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"Allah Created Adam and Eve, Not Adam and Adam":
A Descriptive Phenomenological Study of
the Lived Experiences of Muslim Gay Men in Indonesia

Final Version

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Outline

Abstract

Muslim gay and bisexual men in Indonesia face challenges when they are living in a homophobic and heterosexist society in the country. However, the study of strategies they utilise to manage those homophobic attitudes from society, such as discrimination, prejudice, and stigma of their sexual minority, are limited. Therefore, drawing on minority stress theory—especially minority stress model of Meyer—this study was conducted to explore the lived experiences of Muslim gay or bisexual men in Indonesia.

All participants have self-identified as gay or bisexual men and considered themselves to be Islamic believers in a particular time and they are living in Indonesia. The primary data collection method utilised was a semi-structured interview. The data were recorded as consented by the participants and transcribed verbatim according to the research questions from a snowball sample of seven Muslim gay or bisexual men in Indonesia including problems they face and the strategies they employ to manage those problems with regards to their religious and sexual status, the participants also are aged from 20 to 27 years old and living in Indonesia. The data then were analysed using a thematic analysis.

The study revealed that Muslim gay or bisexual men in Indonesia experienced several problems and barriers because of their sexual and religious status. The problems include feelings of rejection, isolation, and concerns. In order to deal with these problems, all participants employ several strategies, such as self-acceptance, self-control, positive reinterpretation, seeking social support, concealing, and migration.

This study recommends for pro-LGBT parties, such as educators, counselling practitioners, activists, and religious teachers to provide LGBT friendly solutions so that they could live well and properly in a homophobic and heterosexist environment. Notably, religious teachers play an important role in educating and advocating sexual minorities with more humanistic religious teachings regarding their sexual status so that they could accept the fact that they are attracted to same-sex persons instead of reject it.

Keywords: homosexuality, Islam, gay, bisexual, Indonesia, homophobic, heterosexist

Words: 22,103 words (exclude outline, abstract and bibliography)

Chapter 1

Introduction

Background

Religious principles have played a crucial role in influencing personal identity and meaning. Consequently, religion may contradict significantly with one's intimate needs and desires (Siraj, 2012, p. 457). This is the case with Muslim gay men living in Indonesia. The pervasiveness of heterosexism among homosexual individuals in the country is proven. In this regard, Ichwan (2014, pp. 199–200) proved that some religious institutions that dominated in Indonesia has influenced "people's understanding of issues of gender, sexuality, and sexual orientation" and Islam in particular has a tendency to increase "the level of heterosexism within Indonesian society." For instance, two homosexual men in 2017 have been whipped publicly in Aceh Indonesia for committing same-sex intercourse (McKirdy, 2018). This incident shows that Islamic doctrines are highly likely related to the high level of homophobia in Indonesian society, especially to those who are Muslims.

Nevertheless, there is minimal data on the strategies that they employ to manage the negative thoughts and stigma of their sexual standing and religious affiliations. Islam is considered a homophobic religion based on the strong prohibition of unions between individuals of the same sex (Siraj, 2012, p. 449). As a result, the beliefs in the religion may cause an immeasurable amount of anxiety and strain on LGBT members based on their desires, feelings, and

emotions that are considered to be aberrant (Pietkiewicz & Kołodziejczyk-Skrzypek, 2016; Siraj, 2012, p. 449).

The incommensurability between male homosexuality and Islam in Indonesia is influenced by the national and local spatial scales (T. Boellstorff, 2005, p. 576). Indonesia is home to more Muslims than any other nation across the globe. Ethno-locality plays a major influence among the lives of Indonesians as it attributes to their shared frame of reference (T. Boellstorff, 2005, p. 576). In this case, Muslim gay men are subject to a wide range of challenges based on their sexual preferences. It is clear to the LGBT Indonesians that the concepts of their sexuality do not originate from their elders or from traditional beliefs. As a result, there are no individuals who refer to themselves using the terminologies in their communities. Being an LGBT member is considered to be a national concept that is associated with the globalised notions of homosexual subjectivity (T. Boellstorff, 2005, p. 577). Therefore, the members of the groups are subject to retreat to spatial scales that enable them to inhabit the incommensurable spaces of being identified as a homosexual man and Muslim. Muslim gay men in Indonesia rarely find themselves in an environment that allow them to express their sexuality and religious beliefs openly.

In some parts of the world, homophobia atmosphere is so extreme in a heterosexual environment that heterosexuals often persecute sexual minorities socially and legally. It leads gay men and women to hide their sexual identities and expressions in public realms (Johnson, 2004). Similarly, it is clear that being a gay and Muslim simultaneously in Indonesia is ungrammatical due to the

dominant social norms that exist in the society (T. Boellstorff, 2005, p. 575). This grammar violation is based on the fact that gay and Islam are incommensurate and violating the order of the world. Bouhdiba, as quoted by Boellstorff, explained that adultery in Islam is acceptable as it is "still remains within the framework of order," which is realising one's sexual desire to the opposite sex (T. Boellstorff, 2005, p. 576). Even though this behaviour is a mistake in the perspective of Islam as it realises the sexual desire beyond the limits set by God, this behaviour still recognises the harmony of the sexes between men and women. Bouhdiba, further, illustrated this mistake with the phrase, "the earth is square," while male homosexuality is just as "earth happy twelve the." Same-sex attraction among men is not only wrong but also "ungrammatical." Therefore, Islam views male homosexuality as an unnatural sexual desire and condemns such behaviour because it virtually contradicts the harmony of the sexes by which men have sexual desires to women vice versa.

Islam is highly associated with homophobia and heterosexism. Boellstorff states that Islamic figures absolutely reject homosexuality as they are of the opinion that "homosexuality is clearly a social illness, a morally evil trend that must be eliminated, not a human rights to be protected as [Western] gays now claim" (T. Boellstorff, 2005, p. 575). Some studies show that negative attitudes of religious beliefs towards sexual minorities within a community which has strong religious traditions causes prejudice against sexual minorities. Therefore, LGBT people who are affiliated to a religion consider that their beliefs act oppressively towards their sexual status (Pietkiewicz & Kołodziejczyk-Skrzypek, 2016). For

example, Barton (2010) describes how the challenges faced by LGBT individuals who live in a fundamentalist Christian community by which same-sex desires and/or behaviours are considered a major sin against God.

Other studies show that the internal conflict between sexual or gender identity and religious tenets can significantly damage the psychological and emotional well-being of sexual minorities. For example, Beagan & Hattie (2015, p. 94), as stated by Super and Jacobson (2011), note that sexual minorities experience psychological distress from religious communities that use the power of position and religious tenets to oppress, coerce, and manipulate sexual minorities through "shaming, stigmatizing, rejecting, ousting, exorcising, and ex-communicating" (p. 94). These heterosexist behaviours lead to a series of a physical and mental health problem of the sexual minorities, such as depression, suicidal ideation, and other mental health disorders (McDavitt et al., 2010; I. Meyer, 2003, p. 674).

In order to deal with homophobic and heterosexist culture, sexual minorities may employ various strategies. For example, Adihartono (2013) examines Indonesian gay men who migrate to gay-friendly countries, such as the Netherlands, France, and the United Kingdom (Adihartono, 2015, p. 10) as a strategy to deal with the problem because of their sexual status. Another strategy that is common among sexual minorities is to conceal their sexual identity or orientation from people. Boellstorff, for example, illustrates how Muslim gay men in Indonesia rarely find themselves in official religious institutions such as mosques due to the discrimination and bias against their sexuality in the domain

4

(T. Boellstorff, 2005, p. 577). Moreover, seeking support from other people is deemed as another strategy to replace the family support that is expected by them. Therefore, it is obvious that sexual minorities, including Muslim gay men, will be making special efforts to deal with the homophobic and heterosexist situation come to them. In this case, this research will be aimed at finding out the current situation with regards to homosexuality in Indonesia, and exploring and describing the barriers that Muslim gay men experience and the strategies they used in the homophobic and heterosexist society in Indonesia.

