about how sexual minorities needs to be addressed because they are dangerous. The understanding of sexual minorities as a disease also can be found in an interview with our respondents. For example, Mama consistently referred to sexual minorities as a disease in her statement. She also stated that a "solution" was needed for sexual minorities. We can see it from her interview.

"I'm okay with seeing LGBT as a disease because maybe they feel that it's their soul, it doesn't matter. But when they do it openly, I don't think it is worth consuming for the public. Openly in public means they make a LGBT community and say that they need protection like a victim, and not that it's actually their desire to be LGBT. Well, when they think as a victim and as a disease, then let's find the solution and treat them right."

In contrast, *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* frames sexual minorities as "not a disease", which means sexual minorities are just ordinary human beings. We can see an example in Figure 15 below.



Figure 15. *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* posting to counter ideas that sexual minorities are contagious

Figure 15 is a post from *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* which explains why many people consider sexual minorities to be contagious. According to this post, it is because of normative hetero-cisgender views circulating in the community, giving rise to stereotypes about sexual minorities. Through this post, *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* positioned that sexual minorities are not a disease. *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* also consistently provides information about sexual minorities not being a disease, by giving a WHO statement which stated sexual minorities are not a disease. The understanding of sexual minorities as ‘not a disease’ can also be found in the interviews with our respondents. For example, from Dicky’s interview we know that he understands sexual minorities are not different from heterosexual people. We can see it from his interview.

“For me, LGBT people are not different from other people. I mean, they are like normal people. They only have different sexual orientations; some LGBT people get that from birth and some get it from their ancestors.”

The different patterns of “framing the issue” can be explained by looking at Barad’s performativity perspective of materiality and discursive practice. Here, understanding the issues related to sexual minorities as the material and the way in shaping the understanding (e.g., through online articles, scientific research, or personal statements) as a discursive practice. As Barrad said, discursive practices are fully implicated in the dynamics of intra-activity through which phenomena come to matter. The relationship between the material and the discursive is one of mutual entailment (Barad, 2003)

The third type of doing is “using hashtags”. When talking about the issue of sexual minorities, both groups use *hashtags* differently. *AILA Indonesia* uses “*hashtags* as emotion”, which means they use *hashtags* to emphasize certain emotion. Meanwhile, *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* used “*hashtags* as campaigns”, which means they use *hashtags* for an informational purpose. For *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi*, *hashtags* have the potential to link a broad range of posts on a specific topic. We can see examples of the different uses of *hashtags* in Figures 16 and 17.



Figure 16. The use of the *hashtags* on *AILA Indonesia*’s page



Figure 17. The use of the hashtags in a *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* post

In Figure 16, a user commented on the *AILA Indonesia* comment section using the *#elusdada* hashtag, only to express his concern for his “stubborn sexual minorities who did not want to be healed” comment, even though he already had written links related to sexual minorities being cured. The use of hashtags by the user in Figure 16 is different from the use of hashtags conducted by *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi*, because the hashtag that is being used is not intended for campaigns or easy access to look for certain information but as an expression of feelings. This shows that hashtags have the potential to link a broad range of posts on a specific topic and to express certain meanings of Facebook comments.

In Figure 17, we can see how *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* uses the hashtag as a campaign that allows users to search for certain content. *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* makes certain hashtags that are used to highlight certain issues, such as the *#IDAHOT2016* hashtag used to discuss sexual minorities issues related to International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia in 2016. Additionally, the *#YouAreNotAlone* hashtag is often used for providing support to sexual minorities who feel discriminated by the society. Through those hashtags, *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* seeks to call attention to issues surrounding sexual minorities that they are fighting for, and point to further context, communities and information spheres.

The different use of *hashtags* from both groups show how structures and processes of affordances are enacted and emergent as Facebook users draw upon Facebook features in their performativity. From the observation, *AILA Indonesia* used *hashtags* as affirmation of the statement that was being made. These kind of *hashtags* became a discussion pattern on the *AILA Indonesia* page, as can be seen from the number of unrelated *hashtags* that appears in their posts. In the other hand, *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* used *hashtags* as a tool of spreading information, like when they used *#IDAHOT* *hashtag* frequently during April and May to promote the event.