Research Questions

Central research question

How do Muslim gay men relate to the heteronormative and homophobic social and cultural environment in Indonesia?

Research sub-questions

Based on the main research question, I propose these following sub-questions:

1. What is the current situation of homosexuality in relation to Islam in Indonesia?

2. What challenges/issues do they face for being Muslim gay men in Indonesia?

3. What strategies do they use to address those challenges/issues?

Research Methodology

Methodology

I will be conducting this research by using a qualitative method, which can be understood as "an effort to understand the nature of a setting and the experiences others have in this context" (Merriam, 1998). This method does not predict what will happen in the future, but it is an analysis selected by those who are interested in a particular event in a particular setting and time to gain in-depth understanding of the event. Hence, I chose this method because this study aims to explore and describe the life experiences of Muslim gay or bisexual men in Indonesia. The subjects of the study may experience various problems and face various barriers when they were living both as a gay and Muslim in the country. In order to deal with those problems, they might look for solutions to overcome them. A qualitative approach in this study presented rich description of the lived experiences of Muslim gay or bisexual men in Indonesia to accurately describe the phenomenon.

Furthermore, I will be approaching the topic by using a phenomenological study and life history in order to explore the lived experiences of the participants as this approach is aimed at to understanding how people experience a particular phenomenon in their life and how people construct their interpretation of those phenomena (Willig, 2007, p. 210). Also, this approach is essential in this research because it was centred on the participants' experiences by disregarding traditions, social and cultural norms and the preconceived notions about being a gay or bisexual Muslim in Indonesia. The approach is also useful because "it involves

the use of thick description and close analysis of lived experiences to understand how meaning is created through embodied perception" (Starks & Trinidad, 2007, p. 1373). In addition to that, I chose it because "it may be referred to as a way of understanding people's perception and perspectives the meaning of particular situation or event" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; Soeker et al., 2015). Therefore, with my aim to understand the life of gay or bisexual men who are Muslim in Indonesia, I find this method became the most suitable to answer my research questions.

In order to understand the participants' lives in this study, I will be also using life history method. Everyone in this world have their own life experiences. Their experiences may vary with each other depending on their response to various events in their lives. If their experiences want to be studied scientifically, the experiences will be expressed in many different forms, such as "responses, reactions, interpretations, auto critics, even as a defence against the outside world" (Bungin, 2015, p. 109). Life history is a method of qualitative inquiry that aims to obtain information about what is experienced by certain individuals living in a particular society (Bungin, 2015, p. 109). Nowadays, this approach has been used by academics from both anthropology, sociology, and health sciences.

With this method, the researchers are able to explore one's micro-historical experiences within a macro-historical framework. This method was first used to interview Native American leaders lived with indigenous peoples of the country. They were asked by the researchers to describe their life experiences as a leader in their community. The interview was aimed "to capture a living picture of a

7

disappearing people and way of life." In addition, to get information from the subjects, the researchers had to avoid yes-no questions, but let the subjects to tell his/her "life stories" in his/her own words. Therefore, this method is also often referred to as a "narrative" research method as it allows the subjects to narrate their lives in his/her own words. Usually, a research using this method explores the subject's lives chronologically, for example, from the period of early childhood of the subjects to the present. In this regard, I find this method being useful enough to gather information from the research's subjects regarding their lived experiences as a gay or bisexual Muslim living in a Muslim majority country, which is Indonesia.

Research Site

The setting where the study conducted was in Indonesia. This country is located in Southeast Asia and is the 4th most populous country in the world by which more than 260 million people live in the country. Also, this country is religiously dominated by Islam, which around 87 per cent of the population is Muslims.

Research Participants

This research employed a snowball sampling technique. According to Creswell (2003, p. 209), this technique is a term of purposefully sampling that often proceeds after a study begins and occurs when the researcher asks the participant to recommend another potential participant to be sampled.

Furthermore, this study focuses on the lived experiences of seven men who self-identified as gay or bisexual, affiliated to Islam, aged from 20 to 26 years old, and live in Indonesia. Their experiences include the problems or barriers they faced because of their sexual and religious status and how they deal with those issues. Before describing and analysing their experiences in detail, I will describe the current situation of homosexuality, specifically male-male intimacy, in Indonesia in relation to Islam to gain a brief overview of the topic of the study.

Additionally, I took seven participants as a sample (See Table 1). These participants are chosen based on the aforementioned criteria. Englander stated that "the phenomenological method in human science recommends that one uses at least three participants" (Kahija, 2017, p. 93). In particular, this study is a descriptive phenomenological research (DPR) in which Kahija recommends more than three participants for this kind of research (Kahija, 2017, pp. 91, 229). Therefore, I think seven participants are enough for this study to gather diverse stories of homosexual males' lived experiences in Indonesia.

I initiated the recruiting process of the participants in this study by means of an online search for gay communities and organization in Indonesia. Four organisations and communities were contacted via e-mail. These included: GAYa Nusantara, *Yayasan Vesta Indonesia* (Indonesian Vesta Foundation, abbreviated YVI), *People Like Us Satu Hati* (People Like Us One Heart, abbreviated PLUSH), and *Arus Pelangi* (Rainbow Currents). These organizations provided some services, such as medical assistance, counselling, social support, etc. However, only three organisations that replied my e-mail and showed interest in

this study and from those three there are only two organisations that provided relevant research subjects for this study. Two participants were selected by PLUSH while the others were provided by YVI. Both organisations selected those participants from their internal network.

While recruiting the potential participants for this study, I faced various challenges from them. One of the most remarkable challenges was the privacy issues of their stories and the feeling of shame. Some of them were afraid and worried if their stories would be known by 'the others' (homophobic heterosexual people). Even if I convinced them that I would keep their stories secretly, for them, discussing their experiences of being homosexual in Indonesia is a shame. Thus, they thought twice about being involved in this research. Nevertheless, some of them showed interest and bravery in sharing their life stories of being gay or bisexual men in Indonesia.

Table 1

Demographic Information

Participant code	Age	Religion/ Personal Beliefs		Sexual Orientation	Last/Current Education
		Then	Now		
1	20	Catholics	Islam	Bisexual	College
2	26	Islam	Islam	Gay	College
3	21	Islam	Buddhism	Gay	College
4	26	Islam	Islam	Gay	Middle School
5	22	Islam	Islam	Gay	High School
6	27	Islam	Islam	Gay	High School
7	26	Islam	Islam	Gay	College

Data Collection

Interview was employed to obtain data from the participants and to explore their life experiences when they were living as a gay or bisexual man and Muslim in a homophobic society in Indonesia. Before interviewing them, I made an interview guide to ensure (See Appendix E) the process of interviewing on track, which is to answer the proposed research questions. Because it used a semi-structured interview, I did not too focus on the guide during interview sessions. Thus, other questions out of the guide as long as they were related to the topic might be asked by the researcher to the participants. In addition to that, the interviews were recorded by using a voice recorder application on smartphone as have been consented by the participants (See Appendix A and B). The use of this recorder enabled the researcher to facilitate the process of analysing data so as to avoid inaccuracies in the data collected.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used in this study to analyse the data in a qualitative inquiry. It is a method to analyse data that have been collected by the researchers by identifying the patterns within the data (Heriyanto, 2018, p. 318). According to Braun & Clarke, thematic analysis is "a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 6). This method is very useful to explore the qualitative research data in detail in order to find the interrelated patterns in a phenomenon and to explain the extent to which a

phenomenon occurs through the lens of researcher. It is said that thematic analysis is a fundamental method to analyse data in qualitative inquiry.

There are several stages when analysing data using this method. First, familiarizing oneself with the data. If the data is collected from interviews, the researchers should transcribe it first, read and re-read the transcripts, and then note down the initial ideas so that they will blend with the data and eventually understand the data. The purpose of this stage is to understand the collected data and find things in relation to the research questions (Heriyanto, 2018, p. 319). Second, generating initial codes. In this stage, the researcher should find the main topic of within a paragraph in a transcription. He/she may code according to the words or the meanings within a paragraph.

The purpose of this stage is to understand more the meanings contained in each statement delivered by the participants (Heriyanto, 2018, p. 321). If the data have been entirely coded, the researcher should classify all the codes into several groups. Then he/she names the groups in accordance with the codes within the group. Third, searching for the themes. In this sense, the themes should describe the extracted data in relation to the research questions. In other words, the themes illustrate the patterns in a phenomenon researched (Heriyanto, 2018, p. 322). Forth, involved reviewing the themes. In this stage, the researcher checks the tentative themes emerged from the data-set whether or not the themes really represent the data and answer the research questions. Usually, the researcher completes the weakness found in the initial themes so that generating the revised and refined themes. Fifth, Defining and naming themes. In this stage, the

researcher develops the analysis of each theme in detail, carries out the scope and focus, and narrates of each. He/she also names of each theme informatively.

Sixth, producing the report. In this final stage, the researcher writes a report on the results of the semantic analysis from the previous phase to tell the participants' story and convince the readers with sufficient evidence.

Previous Studies

Even though discussing homosexuality in Indonesian public is a taboo, there are some previous studies with regards to Islam and homosexuality in Muslim majority countries. Some of them discuss the experiences of being a homosexual individual in the country that is predominantly homophobic. However, study on the experiences of homosexual males who are Muslim includes problems they encountered and how they overcome those issues are still rare, especially for those who are living in Indonesia. Nevertheless, there are several similar previous studies related to this research topic as follows:

1. Several research on homosexuality in Indonesia have been conducted by Tom Boellstorff. For example, he published a journal article entitled "Between Religion and Desire: Being Muslim and Gay in Indonesia" in 2005. The purpose of the is to explore the relationship between religion and sexuality among and the experiences of being Muslim gay men in Indonesia. He was using an ethnographic study to gather information from Indonesian homosexual males who are Muslim. Additionally, he also examined religious doctrine, interpretation, and community to explore the

incommensurability between sexual and religious identity among Muslim gay men in Indonesia. The research revealed then that the incommensurability between those identities among them in the public sphere is influenced by the significant (religious) social norms (T. Boellstorff, 2005). In the same year, he published a book entitled "The Gay Archipelago: Sexuality and Nation in Indonesia." This book might be the first work that explores the lives of gay men in Indonesia. It is composed of eight chapters divided into three parts, namely The Indonesian Subjectivity, Opening to Gay and Lesbian Worlds, and Sexuality and National. When conducting his research in the country, he sampled several big cities in Indonesia, such as Makassar, Surabaya, and Bali. In addition to discussing the lives of gay men in Indonesia, he also discussed in this book how gay and lesbian identity work in their daily lives, where favourite places for gay and lesbian Indonesians to meet, how the concept of sexuality and nationalism in Indonesia related, etc. The conclusion of this book comes from the statement of Irwan, a Macassar. He said, "Culture is something that is created by humans and then believed. There are people who have created 'gay' here in Indonesia and believe in what they have created. So gay is part of Indonesian culture" (Tom Boellstorff, 2005). Additionally, in 2006, he published another journal article entitled "Gay and Lesbian Indonesians and the Idea of the Nation." The purpose of the article is to demonstrate how heteronormativity plays a fundamental role in forming nation-states as "imagined communities" and how the concept of nation-

state in Indonesia is adapted from the core family archetypes consisting of a husband, wife, and children where the president of the country is associated with a husband in a family. Therefore, nationalism in Indonesia is limited by the heterosexual family model so that same-sex couples will not get any place in the country (Tom Boellstorff, 2006a).

2. Okdinata conducted a research entitled "Religiustias Kaum Homoseks (Studi Kasus tentang Dinamika Psikologis Keberagamaan Gay Muslim di Yogyakarta)" or "Religiosity of Homosexuals (Case Study of Religious Psychological Dynamics of Muslim Gay in Yogyakarta)" in 2009. The purpose of this research is to find out the symptoms of doubt and conflict of identity among Muslim homosexual males in Yogyakarta. In this study, Okdinata interviewed and observed six Muslim gay men, that were taken purposively, in Yogyakarta. In addition to that, he used a literature review in his research to support his research findings. The research revealed then that all research subjects experienced doubt and psychological conflicts between internalized religious values from when they were children to adult and their sexual identity. Even though their religious and sexual identities conflict, they fully accepted themselves for being gay and Muslim. Besides, the respondents indicated philosophical-theological thinking in which they argued that the problem of sin for being a Muslim gay man as a problem between himself and God. They also believed that their religion truly appreciates their choice to have both identities (Okdinata, 2009).

3. Gesti Lestari conducted a research entitled "Fenomena Homoseksual di Kota Yogyakarta" or "Homosexual Phenomena in Yogyakarta" in 2012. The purpose of this research is to find out the reasons for the five respondents why they chose the path to become a homosexual and how the five members of the community view the existence of homosexuals around them. To obtain the data, Lestari conducted interviews and observations on the research participants and looked for related works of literature to support his research. The research uses qualitative methods and takes samples purposively. The research revealed then that the reasons for being a homosexual are sexual needs and trauma in establishing a relationship with the opposite sex. In addition, five community members have different attitudes towards homosexual people. These attitudes are related to people's acceptance of homosexuality and can be grouped into three categories, namely those who tend to accept the existence of homosexuals, those who are less accepting of homosexual people, and those who cannot accept the existence of homosexual people at all (Lestari, 2012).

4. Deni Titin Ragil Wulandari conducted a research entitled "Religiusitas Kaum Homoseksual (Studi Kasus Fenomenologi tentang Konsep Diri Mahasiswa Muslim Kaum Homoseksual di Yogyakarta)" or Religiosity of Homosexuals (Phenomenological Case Study of the Self Concept of Homosexual Muslim Students in Yogyakarta) in 2017. The purpose of this research is to determine the religiosity of gay Muslim students and to explore their religious life related to their self-concept. This study employs qualitative research, uses

phenomenology as an approach, and takes samples purposively. Moreover, Wulandari interviewed and observed four respondents to gather their stories of being homosexual students in Yogyakarta. The research revealed then that all research participants have different opinions regarding religious beliefs, practices, and experiences. The majority of respondents indicated that their sexual orientation did not affect their religiosity. Concerning the concept of self, overall, all respondents have a positive view. However, two of them tend to have a negative concept of self. Family, environment, peers, and trauma of having a relationship with their ex are the cause of their homosexuality (Wulandari, 2017).

5. Emilie Wester conducted a research entitled "Between Allah and Me: God is the Judge" in 2017. The purpose of this research is to explore the individual experiences of being homosexual and Muslim. She examined the intersection between religious and sexual identities by using identity theory, personality, and cultural concepts. To collect data, she interviewed three different respondents who are actively practicing religious rites and are openly gay in their group. The research revealed that Islam is not against homosexuality according to the participants' understanding. In addition, the study disclosed their lived experiences of being gay Muslim and the role of culture in sexuality (Wester, 2017).

All above studies discuss how homosexuality works within the framework of Islam. The first and third study discuss the phenomena of homosexuality in Indonesia. However, the first one linked Islam and how its gay followers lived in

Indonesia. The second and fourth study discuss the religious experiences of some homosexuals in Indonesia. The fifth one discusses how some progressive Muslims who are gays ~~in the world~~ view on homosexuality in relation to their religion. For this study, the above studies produce three main topics: Islam and homosexuality, phenomena of homosexuality in Indonesia, and religiosity among homosexuals in Indonesia. These three topics can develop knowledge and understanding about LGBT Muslims in Muslim majority countries. However, the experiences of Muslim gay men in Indonesia, including their problems and solutions, is lacking. This essay will fill in that gap by examining personal experiences of LGBT individuals who are Muslims lived in homophobic society in Indonesia. In some literature, sexual minorities will experience bad psychological health when they are living in a community that is dominated by homophobic heterosexuals. Prejudice, stigma, discrimination, internalized homophobia, etc., will affect the psychological health of sexual minorities. Thus, I chose minority stress theory to reveal the life experiences of Muslim gay and bisexual men living in a homophobic society in Indonesia.