In summary, to answer the research question of this chapter the performativity between humans and nonhumans plays important parts in

shaping the pattern of discourse surrounding issues about sexual minorities. From the nonhuman aspect, Facebook groups help create patterns of doings around the issue of sexual minorities. As Altheide (2013) said, new technologies reflect, refine, and contribute to negotiating social interaction within institutionally mediated contexts. New technologies and formats have altered the communication order, while expanding surveillance, even as everyday life activities integrate media forms. Furthermore, Gherardi (2009) also said that knowledge is therefore not only an activity situated in practices, but it is also an activity distributed between humans and non-humans. Objects, tools, and artifacts embody knowledge; they anchor practices in their materiality; they interrogate humans and are extensions of their memory. Here, we can see how both Facebook groups co-produce different understandings of sexual minorities' issues as a result of different patterns of doings. Those patterns are corresponding because both *AILA Indonesia* and *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi* are always referring to each other in responding to the issue of sexual minorities. Furthermore, Facebook features that are available, such as links, comment sections, and photos, also help in shaping the different understandings about sexual minorities between *AILA Indonesia* and *Perkumpulan Arus Pelangi*.

Conclusion

Although discussing the same issue, people can have different understandings, as clearly highlighted from the four respondents in this study. Their understanding of sexual minorities is also related to their way of engaging with social media. In this regard, Facebook groups shape issues by making different patterns of doings. As Couldry (2004) said, "media consumption" or "audiencing" can only be understood as part of a practice that is not itself "about" media: what practice this is depends on whom we are describing and when (Couldry, 2004). Furthermore, Barad (2003) also said that practices of knowing and being are not isolatable, but rather they are mutually implicated. We do not obtain knowledge by standing outside of the world; we know because "we" are *of* the world.

Therefore, understanding posthuman performativity can make a positive contribution to media literacy practice. As Dezuanni (2017) said, media literacy should create safe environments for performative variation, and media literacy matters most when people are able to *speak about, with* and *through* media concepts and technologies in ways that vary normativity. The limitation of this study is that the four respondents did not represent

Indonesian society, they only indicated how we can learn their way of thinking through their social media performativity. Information technologies provide a means by which people can be exposed to experiences very different from their own, enabling them to extend their experiences beyond their own communities. At the same time, experience of the 'Other' through technology raises issues around authenticity and power in the 'virtual reality' that can be accessed (Conole and Dyke, 2004).

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“Hey... #folback my Instagram, Please!”: Practices of Privacy and Experiences of Bullying of Indonesian Youth

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Abstract

Social Network Sites (SNS) have emerged as a major issue in the media landscape over the last 10 years. On one hand, SNS are believed to assist youth in their personal development, by increasing their communication and self-presentation to others. SNS can also contribute to a reduction of privacy and increase the possibility of misuse by other parties. This contradiction has been identified as making youth more vulnerable to the phenomena of “cyberbullying”. Since cyberspace allows someone to appear anonymously, “traditional” (physical and non-physical) bullying victims have new ways fight back against perpetrators. Additionally, perpetrators of “traditional” bullying in the offline sphere could be provided more space to attack the victim online. This chapter investigates the privacy practices of Indonesian youths on SNS to reveal interplay among internet use, privacy practices in SNS and cyberbullying experiences. 1194 students from 7th – 12th grade were recruited to participate in this research. The research found that even though female students are more active than their male peers in using the internet, they are more likely to avoid risky online activities. Almost all of the student respondents had at least one SNS account, with many having accounts across multiple platforms. Males experienced a higher frequency of being both victim and perpetrator of cyberbullying than female students. It is found that students’ bullying experiences—either as victims or as perpetrators, either in face-to-face or online interactions, either physical or non-physical—are all intercorrelated. The “roles” of victim and perpetrator appear interchangeable in some cases.

Keywords: youth, internet use, social network sites, privacy practices, cyberbullying, perpetrators

Indonesian Internet Euphoria

Along with the development of telecommunications infrastructure, the number of Indonesian internet users has exploded in recent years. According to the Indonesia Internet Service Provider Association (APJII, 2024), there are 215 million internet users in Indonesia, of which 26.5% of them are youth (5-19 years old). Using social network applications was the most preferred online activity chosen by Indonesian youth, at about 84.4% of youth users. It was followed by reading news (84.3%) and accessing entertainment websites (83.8%).

About 99.5% internet users accessed the internet through their mobile devices, with only 0.5% through a computer. These youth reported actively accessing the Internet to download music, to play online games, to get involved in social networking, to chat with other online users, and various other online activities.