Summary

Discussion on homosexuality in Indonesia is a taboo topic, especially if it is combined with religious doctrines. Muslim gay men will experience a set of multiple identity conflicts because their religious community rejects their sexual identities that are different from the majority, which is heterosexuality. The refusal of homophobic religious people both verbally and non-verbally towards

them resulted in internalized homophobia directed to themselves. Therefore, religious gay men will find problems when they have both identities.

The study of the experiences of being Muslim gay men in Indonesia, including the problems they encountered and the strategies they used to overcome the problems was lacking so that I am quite interested in conducting research on their experiences of being Muslim and gay in the Muslim majority country, such as Indonesia.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

Minority Stress Theory

The term "minority stress" refers to "psychological stress derived from minority status" (I. H. Meyer, 1995, p. 38). This theory is basically related to the issues involving minority and dominant standards as well as any conflict experienced by minorities as a consequence of disputes with the social environment (I. H. Meyer, 1995, p. 39). Such a conflict occurred between minority group members and social experiences leads to stress, and it leads to adverse mental health outcomes among them. If one lives as a minority in a society that stigmatize and discriminate him/her because of his/her different standards or physical appearances or other preferences with majority of people in the society, a conflict may occur between the minority and the dominant culture.

In relation to sexual minorities, negative views of majority people against minorities who are different in sexual orientation might affect their thought about themselves. Meyer wrote that "negative regard from others therefore leads to negative self-regard" (I. H. Meyer, 1995, p. 39). In this sense, it can be related to internalized homophobia among homosexual people which means bad opinion of heterosexuals regarding homosexuality against them is directed to himself. Therefore, homosexual men may suffer psychological problems because they live in a homophobic environment (I. H. Meyer, 1995, p. 38). Thus, gay men are very likely to be subjected to chronic stress because of negative societal attitudes against them. This chronic stress is caused by various different types of stressors,

such as internalized homophobia, stigma, discrimination, and violence. A study conducted by Meyer indicated that each of the stressors significantly affects the mental health of gay men. He said that "men who had high levels of minority stress were twice to three times as likely to suffer also from high levels of distress" (I. H. Meyer, 1995, p. 38).

I employ minority stress theory with the purpose to explore how Muslim gay men have been living in a homophobic society in Indonesia and how heterosexism affect them. In general, Indonesian people should affiliate themselves to one of six officially recognised religions in the country—Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism, Hinduism, or Confucianism (Hosen, 2005, p. 419)— in which majority of them believe in Islam. In addition, this religion has a long-time relationship with Indonesia which eventually affects many sectors, e.g. law, and social norms as well as what is normalcy and abnormalcy in this country. Even though religion is not the only one factor that contributes to the development of heterosexism, a literature shows that how religion produces this negative attitude (Park, 2001, pp. 18–22).

Similarly, in the context of Indonesia, according to Ichwan (2014), it is oversimplified if one states that colonialization is the only factor that resulted in homophobia in the country because this problem has emerged before the colonial period. He asserts that "heterosexism flourishes when the dominant religious doctrine in the country forces people to draw a strict gender boundary between men and women" and "heterosexism will not flourish when the dominant religious teaching is open to the fluidity of gender" (Ichwan, 2014, p. 204). Thus,

21

he concluded that "a religious-based country like Indonesia, religious teachings regarding gender and sexuality that fosters heterosexism has an impact beyond religious institutions. It influences all other society institutions—family, education, law and mass media—because religion shapes people's world view" (Ichwan, 2014, p. 204).

From the above statement, most Muslims, particularly in Indonesia, believes that homosexuality is against its teaching in nature and this understanding may affect its followers' worldview regarding gender and sexuality. It is true that many Muslim who are gay or bisexual in the country and they are sexually minorities who experience various problems, including psychological problems, such as stress or depression, when they are living as a Muslim gay or bisexual male in a stigmatizing and discriminating society. Therefore, I believe that this theory will be very beneficial to understand the problems faced by Indonesian Muslim gay or bisexual men.

Homosexuality

Introduction

Experts differ on defining of homosexuality. However, I would like to take several definitions of this term from several references in order to give an illustration of what homosexuality is. Basically, homosexuality can be understood as "a sexual orientation or choice that is directed to person or people who have same-sex or an emotional and sexual attraction to person or people who have same biological sex" (Kendall, 1998, p. 375; Oetomo, 2001, p. 6). Additionally,

Goorin quoted a definition of homosexuality according to John Money in his writing entitled "The Sexology of Erotic Orientation." He said that homosexuality is marked by "same-sex contact, either as a genital act or as a long-term sexual/erotic status. A homosexual person is able to fall in love with, and become the pair-bonded sexual/erotic partner of only a person of the same morphological sex" (Gooren, 2011, p. 793). Additionally, Masango defines homosexuality as "the orientation of sexual need, desire, or responsiveness towards other persons of the same gender" or "persons whose conscious sexual desire, and experience are exclusively or primarily directed towards other persons of the same sex" (Ilyayambwa, 2012, p. 50; Masango, 2002, pp. 958–959). Therefore, from the above statements, I concluded that homosexuality is closely related to the one's attraction to other people of the same sex. This attraction can be sexual, romantic, or emotional.

Homosexuality and Islam

Introduction

All Muslims believe that *Qur'an*, besides *Sunnah*, is one of their life manual and guidelines that must be obeyed in totality. Theologically, humans will get lost from their lives when they have lost their life guidelines. They have no life guidelines that can be used to achieve the highest goals of their lives, such as meeting their God in the hereafter or becoming heaven's inhabitants. In Islamic perspective, both guidelines are light that will bring humanity to their real-life

goals. Therefore, it should be noted that the position of *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* is central in the Islamic religion.

Qur'an is one of the bases for Islamic *Shari'a* which regulates various aspects of life of its believers. Sexuality is one of the many aspects of human's life that is controlled by Islamic laws. Basically, this religion does not prohibit someone from having sexual desire, but it regulates how their sexual desires are properly channelled. In addition to the urgency of marriage in Islam (Eniola, 2013, pp. 20–21), one cannot have sexual desire for those who have the same biological sex. In other words, men and women cannot channel their sexual desires to men and women respectively. Those who violate this rule will be punished with certain penalties, such as caning in Aceh.

Boellstorff states that being a gay Muslim in Indonesia is "ungrammatical" because of the dominance of social norms that apply in society (T. Boellstorff, 2005, p. 575). This grammar violation is based on the fact that gay and Islam are not comparable and violate the rules in the world. Bouhdiba, as quoted by Boellstorff, explained that adultery in Islam is still understandable and acceptable as it is "still remains within the framework of order," which is realizing one's sexual desire to the opposite sex (T. Boellstorff, 2005, p. 576).

Although this sexual behaviour—adultery—is a mistake in the Islamic perspective because it realizes one's sexual desire beyond the limits set by God, such behaviour still recognizes the harmony of sexes between men and women where men must have sexual desires to women vice versa. Bouhdiba, further, illustrates the mistake of adultery with the phrase "the earth is square" while male

24

homosexuality is just as the phrase "earth happy twelve the." Therefore, same-sex

attractions in the perspective of Islam are not only wrong, but also

understandable, unacceptable, "ungrammatical" as it is contrary to the harmony of

the sexes.

From those above statements, one of the fundamental reasons why Islam rejects

homosexuality is because it is contrary to the harmony of human sexes. Islam

believes that God has created humans in pairs and regulated how their sexual

desires are directed, which is channelled to the opposite sex and "performed

within the bounds of the *Shari'a"* (Rehman & Polymenopoulou, 2012, p. 8) or to

their partner legalized in a marriage institution. The purpose of marriage in Islam,

besides recreation, is procreation, which is to continue the offspring (Eniola,

2013, pp. 20–23; Hanah, 2017, p. 48; Mulia, 2009, p. 4; Suwardin, 2018, pp. 100–

101). The unification of gay men, whether through marriage or not, cannot

produce children sexually, although some countries give them permission to adopt

babies. Nevertheless, this type of marriage cannot produce offspring. Therefore,

homosexuality is unacceptable in Islam because it contradicts the harmony of

human sexes by which humans are created by God in pairs, and it is contrary to

the sacred purpose of marriage in Islam itself, which is procreation (Harahap,

2016, p. 229). *Qur'an* says:

> "O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created
> from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women.
> And fear Allah, through whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Indeed
> Allah is ever, over you, an Observer." (QS. 4:1)

> "And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you
> may find tranquillity in them; and He placed between your affection and
> mercy. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought." (QS 30:21)

Both verses above are fundamental reasons for Islamic jurisprudence scholars in the classical period to forbid same-sex acts. Islam, theologically, legalized the unification of men and women as their marriage can produce offspring while same-sex couple marriage, if exist, cannot do the same thing with the former. Thus, same-sex marriage is contrary to the principle of marriage in Islam that emphasizes the union of two people of different sexes and the production of boys and/or girls.

In this section, I will focus more on how the traditional Islamic scholars view homosexuality, including Shafi'i, Malik, Hanbali, and Hanafi. This is not because progressive views of Muslims are less important to be addressed here in the study, but these four schools of thought have significant influence in the Islamic world, particularly in Indonesia, compared to its progressive views.

Four Schools of Islamic Jurisprudence: No Mercy for Homosexuals!

Four schools of Islamic jurisprudence entirely agree that homosexuality is contrary to the Islamic laws. This statement is based on the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* which are the guidelines for Islamic followers. Traditional Islamic scholars state that same-sex acts are *haram* or prohibited because they are contrary to the fundamental teachings, especially to the concept of marriage, of Islam. Even though they all agree to ban the practice of homosexuality, they have different opinion regarding what penalties should be given to the perpetrators. Nevertheless, they proposed the punishments depend on the situation, condition, and which Islamic school of thought adopted by majority of people in a particular

26

region. Generally, traditional Islamic scholars in the past have sentenced the homosexual perpetrators to death by various ways of execution. For example, during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr (632-634 AD.), there were marriages between men. Ali ibn Abi Talib suggested that those who carried out such marriage to be sentenced to death by means of being burned alive. Some literature wrote that Ali ibn Abi Talib suggested to punish the perpetrators by raining down burning stones (Rehman & Polymenopoulou, 2012, p. 22).

Generally, the verses used as legal justifications for homosexuals are verses narrating the story of the Prophet Lot and his people. For example, QS. 26:165-166 says, "why do you come to the kind of man among men, and you leave the wives made by your Lord, even you are the ones who transgress." However, besides a myriad of verses related to this kind of stories, the interpretation of these verses is still debated among Islamic scholars because classic Islamic literature do not explicitly state the penalty for those who committed homosexual practices.

Traditional Muslim scholars totally agreed that the perpetrators must be sentenced to death for committing homosexual acts (Rehman & Polymenopoulou, 2012, p. 9). Ibn Qudamah al-Maqasidi a scholar of the Hanbali school of thought stated that the stipulation of the law on homosexual acts is the result of *ijma'* or the agreement of classical Islamic scholars based on the *Qur'an* and *al-Hadith*. He said that "the punishment [against the perpetrators of sodomy] was the *ijma'* of the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad, they had agreed to sentence the perpetrators of sodomy to death even though they differs in the procedure for implementing the death sentence" (Qudamah, 1997, Chapter 12, page 350; Sinyo,

2014, p. 86). In addition, he also stated that classic Islamic scholars have different

opinions regarding what should be done to those who have committed

homosexual practices, even though they all agreed with their legal status, which is

haram (Abdul-Karim, n.d., p. 6). Therefore, although the punishment for the

perpetrators of homosexual acts is final, which is death penalty, they do not have

an exact method on how to execute the people involved in the practice.

Besides being found in the *Qur'an*, the prohibition of homosexual practices

is also found in the *Hadith*. Ibn Abbas, for example, narrated from the Prophet

Muhammad who stated, "whoever you find doing the action of the people of Loot,

execute the one who does it and the one to whom it is done" (Abu Dawud 4462,

Ibn Majah 2561, and al-Tirmidhi 1456). In addition, Ibn Abbas also narrated that

"may Allah curse the one who does the actions of the people of Loot" (Nasai in

al-Sunan al-Kubra IV/322 No. 7337 and Ahmad 2915). Both of these *Hadith* are

the foundations for traditional Islamic scholars to prohibit homosexual practices

in the Islamic world.

Furthermore, traditional Muslim scholars also differed whether the practice

of homosexuality is part of adultery or not. Allah calls this homosexual practice as

an abominable act (*al-faahisyah*) and forbidden (*munkaran*). Allah says, "And

[mention] Lot, when he said to his people, 'Indeed you commit such immorality

(*faahisyah*) as no one has preceded you with from among the worlds" (QS.

29:28). Imam al-Qurtubi explained that the word "commit such immorality

(*faahisyah*)" means crime against male sexual organs. God uses this term to make

it clear that homosexual practice is part of adultery (*zina*) as God says in QS.

17:32, "And do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse (*zina*); Indeed, it is ever an immorality (*faahisyah*) and is evil as a way" (Abdul-Karim, n.d., pp. 5–6).

Similar to al-Qurtubi's explanation, Malik the founder of Maliki school of thought argued that homosexual practices can be classified as adultery. Thus, the perpetrators, whether they are married (*muhshan*) or not (*ghairu muhshan*), must be punished as the same way with adulterers, which is stoning (Bello, 2012, p. 6; Rehman & Polymenopoulou, 2012, p. 10). This punishment was applied as was narrated by Ibn Abbas when Allah gave him an instruction to execute of people involved in homosexual acts, both perpetrators and victims (Abdul-Karim, n.d., p. 6).

In accordance with the *Hadith* narrated by Ibn Abbas above when Allah gave instructions to carry out executions of people involved in homosexual acts, both perpetrators and victims (Abdul-Karim, n.d., p. 6), Malik in his great book *Kitab al-Muwatta* agreed with Shihab's statement when he asked Shihab about someone who practiced the behaviour of the people of the Prophet Lot. Shihab replied that "they must be stoned, both married (*muhshan*) or not (*ghairu muhshan*)" (Bello, 2012, p. 6; Imam Malik ibn Anas, 1989, p. 346). The application of this type of punishment was recently applied by the Government of Brunei where sodomites and adulterers were punished by stoning to death (Tan, 2019).

Like Malik, Hanbali and Shafi'i regarded homosexual acts are categorized as adultery. In the perspective of Hanbali, there are two versions regarding how to execute the perpetrators. The first version considers their marital status: if the

perpetrator is not married (*ghairu muhshan*), then he is whipped as many as one hundred lashes and, after that, he is exiled for one year; while if the perpetrator is married (*muhshan*), then he is punished to stoning to death. The second version ignores their marital status in which the perpetrators are either married or not are stoned to death (Rehman & Polymenopoulou, 2012, p. 10; Suwardin, 2018, p. 101).

Unlike the majority of Islamic schools of thought, Hanafi school of thought "is homosexual conduct considered a—slightly—less serious offense and is punished through physical chastisement (at the discretion of the court)" (Rehman & Polymenopoulou, 2012, p. 10). In other words, Hanafi school of thought has a different mode of the execution of gay men who commit same-sex acts. According to him, homosexual practices cannot be associated with adultery for two reasons: first, the terms "homosexual acts" and "adultery" are not the same in terms of having offspring and lineage obscurity; second, the Companions of the Prophet had different modes of punishment. Therefore, Hanafi argued that sanctions for those who commit homosexual acts are *ta'zir*, which is a punishment given to someone on the basis of the judge's discretion because his or her actions are not explicitly stated its legal status in classic Islamic literature (Suwardin, 2018, p. 101).