When making use of the internet, some youth are apparently unable to control their antisocial instincts, which may be attributed to the anonymity of cyber space. Lee (2007) referred to anonymity as an internet privacy dimension relating to a basic privacy interest in surfing the web and communicating online anonymously. Further, Lee stated that, in less developed societies, little privacy control is afforded because all persons depend on open participation alongside others. Meanwhile Livingstone (2008) found that many children created an account on social networking sites (SNS) by feigning their year of birth making them appear older in order to meet the terms and conditions of the site.

For youths, leisure time with SNS is considered a fun recreational activity, a space where they can share a range of positive experiences from their life-their activities, photos, profile, comments, and knowledge. According to Liu, Ang, and Lwin (2016), it could be symbolic of their existence in their peer groups. Through SNS they can have contact with other people who they care about, such as romantic partners, teachers, idols, prominent people, or even interesting strangers. This is an exciting experience on one hand, but it risks many potential problems arising at the same time.

Meanwhile, bullying, both traditional and via the internet, has also become a major problem in the last 10 years (Amelia, 2011; Adit, 2010). Ipsos (The Jakarta Globe, 2012) indicated that 91% of Indonesian parents are aware that their child or a child in their community has experienced cyberbullying. According to the Indonesian National Commission for Child Protection, cyberbullying is a form of psychological aggression, and can include experiences such as name calling, insulting, or threatening someone with violence.

The impact of cyberbullying on the victim can potentially be more damaging than traditional bullying outside the online space. This situation could be due to difficulties in identifying the perpetrators, the frequency and intensity of the bullying, and the lack of safe spaces where a victim can find respite. The experience of cyberbullying might cause the victim to feel valueless, isolated, and dehumanized. In some cases of cyberbullying, the victims end their life because of negative feelings associated with the cyberbullying.

Prior research on cyberbullying in Indonesia was done by Akbar, Huang, and Anwar (2014), who did research on developing a cyberbullying scale to investigate bullies among Indonesian adolescents. It aimed to develop and to validate a cyberbullying scale for bullies as a research instrument. That research was conducted in a senior high school in Bireun, in the Special Region of Aceh Province, through survey involving 245 students. Willard's (2007) cyberbullying conceptions were used as the indicators of cyberbullying: flaming, harassment, stalking, denigration, impersonating, outing and trickery, and exclusion. Results of the study showed the cyberbullying scale for bullies to have internal consistency and be highly reliable, that the Cronbach's alpha of scale was greater than 0.910, and the item scale coefficients were greater than 0.30.

Other researchers, Margono, Yi, and Raikundalia (2014), explored the pattern of cyberbullying of Indonesian youth on social network sites (SNS), by mining words which were commonly used to bully someone on SNS. That study used software to collect words which were related to insulting someone from Twitter users in two of the biggest cities in Indonesia: Jakarta and Surabaya. Uniquely Indonesian bullying words, which related to animals, psychology, disability, and attitude. The example is "*kamu gila, perilakumu seperti anjing, bangsat!*" (You are crazy, you act like a dog, you rascal!). The research identified four words which are commonly used by Indonesian Twitter users to curse, which were "*anjing*" (dog), "*bangsat*" (rascal), "*setan*" (satan), and "*iblis*" (devil). It concluded that the perpetrators of cyberbullying have a social attitude problem in which they always feel superior to the victims. Then usually they invite their friends and other followers to be involved in the cyberbullying also.

The Double-Edged Sword of the Internet: Opportunities and Risks

It cannot be denied that Internet use in adolescents brings the debate on the opportunities and risks associated with it into the public sphere. The magnitude of opportunity and risk gained by youth activity in the SNS is

debatable. Hasebrink and Lampert (2011) categorized media as being 'risky' if youth are positioned purely as recipients of mass-produced images or text, to which may be unwittingly or unwillingly exposed online, including pornographic content, racist/hateful content, embedded marketing, gambling, sexual harassment, cyberbullying, and so on.

Alternatively, Livingstone and Brake (2010) stated that opportunities and risk are linked. The more opportunities that are gained by youth, the more risks they are likely to encounter. The more skilled youth become in their use of the internet, the more they have experience both opportunities and risks. Accordingly, Park (2011) argued that technical familiarity in digital media and online experiences especially impacted an individual's privacy strategy. Privacy is an important issue in digital media usage because of online infrastructure's enormous processing and storing capacity. Any information could be very easily stored, duplicated, distributed, presenting a significant threat to an individual's right to privacy.