Other Islamic scholars have different opinions with the experts in the field of *Fiqh* regarding how to execute Sodomites. Some argue that the perpetrators of sodomy must be thrown from high buildings (Bello, 2012, p. 7; Islam Online Archive, 2003). The punishment has been applied by ISIS, a fundamentalist

Islamic organization in the Middle East, to someone who is allegedly a homosexual (Webb, 2016). They believe that what they have done is in accordance with *Shari'a*. Moreover, other scholars argue that sodomy perpetrators must be whipped with a hundred slashes, if he is not married; and killed if he is married (Bello, 2012, pp. 7–8; Suwardin, 2018, p. 101). The punishment has been given to same-sex couples who commit homosexual acts in Aceh, Indonesia (BBC, 2017). Although the maximum penalty for this punishment is one hundred lashes, the *Shari'a* court only gave eighty slashes as requested by the prosecutor.

Another type of punishment given to those who practice sodomy is imprisoned to death (Bello, 2012, p. 7). The application of this punishment is occurred in Nigeria where people involved in "domestic partners," "caring partnerships" or "adult independent relationships" between people of the same sex, and all types of "public show of affection," like a kiss, sentenced to prison for ten years (Kamar, n.d.). This penalty is also applied to those who support, meet and participate in groups that advocate for LGBTI rights in the country.

Debates regarding the modes of punishment for those who commit homosexual acts are related to adultery or unlawful sexual relationship. Sexual intercourse outside of the institution of a lawful marriage is unacceptable. In the lens of Islamic law, any unlawful sexual relations are illegal and a part of criminal acts. Illegitimate sexual intercourse is classified as adultery or *Zina,* which is "a major offense" (Rehman & Polymenopoulou, 2012, pp. 8–9). Homosexual acts are in this category in which a lot of Islamic scholars have been associating these practices with adultery. Thus, the perpetrators should be punished like adulterers.

Likewise, Sanjakdar, as quoted by Rehman & Polymenopoulou (2012, p. 8), stated that "deviating from the Islamic narrative of heterosexual relations within marriage, is a hugely charged and politically sensitive act, which can subject persons to 'harsh criticism from fellow Muslims' as well as becoming 'ostracized from the Muslim community.'"

From the four schools of thought, Hanbali school is awarded as the most conservative school of thought in the *Sunni* world compared to the other three schools (Hughes, 2013, p. 148; See explanation about "Schools of Sunni Jurisprudence" in Sorenson, 2018; Zartner, 2014, pp. 132–133). Even so, in some cases, such as laws relating to finances, Hanafi school are more liberal compared to other schools of thought (Fanack, 2018; Oxford Islamic Studies Online, n.d.). The term "conservative" here refers to "adherence to a strict interpretation of Islam through a literal understanding of the *Qur'an* and *Hadith*." Thus, the interpretations of Islamic doctrines in the school of Hanbali are considered strict using a literal and constructionist approach (Kakoulidou, n.d., p. 11). Oxford Islamic Studies Online states that the Hanbali school "rejects *Taqlid*, or adherence to opinions of other scholars, or advocates a literal interpretation of textual sources" (Oxford Islamic Studies Online, n.d.). Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab, Ibn Qayyim, and Ibn Taymiyah are samples of the most well-known and controversial scholars in the Hanbali school. His strict interpretations are also considered to have a significant influence on Wahhabism and contemporary jihadism.

Homosexuality in Muslim Majority Countries

It might be true if Siraj said that "Islam is inherently a homophobic religion" (Siraj, 2012, p. 449) due to its strong homophobic religious doctrines. Although this statement seems correct and is considered to represent the majority view of Muslims towards same-sex attractions, it is not entirely correct because some Muslims, which are progressive in the religion, believe that Islam embraces sexual minorities, such as gays and lesbians. However, a lot of Muslims agree with conservative Islamic ideologies about homosexuality where it is considered as a sin against God and a major offense against *Shari'a* as stated by the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence and majority of other Islamic scholars. These ideologies influence many states in the world, especially if Islam dominates a particular country. Thus, it is highly likely if Muslim majority countries apply particular punishment, such as caning, stoning, etc., against people who have committed same-sex acts due to the strong influence of Islam within those countries.

Rehman & Polymenopoulou (2012, pp. 3–4) reported that homosexual people get cruel treatment from countries that implement strict Islamic law. Some Islamic theocracy states, such as Iran and Saudi Arabia, sentence to death for those who commit homosexual acts in their administrative areas. Some countries that are predominantly Muslims apply the same punishment as Iran and Saudi Arabia done or other punishment as I have discussed previously. Northern region of Nigeria and southern region of Somalia impose death penalties for Sodomites. Other punishments, such as caning and stoning in public, are applied in other

Muslim majority countries, such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Some states, such as Maldives, imprison the perpetrators for the rest of their lives. Therefore, it can be concluded that Muslim majority states have "the highest level of homophobia and intolerance toward sexual diversity" (Rehman & Polymenopoulou, 2012, p. 4).

Non-heterosexual people who live in a particular Muslim majority country might face serious problems regarding their sexual identity/orientation and rights. Not only the states, Islamic societies often indicate homophobic and heterosexist attitudes. It is evident if "they sometimes completely refuse to recognize the existence of homosexuals, using religion as an ideological argument for its negation" (Rehman & Polymenopoulou, 2012, pp. 4–5). Religion, culture, and tradition within the country are often used by its Muslim citizens to "sanctify brutal punishment, discrimination, and exclusion of LGBT persons from the society" (Rehman & Polymenopoulou, 2012, p. 5). The government representatives and public officials are also able to contribute to the spreading of homophobic ideologies within the country. Media that displays elements of non-heterosexuality and broadcasts homosexuality-nuanced contents will be censored. Furthermore, various elements in a country influenced by Islamic traditions will massively restrain and reject the ideas of sexual and, probably, gender diversity in the country.

Homosexuality in Indonesia

Introduction

Homosexuality has existed in Indonesia for a long time. Its history is rooted in the establishment of Dutch East Indies Company in Indonesia. Homosexual activities were prohibited by the colonial government and categorised as criminal acts according to *Wetboek van Strafrecht* article 292 (Bloembergen, 2011, p. 413), thus those who committed homosexual acts would be punished. Moreover, homosexual men had been stigmatized and discriminated by society. Notably, religious communities like Christianity perceive homosexuals as sinners and contrary to the human nature. Homophobic attitudes have been obviously depicted by not only religious group members, but also the government members and public officials who ultimately lead to the rejection of same-sex relationships and the individuals from their territory. In this section, I would like to describe how homosexuality has been living in Indonesia categorised in three different historical periods of homosexuality: before Indonesian independence, during the Old and New Order period and the Reformation Era of Indonesia. In general, it can be said that homosexuality is not new phenomena over the country and sexual minorities have been facing various homophobic attitudes from the society.

Homosexuality before Indonesian Independence

Homosexuality in Indonesia occur before its independence. Essentially, same-sex acts are strictly prohibited under the Dutch rule in the country. It is not seen as a sexual orientation, but is associated with deviant sexual behaviours like

sodomy or adultery. Those behaviours are sentenced to death in various means of punishment, such as being hung, strangled or drowned to death. In order to carry out a moral cleansing operation (*zedenschoonmaak*), the Dutch authorities persecute many people who engage in such sexual intercourses in Indonesia.

With regards to punishment against the perpetrators, according to Clarence-Smith & Reyes, the Dutch government first sentenced someone to death for committing sodomy in 1636 on Banda Island, Central Moluccas. At that time, a slave was burned alive along with a dog. Then, in 1643, the authorities executed two people, Ingel Harmensz and Bento de Sal, for committing same-sex acts in Batavia or what is now Jakarta. The *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC) gave different penalties for both. Harmensz was punished by drowning, while de Sal was punished by being burned alive. The former penalty was the first punishment for sodomites in the VOC territory and became a common death penalty for sodomy perpetrators in the 17th century in the Dutch East Indies (Boomgaard, 2012, p. 150).

In 1644, the Dutch government executed a Dutchman Joost Schouten for sodomy. He was punished by death by being "strangled and burned to ashes" (Boomgaard, 2012, pp. 150–151; Headsman, 2013). This event was recorded in the previous memoir of Gijsbert Heeck, a medicine specialist for the Dutch East Indies government. Schouten was an educated, great merchant, and Dutch East Indies government diplomat. Although he did not spend time in Indonesia, he was executed in Batavia for sodomy.

Furthermore, in 1735, the Dutch government sentenced two Dutch people to death, Class Blanc and Rijkaert Jacobsz, by drowning. Jacobsz worked for the Dutch East Indies as a sailor. Previously, he was accused of sodomy in 1713 in Batavia. Because there was no enough evidence, he was exiled to Robben Island for twenty-five years. Allegations for sodomy against him were triggered by a report told by a Batavian slave named Panaij van Boegies. He reported Jacobsz had committed sodomy against him. A few numbers of witnesses revealed that Jacobsz had committed adultery with Blanc in 1732. The testimonies strengthened the accusation against them and they admitted that they had committed prohibited such sexual behaviour. Thus, the Dutch government sentenced them to death on August 19, 1735 (Newton-King, 2005, pp. 6–8; SAHO, 2018).

According to the Dutch Criminal Code article 292 (*Wetboek van Strafrecht*), homosexual practice of men under the age of 21 was a crime (Bloembergen, 2011, p. 413). However, this law emphasizes the prohibition of pedophilia instead of homosexuality itself because in other cases the latter was not a part of crime. Colonial government officials carried out massive arrests of those who accused homosexual pedophiles in several major cities in the Dutch colonies, such as Batavia, Bandung, Yogyakarta, Malang, Palembang, Makassar, etc., in Indonesia. Although many people, around 171 of the 223 people, accused of homosexual acts who were captured by the Dutch officers, a small number managed to escape the operation, one of which was Sutjipto (Bloembergen, 2011, pp. 412–413; T. Boellstorff, 2005, p. 48). He was a man of *Priyayi* descent from East Java. He

wrote an autobiographical book about his lived experience as a homosexual in the Dutch colonial period in Indonesia.

Historian Marieke Bloembergen states that the Dutch Government essentially gave homosexual people the freedom to live in the country even though Christianity regarded homosexuality as unnatural, abnormal and prohibited (Bloembergen, 2011, p. 414). The problems of morality in the Indonesia archipelago have shifted over the Dutch colonial period. Before 1983, the Dutch Government focused on the practices of prostitution against women and children. After that, the Dutch Government formed police forces specifically in the area of public morality or what was called the "polisi kesusilaan" (*zedenpolitie*) as "a means of civilizing colonial society, a guardian and caretaker of public order and health, … [and] a means of controlling society." Homosexuality began to be confronted with the problems of morality and is seen "not only as a disgrace that polluted the noble character of society, but is also regarded as a crime" (Bloembergen, 2011, p. 414).

After the "moral police" were formed in the Dutch East Indies, a number of Dutch people showed homophobic attitudes against homosexual people. The government and police officers in Surabaya, for example, stated that "public decency is a feature of modern society" (Bloembergen, 2011, p. 414). In this case, same-sex attractions were deemed to have deviated from public decency or prevailing social norms. Also, a number of specialists in medical field was invited by the colonial government to discuss about sexual behavior deviations in the "heteronormativity" framework (Bloembergen, 2011, p. 416; Putri, 2019).

Some executions of those who were accused of sodomy were colored with religious understandings. Christianity significantly influenced the Dutch East Indies. For example, the intervention of the authorities in granting sanctions for Sodomites has several religious-based reasons, such as "[the] fear for the punishing hand of God if those who ruled did not take drastic measures" (Boomgaard, 2012, pp. 150–151). In fact, their country deserved God's punishment if they hide the perpetrators in their territory. Thus, such intervention revealed the fear of homosexuals for religious-nuanced reasons.

Besides Islam, Christianity is another religion that believes in the story of God's punishment against the people of Lot. They believe that the people of Sodom were zealous because they committed sexual behavior that God forbade. Such heteronormative stereotypes associate the existence of homosexuals with disasters as they occurred that have been inflicted by God on the people of Sodom. Therefore, it can be concluded that religion, in some cases, contributed to the homophobic attitudes and thoughts in society (Park, 2001, pp. 18–22).

In summary, the Dutch East Indies did not questions ones' sexual orientation, but their sexual deviations, such as sodomy. The prohibition and punishment were imposed on those who committed sodomy against people under 21 years of age.

Homosexuality in the Old and New Order Indonesia

During the New Order, LGBT-based organizations began to emerge in Indonesia. In 1968, the term "wadam" or "wanita-adam" which means a man who

was half-male and half-female as his gender appeared to replace the pejorative terms of homosexuality or "bencong" (sissy, effeminate, ladyboy). In 1969, an organization called *Himpunan Wanita Adam Djakarta* (the Djakarta Woman-Man Association) was established in Jakarta and facilitated by the Jakartan Governor Ali Sadikin. The use of the term "adam" in the word "wadam" has been rejected by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) because it belonged to the religious vocabularies. As a result, in 1980, the term "wadam" was changed to the term "waria" which had similar meaning to accommodate the third gender in Indonesia (Kiblat, 2019; Muthmainnah, 2016, p. 16; Roby Yansyah, 2018, p. 135).

In 1982, some people established the first homosexual organizations in Indonesia and Asia, namely Lambda Indonesia (Roby Yansyah, 2018, p. 135). The organization was campaigning about LGBT in the country in various ways, such as mass media. For instance, in 1982-1986, the organization published a monthly magazine called "G: Gaya Hidup Ceria" or *G: Cheerful Lifestyle* in English (Muthmainnah, 2016, p. 16). However, this magazine was not circulated in 1986 afterwards. Moreover, the organization also inspired the establishment of the first lesbian organization in Indonesia called *Persatuan Lesbian Indonesia* (Indonesian Lesbian Association, PERLESIN). However, this organization only lasted one year (Kiblat, 2019).

The efforts of Lambda Indonesia to introduce LGBT and accommodate sexual minorities in Indonesia bear fruit. Several branches of this organization were established in several regions in Indonesia, particularly in Surabaya, Jakarta, and Yogyakarta. In 1985, for example, gay people in Yogyakarta established an

organization called *Persaudaraan Gay Yogyakarta* (the Gay Yogyakarta Brotherhood, PGY). In 1987, a similar organization called *Kelompok Kerja Wanita Lesbian dan Gaya Nusantara* (the Lesbian Women and Archipelago Gay's Working Group, KKLGN), which was subsequently abbreviated as GAYa Nusantara, established another gay organization in Pasuruan, Surabaya, as the successor to Lambda Indonesia (Muthmainnah, 2016, p. 16; Roby Yansyah, 2018, p. 135).

With the emergence of many organizations that embraced Indonesian LGBT people, they held the first national meeting called *Kongres Lesbian dan Gay Indonesia* (the Indonesian Lesbian and Gay Congress) in Kaliurang, Yogyakarta, and were attended by around 40 participants. The congress produced six important points regarding their future existence in Indonesia. GAYa Nusantara was trusted to implement the points and to coordinate *Jaringan Lesbian dan Gay Indonesia* (the Indonesian Lesbian and Gay Network, JLGI). Then, the second national meeting was held in 1995 in Lembang, Bandung, West Java. At this meeting, for the first time in Indonesian history, a political party called *Partai Demokratik Rakyat* (the People's Democratic Party, PRD) explicitly included in their manifesto the rights of homosexuals and transsexuals. In 1997, the third congress was held in Denpasar, Bali. At this meeting, for the first time, media and journalists were allowed to cover the activities of the LGBT movement in Indonesia (Tom Boellstorff, 2006b, p. 466; Muthmainnah, 2016, p. 16).