A study by Debatin, Lovejoy, Horn, Hughes, and Brittany (2009) showed that social network sites' users were very careless in disclosing their personal data. They did not know about the privacy policy, used the privacy settings inconsistently, or did not know of the privacy policy at all. Furthermore, some users were aware of the potential risks to privacy on SNS but did not adjust their behavior accordingly. Livingstone, Haddon, Görzig, and Ólafsson (2011) emphasized the importance of comprehension to both of the circumstances and consequences of being bullied, and the act bullying in bullying research. It might be assumed that there is a cultural context to bullying. Furthermore, O'Neil and Dinh (2015) stated that the usage of gadgets (smartphone or tablet) with mobile internet facilities in adolescents is considered to increase the chances of cyberbullying several times over. Mobile internet allows them to be continuously online and connected to the virtual world. The more often they were online, the more likely they were to be exposed to bullying in cyber space.

Privacy

Altman (1977), a social and environmental psychologist, defines privacy as "a selective control of access to the self, involving dialectic, optimization, and multimodal process". He also stated that privacy is an attitude emerging dynamically, and it is dialectically related to the interaction in social life. Sometimes people open themselves to others, but at other points shut access down. This dialectical process produces an open-or-closed-person policy which will be repeated at certain times, depending on the social challenges

faced by individuals. Privacy is a nonmonotonic, which means that a person's relationship to, and practice of, privacy, need not be attributed to the same reasons in each instance. The mechanism will move dynamically according to the psychological needs of the individual. Privacy is not just a set of rigid verbal or para-verbal behaviors such as identifying personal space and being territorial with others, but rather involves a cultural system capable of adjusting the privacy mechanism in a person. Altman's statement is corroborated by Westin (2003), in that any concept of privacy is contextual. Privacy is a part of the culture of democracy, which entitles a person to "have a private space" in public life.

In relation to privacy in social networking internet activities, Peter and Valkenburg (2011) cited the concept of "public networked" from Boyd (2010), which is defined as "a public that are restructured by networked technology". Technology sets the flow of information in the networked public and sets both the interaction of people with the information and their relations to other people. Digital technologies have the ability to store, duplicate, distribute, and trace information easily. The affordances of content in networked publics are difficult to control, even by the owner of the information themselves. Therefore, Peter and Valkenburg stated that there is a contradiction between adolescent involvement in SNS and privacy. On one hand, SNS can help adolescents to achieve a degree of personal development: individuation, self-presentation, self-disclosure, and sexual self-exploration; but on the other side SNS reveals their privacy in public, which could make them susceptible to being misused by other parties.

Accordingly, Marwick and Boyd (2014) stated the importance of teenagers having improved privacy practices in this new digitally networked era. Swidler (2001) elaborated "practices" as a daily routine that people do without "thinking intensively" to do so; tends spontaneously or "automatic". Swidler linked "practices" as a routine or habits of an individual in using her/his body daily - which "taken-for-granted" for space, food, clothing, music - in social routines which she/he knows well, and she/he could improvise spontaneously. Thus, privacy practices could be routine activities to set individual privacy policies of people in digital networking, which could be done without "thinking intensively", "automatically", and which could be improvised spontaneously.

Meanwhile, Ziegele and Quiring (2011) highlighted the issue of informational privacy, which is closely related to the policy on how to control our self-disclosure on SNS, and how people decide to release and withhold information, as well as the spatial and personal restriction of access to

private information. Dienlin and Trepte (2015) used the term “privacy behavior” to explain “any behavior which is intended to improve relationships with others, either through self-disclosure restrictions or by avoiding interaction with others”.

Furthermore, Ziegele and Quiring (2011) stated that violations of privacy arise because of unwanted and uncontrolled publicness on SNS. This means that privacy issues occur when users misinterpret the media communication environment and/or use communication media in an inappropriate way. The most important factors related to informational privacy are autonomy and control of information disclosure. When someone decides to give comment on other people’s existence on SNS, it is autonomy. However, if her/his comments cause controversy in the virtual world, then it could result in a loss of control. Through SNS, people have the autonomy to make their profile known by others, and they will then tend to try and curate these spaces by showing everything that is positive to cultivate and maintain social relationships. Tufekci (2008) called that phenomenon “the need to be seen”.

Cyberbullying

Olweus (1993) defined bullying or victimization as repeatedly intentional negative actions done to somebody either verbally, such as threatening, taunting, teasing, calling names, or physically such as beatings, push, kicks, pinches, or restraints. ‘Traditional bullying’ in the digital era has extended its scope beyond the physical world and environments like the schoolyard, to also encroach on cyber space. Swartz (2005) further defined cyberbullying broadly as the use of the internet or other digital communication devices to insult or threaten someone. Cyberbullying is depicted as a deliberate method of intimidation that can happen to anyone using electronic communication tools, such as instant messaging (IM), e-mail, SMS (texting).

Meanwhile Patchin and Hinduja (2006) defined cyberbullying as intentional and frequent physical, psychological, emotional, or relational aggressions to others through computers, cell phones, or other electronic devices. Erdur-Baker (2010) clarified that the frequent usage of internet-based communication tools has a correlation to both cyber-victimization and cyberbullying. Juvonen and Gross (2005) stated that cyber space is an extension of forums such as the school ground, where bullying takes place.

Willard (2007) detailed the types of actions that could be classified into cyberbullying, which are

- a. Flaming, a heated short argument using offensive, rude, vulgar language, insulting or sometimes threatening, that occurs between two or more protagonists.
- b. Harassment, offensive, or repeated messages targeted to an individual, which could use either public or private communication channels
- c. Denigration is harmful, a cruel rumor or gossip (untrue speech), which are deliberately spread up to interfere in friendships or to damage the reputation of the target.
- d. Impersonation, which occurs when the cyberbully has an opportunity to make use of the target's communication channels by hacking or getting the password of the target.
- e. Outing, which aims to publicly post, send, or forward intimate personal information of someone else (text, picture, video), which is potentially embarrassing, to others.
- f. Exclusion, which is the removal of a person from the membership of a group, or segregation between persons who constitute part of an in-group and thus making them an outcast.
- g. Cyberstalking, which is sending repeatedly harmful intimidating communications, which are extremely offensive and often followed with threats which may, even involve extortion.

How do Internet Use, Privacy Practices and Cyberbullying correlate with each other?

In terms of online privacy management, Lewis et al. (2008), Boyd and Hargittai (2010), and also Litt (2013) found relations among technological familiarity, frequency of use and the development of skill in adjusting SNS's privacy setting. Students, who regularly posted content on SNS, could manage their privacy better than their counterparts who seldom posted content on SNS. Familiarity on SNS gives them self-confidence to modify the default privacy settings in accordance with what they need. Accordingly, Park (2011) also those assertions that years of usage and daily internet usage, technical familiarity, and online experiences impacted an individual's privacy strategy. Those conditions lead us to question whether internet use is positively related to privacy practices on SNS (Question 1).

Meanwhile, privacy violations might arise because of carelessness in publishing personal identities on SNS. This means that privacy problems occur when users misinterpret the environment of media communication and/or use the communication media in an inappropriate way. A personal

profile that is over-exposed to the public could lure people to commit harassment, or at least present a ‘soft target’ for those so motivated. Accordingly, Hogben (2007), O’Dea and Campbell (2012), as well as Kwan and Skronic (2012), recommended that increased privacy settings on SNS is one of the ways to prevent cyberbullying. For those reasons we would like to know whether privacy practices in SNS positively related to cyberbullying experiences (Question 2).

Since cyberspace allows someone to appear anonymously, victims of “traditional” (physical and non-physical) bullying might fight back through cyber space against the perpetrator(s). At the same time, cyberspace provides a new avenue for perpetrators of traditional bullying to expand their activities. Accordingly, Li (2007) stated that anonymity of cyberbullies encourages the victim to retaliate because of reduced consequences compared to traditional bullies. Therefore, we would like to know whether the experience of bullying—as victim or perpetrator in traditional or cyberbullying – have correlations among each other (Question 3).

Methods: Urban Youth as Internet Users

This research was conducted in Yogyakarta, the capital city of Special Region of Yogyakarta. It is the city of highest internet use penetration out of anywhere in Indonesia (APJII, 2024). The internet users in Yogyakarta are about 88.73% of its 3,736,490 inhabitants. Yogyakarta is a city in the middle of Java Island, which is often called “a student city”, and simultaneously “the miniature Indonesia”, because many people from other parts of Indonesia come to Yogyakarta to pursue higher education.

Before the research was initiated, a sample of the questionnaire and research proposal were sent to the City Licensing Agency and Regional Planning and Development Agency of Yogyakarta City. This ensured that there were no ethical concerns regarding the questionnaire. After receiving a research license from both government agencies, we invited schools to participate in this research. Eleven public schools and ten private schools participated in this research voluntarily. Research respondents were youth between 12-18 years old, who are usually in 7-12th grade at school.

The initial online questionnaire was piloted to 20 middle school students and 20 high school students. They were asked to answer the questionnaire and to mark out the words or sentences that were ambiguous or difficult to understand. The online questionnaire was provided by Unipark. It consisted of about 72 questions that were constructed into 21 pages.

At a time approved by each school, the process of answering the questionnaire was conducted in the school computer laboratory, via a computer connected to the internet or a student's smartphone connected to the school's Wi-Fi. The total impressions for the online questionnaire by Unipark was 1548. However, after the data cleaning process, only 1194 usable data sets were delivered. 354 data sets could not be used because they were incomplete. From 1194 respondents who participated, 65.5% were female and 34.5% were male.

Results

The composition of respondents from public and private schools were 56.3% and 43.7%, most of whom came from middle class backgrounds. Most of the students live with their main (nuclear) family (father, mother, young/old sister/brother). It is a common in Indonesia that grandparents also live alongside their children's nuclear family, and sometimes a nuclear family is also "entrusted" with a niece or nephew by consanguineous relatives. However, there were only about 9.7% of student who lived in such a boarding house.

Ways of Accessing the Internet

As an archipelagic country, it is not easy for the Indonesian government to provide telecommunication infrastructure with an equal standard in every island. There is a significant gap in telecommunications infrastructure between urban and rural areas. According to Lim (2011), out of 66,778 villages across Indonesia, almost 65% remain unwired. In 2010, the *teledensity of fixed telephony* was just 3.55%. However, the utilization of wireless telephony had already reached 88.85%. Whereas Gusti (2014) stated that wireless telephony technology gives better access to information for people living outside of Java Island. There are 270 million wireless telephone users in Indonesia as of 2014, or equal to 1.13 wireless telephones per person on average.

It is not surprising, then, that most of the respondents in this research accessed the internet primarily through their smartphone. About 32.6% of students got pocket money of an average about Rp 150,001-Rp 300,000 per month (equivalent with about USD 11-23). They spent at least Rp 5,000 (USD 0.40) per month on mobile phone credit. Notably, 22.4% of them spent about Rp 50,000 (USD 3.8) per month on mobile phone credit.

Twelve years old is the common age for Indonesian youth to own a smartphone for the first time, at about 21.5% of the respondents. Smartphones

are commonly given as a gift between the 6th grade of elementary school at the 7th grade of secondary school. However, about 1.5% of students surveyed said that they did not have any smartphone. The mean value of first-time access to the internet is 10.09 years old.

About 52.2% of students accessed the internet more than 4 hours on weekend days/national holidays; even on a normal school day, 22.6% of them also accessed the internet more than 4 hours. The most frequent activities of respondents when accessing the internet was the use of instant message applications (e.g. WhatsApp, Line, etc.) and visits to social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.). Respondents were asked to indicate how often they accessed “something” on the internet in the last 30 days (several times each day, every day, or almost every day, once or twice in a week, once or twice in a month, or never).

Privacy Practices in SNS

Indonesia is typically a very open society emphasizing harmonious social relations in society, where shared values of harmony and togetherness are upheld. Indonesian’s concept of privacy is certainly different from the dominant Western paradigm, and is applied more flexibly in social life. Indonesians will typically consider that their neighbors and friends are “their closest relatives”, who could help each other with everyday life’s difficulties at any time.

However, according to Boyd (2010), SNS have changed the conception of “friend” in real life. Making someone as our “friend” on SNS is just as simple as pressing a button to “add friend”, even if the individual is someone we have never met face to face, or are not part of even an extended social network. In this way, SNS has over-simplified the meaning of ‘friendship’ itself.

Among 1194 respondents, about 97.7% of them declared that they had at least one SNS account and about 89% of them said that they had more than one SNS account. Almost half of them (45.2%) claimed that they had “friends” on SNS numbering more than 300. In term of account privacy settings, about 32.7% of them said that their account was set as “public, so that everyone can see my profile”; meanwhile 38.9% of it set their account “partially private, so that friends of friends of my network can see my profile.”

A visible profile with interesting personal information will attract others to respond with comments or “likes”. Information that is usually disclosed on an SNS profile includes photos that clearly show their face 64.3%, their complete name 75.5%, birth date 45.7%, and hometown 47.1%. SNS for students is a place where they could share any information they consider interesting

to be commented upon by their “friends”, and they therefore update their profile whenever there is something new to share, such as a photo.

Victims of (Cyber)bullying

Many respondents had experiences as victims of physical-, non-physical-, and cyber-bullying. About 48.2% of students had experienced at least once instance of being a victim of physical bullying (e.g. hits, pushes, kicks, pinches, or restraints, etc.) in the last 12 months. 2.1% had been bullied “more than 10 times” in the last 12 months. Of these, 10.3% took place at school and 17.1% at home.

Becoming a victim of non-physical bullying (e.g. being insulted, threatened, defamed, etc.) was even more common for students, to the extent that 71.2% of them had experienced it at least “once” in the last 12 months. Furthermore, about 6.5% of them had experienced being a victim of non-physical bullying “more than 10 times” in the last 12 months. Of these, 37.9% took place at school and 11.5% at home.

Meanwhile, about 48.5% of respondents had experienced an instance of cyberbullying at least “once” in the last 12 months. Only about 2.8% had experienced it “more than 10 times” in the last 12 months. 18.5% had been insulted (e.g. by text/picture/video/audio), 12.6% had rumors or gossip spread about them, and 11.1% have been removed from an e-group. This bullying took place mostly through SNS (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.), accounting for 22.1%, and instant messaging (e.g. WhatsApp, Line, etc.), accounting for 25%.

Statistical correlation analysis revealed that experience as a victim of physical bullying is positively related to experience as victim of non-physical bullying ($r=.471, p<.001$). Additionally, experience as a victim of non-physical bullying is positively related to experience as victim of cyberbullying ($r=.509, p<.001$). Last but not least, that experience as victim of physical bullying is also positively related to experience as victim of cyberbullying ($r=.409, p<.001$). From these results we could posit that when someone becomes a victim of physical bullying, she/he could also become a victim of non-physical bullying and cyberbullying at the same time.

Perpetrators of (Cyber)bullying

Respondents in this research were asked whether they have experience as a perpetrator of bullying. About 43.5% them said that they had perpetrated physical bullying at least “once” in the last 12 months. Further, only 2.3% of them had experienced being a perpetrator of physical bullying “more than

10 times” in the last 12 months. Being involved as a perpetrator non-physical bullying was also more common for respondents, to the extent that about 60.7% of students had participated in it at least “once” in the last 12 months, and about 5.3% had participated in it “more than 10 times” in the last 12 months.

Involvement as perpetrator of cyberbullying is generally lower than other forms of bullying, with 40% of students reporting that they had been involved as perpetrators of cyberbullying at least “once” in the last 12 months, and about 2.1% being involved in it “more than 10 times” in the last 12 months.

Similar to respondents’ experiences as victims of bullying, we found correlation among their involvement as perpetrators of all bullying types. Experience as perpetrator of physical bullying was positively related to experience as perpetrator of non-physical bullying ($r=.534, p<.001$). Experience as a perpetrator as physical bullying was also positively related to experience as perpetrator of cyberbullying ($r=.413, p<.001$), and the experience as a perpetrator of non-physical bullying also positively related to experience as perpetrator of cyberbullying ($r=.558, p<.001$). These results suggest that involvement in any one form of bullying is likely to indicate involvement in other types of bullying, including cyberbullying.

Between Using the Internet, Privacy Practices, and (Cyber)bullying

In this chapter, we have provided evidence that internet use is positively related to privacy practices in SNS for study respondents ($r=.312, p<.001$), suggesting that their familiarity with using the internet is likely to also increase their familiarity with potential privacy issues which can arise through SNS usage. Furthermore, we found that privacy practices on SNS are positively related to cyberbullying experiences ($r=.134, p<.001$), meaning that the more they “exercised” privacy management on SNS the more they experienced cyberbullying. These answer Question 1 and 2.

The anonymity of cyberspace likely makes people feel less responsible for their actions. It opens the possibility of a victim of “traditional” bullying being targeted by perpetrators of cyberbullying because of its relative ease and the multiple ways in which cyber bullying can take place, but also that the internet can become a space for victims of “traditional” bullying to fight back through becoming cyber bullies themselves. We found evidence that experience as a victim of physical bullying is positively related to engagement as perpetrator of cyberbullying ($r=.309, p<.001$), and experience as a victim of non-physical bullying is positively related to engagement as perpetrator

of cyberbullying ($r=.338, p<.001$). This means that internet usage might easily change “victims” to “perpetrators” of bullying.

The internet also provides additional spaces and strategies for potential bullies to disrupt the lives of their victims. We provided evidence that engagement as perpetrator of physical bullying is positively related to engagement as perpetrator of cyberbullying ($r=.413, p<.001$), and that engagement as perpetrator of non-physical bullying is positively related to engagement as perpetrator of cyberbullying ($r=.558, p<.001$). These findings all support Question 3 (see Table 1 below).

Table 1. Correlation matrix for experience of (cyber)bullying

		1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Victim of physical bullying						
2	Victim of non-physical bullying	.471**					
3	Victim of cyberbullying	.409**	.509**				
4	Perpetrator of physical bullying	.581**	.392**	.338**			
5	Perpetrator of non-physical bullying	.388**	.497**	.380**	.534**		
6	Perpetrator of cyberbullying	.309**	.338**	.472**	.413**	.558**	

** $p<.001$

Discussion

This study tried to find insights into youth internet usage, how they disclose themselves in social network sites, and their experiences with cyberbullying. Looking to these findings we could conclude Indonesian youth are very active in using the internet in daily life. With their middle socio-economic background, they could reach the affordable cost to go online. As students, they made use of the internet for searching information to support their school activities, searching for entertainment in their leisure time, and socialization with others as part of developing their identity.

As young people, they were largely aware of how to appropriately “behave” on SNS. They considered how much of their identity to disclose through their SNS profile, and their activities on SNS could easily be considered “normal”. However, when we pay attention to their experiences with traditional and cyberbullying, we must take their concerns seriously.

We can see clearly that all kinds of bullying types and students’ roles as victim and/or perpetrator of bullying are correlated. From this information, we assume that victims and perpetrators of physical-, non-physical-, and cyber-bullying are largely inter-changeable.

We might assume that, on some level, bullying typically involves inequality of power between the victim and the perpetrator; meanwhile there are very substantial differences in the term “power” between “traditional bullying” and cyberbullying. “Power” in physical and non-physical bullying could mean a large body size or big muscles, so they are more physically capable of intimidating or attacking others, for example. Meanwhile “power” in a cyberbullying context could be familiarity with technology or technology literacy, and the ability to buy data. That differentiation of power could be inter-changeable as well. For example, when the victim in traditional bullying has smaller body size but better technology literate, she/he could take revenge through cyberbullying.

Conclusion

SNSs might be useful for young people to develop their personality by sharing information, knowledge, hobbies, and other content which helps them to develop their sense of self identity and self-esteem among their peers. However, this medium might also be used as tool to target and/or disrupt the lives of others. The possibility of the user appearing with a different identity and/or anonym, would appear to foster a sense of reduced social responsibility or inhibition.

Of course, the problem of bullying existed long before the advent of social media. Bullying might appear in unbalanced social relationships among children and parents, student and teacher, young people and elder people, youths and their peers; through which so far “the stratification of power” is preserved culturally, especially in Indonesia. This is threatened by the ease with which bullying can be conducted through SNSs. For youth in general and in Indonesia specifically, their access to the internet is supported by parents at home (by providing gadgets and (money to buy) internet data), by schools (by providing computer laboratories and school Wi-Fi), by the

government (by providing Wi-Fi in public spaces), and by the internet service providers themselves.

Although it is difficult to draw a clear distinction between traditional bullying and cyberbullying, the prevention of both requires an integrated, parallel, and closely coordinated strategy. In the case of cyberbullying prevention among youths, we should involve all actors who might support them in accessing the internet, especially those in the immediate home-school environment, namely parents and teachers. Parents and teachers should be aware and increase their supervision of youths' SNS usage. Digital literacy learning at home and in school have become a pivotal matter, to prevent cyberbullying and develop balanced and harmonious relations among youths, parents, teachers, and peers.

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This book explores intersectional aspects of human rights studies about women, PWDs (Persons with Disabilities), and children, particularly those who are marginalized. It takes an interdisciplinary approach, including gender studies, environmental studies, and media studies. Gender-based violence impacts social, politic, and economic growth because affected women are denied the ability to exercise their basic rights of education, skill development, and employment. Gender roles and societal expectations often hinder the full realization of women's and girls' rights, with adverse consequences for entire families. Understanding how gender manifests in specific situations is therefore a necessary step in addressing the problems of discrimination and violence. Rather than focusing on women, men, or sexual minorities per se, this book examines the relationship and power dynamics between them, their differing roles, responsibilities, opportunities and needs. In so doing, this book rediscovers what subversive activists, advocates, lawyers, doctors, researchers, and others have envisioned for the future: a society where discrimination, marginalization, gender-based violence, and oppression will no longer be woven into every fabric of Indonesian life and culture.

Denny Vitasari, Dewi Candraningrum, Dyah Wulandari,
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