In can be concluded that LGBT-based organizations under the New Order regime could develop well without getting serious resistance from certain parties,

such as religious groups. However, their movements began to be rejected both in private and public spaces from radical religious communities, especially *Front Pembela Islam* (Islamic Defender Front, FPI) and obtained various negative labels, such as sexual deviations, abnormal, amoral, etc., which were circulated in public spaces.

Homosexuality in the Reformation Era (Current Situation of Homosexuality in Indonesia)

After the fall of Soeharto in 1998, gay movements in Indonesia always intersect with politics and religion. Particularly, Islam dominates almost over the country. Boellstorff stated that violence against homosexual people before Soeharto's resignation was "rare to a degree unimaginable in many Euro American societies" (Tom Boellstorff, 2006b, p. 465). A year later after the incident, several cases of anti-LGBT demonstrations carried out by those who were mainly homophobic Muslims in several regions of the country. Boellstorff indicated that these violence acts against LGBT people marked the beginning of political homophobia in the country (Tom Boellstorff, 2006b, p. 468). Although he regarded politics as a major contribution to this phenomenon, he did not deny the contribution of religion, especially Islam, in this matter. For Boellstorff, "it is not clear to what degree Islam is a cofounding variable" (Tom Boellstorff, 2006b, p. 474). Because he assumed that any religion that dominates a country will always have fundamentalist groups within it and has the potential to take any violent actions in the name of their religion (Ichwan, 2014, p. 199). Regardless of

whether religion or politics contribute to anti-gay violence in the country, it is true that many anti-LGBT demonstrations in the country were carried out by homophobic Muslims.

Furthermore, the strong religious resistance in Indonesia made homosexual people have living in the country cannot express their sexual orientation properly in many certain domains, mainly in a university and a particular region. To give a clear example, a university in the North Sumatra established a regulation that discriminates lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people (Tehusijarana, 2018). They also face serious challenges when they live as a sexually minority in a Muslim-dominated region. West Sumatra is the best example of it in which this region is predominantly Muslims and one of the most religiously conservative provinces in Indonesia. Authorities in the region made a regulation which makes it difficult for homosexuals to live on the land (Ramadhani, 2018).

During this period, Indonesian heterosexuals labelled stigmatize sexual minorities in various terms, such as (sexual) deviations, proxy war, immorality, and threats to the nation, sources of HIV/AIDS, etc. According to community legal aid agencies, the stigmatization of the majority group was caused by the fallacy or a lack of understanding of LGBT. Although modern science has denied all the myths related to those labels, "the public prefers to believe that what they want (the majority of people) to believe" instead of scientific explanations (Zakiah, 2018, p. 10).

After successfully holding three LGBT-nuanced national meetings, gay organizations such as GAYa Nusantara, *Persatuan Waria Kota Surabaya* (The

Association of Transgender Person in Surabaya City), together with the French

Cultural Centre held the gay pride event in Surabaya in June 1999, a year after

Soeharto's resignation. Unlike previous congresses that were successfully

implemented, the gay pride event was rejected from Islam organizations, such as

the Surakarta Islamic Defenders Front (*Front Pembela Islam Surakarta,*

abbreviated FPI Surakarta). Because they threatened the committee to attack the

participants of the event, the committee eventually cancelled the event for security

reason (Tom Boellstorff, 2006b, p. 467; Muthmainnah, 2016, p. 16).

A year later, precisely in March 2000, the Indonesian Gay Society (IGS)

established declaring March 1 as the National Lesbian and Gay Solidarity Day at

the Indonesia-France Institute, Yogyakarta. The term "solidarity" in this name

was chosen by Oetomo to provide opportunities for people who want to be

involved in the emancipation of transvestites, gays, and lesbians in Indonesia. In

addition, the emancipation of sexual minorities in the country is considered to

have a similar motto with the French Revolution, which is "freedom, equality, and

brotherhood" (Ariefana, 2016).

The struggle of LGBT organizations and activists during the reformation era

was hampered by anti-LGBT attitudes of faith-based organizations, especially

Islam, which rejected same-sex attractions and acts in Indonesia. The Islamic

Defenders Front (FPI) is one of the anti-LGBT extremist organizations and

demands that LGBT people be sentenced to death for being contrary to Islamic

teachings. These conservative views on religion affect other Muslim majority

regions in Indonesia, such as Bogor. FPI held a demonstration in the city of Bogor

and demands the regional government to reject the existence of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people in the region (BBC, 2018).

Perkumpulan Keluarga Berencana Indonesia (The Indonesian Family Planning Association, PKBI) noted that there are at least three local governments that have discriminatory-nuanced regulation against sexual minorities. Besides, PKBI noted that there are around 22 local regulations in various regions in Indonesia which explicitly included the terms homosexuals and transvestites and around 45 local regulations that indirectly lead to LGBT (BBC, 2018). The emergence of sharia-nuanced local regulations began in 2015 according to Riska Caroline, an advocate and public policy analyst at PKBI. This was triggered by the plan of parliamentarians to criminalize molestation.

In addition to the limitation of LGBT people in the public space, sexual minority individuals find it difficult to express their same-sex attractions on social media. The Indonesian police has a cyber team whose task is to closely monitor any content circulated on social media and they are ready to arrest those directly involved in this publication. For example, in 2016, an Indonesian gay man has been arrested for running an LGBT-themed Facebook page. This arrest was based on the report of an internet user to the police. He said that the page contained pornographic contents including "selling sexual service" (The Star Online, 2018). The man was accused of violating electronic information laws and was given a maximum sentence of six years in prison and a fine of one billion rupiah if found guilty. This incident shows that Indonesian homosexuals have difficulty displaying their sexual orientation in private spaces such as on Facebook.

Restricting their existence in the public spaces has resulted in the use of social media as a virtual domain to interact with queer men and women. However, the strict supervision of heterosexual people in this media as well makes Facebook not the right and safe place for them. Thus, they have been trying to find other alternatives to express their sexual orientation and communicate with other homosexual male and female, such as using online gay dating applications.

Additionally, the depreciation of the freedom space for LGBT people on social media is not only on Facebook, but also on online dating applications, both for gay and public, on Play Store. The Ministry of Communication and Information Rudiantara followed up on the report from the Head of the Criminal Investigation Agency, Indonesian National Police, regarding a number of gay applications that were considered disturbing the public and tended to be used a place for gay exploitation and prosthesis transactions. Media Indonesia reports that these apps are "Grindr, Jack'd, Hornet, BoyAhoy, Blued, Romeo, VGL, GROWL, GayPark, Adam4Adam, Guyz, Scruff, Gay Dating, Surge, Gaydar, Krave, Gay Times, Gay Cities, and Maleforce" (Angriani, 2016). These seventeen apps were found by the police in an iPad belonging to a suspect who promoted Indonesian homosexuals in those software. Thus, the Ministry of Communication and Information in the country ultimately blocked those apps for the sake of social welfare.

Freedom of expression among Indonesian homosexuals in both public and private spaces is very controlled and limited. It causes them to tend to hide their 'true' sexual orientation and pretend to be a heterosexual to avoid persecution and

social sanctions. With regards to religious discussions, male and female homosexuals talk with each other concerning religious topic due to the homophobic situation in the religious domain, such as mosque. This private discussions among them shows that they are aware that their religion and sexual orientation are not in line. Boellstorff said that places of worship were an unsafe place for religious homosexuals as they know that, in case of Islam, this religion only recognizes heterosexual relationship (T. Boellstorff, 2005, p. 577).

When some people do not let other know about their same-sex attractions, some married heterosexually to avoid the stigma and negative responses of homophobic community, while some are not married at all because they have no interest in the opposite sex and the heterosexual marriage institution. Ade, for example, an Indonesian lesbian, recounts her experience of being a lesbian in this country as written on the BBC News website (Sitepu, 2017). According to her story, she initially wanted to focus on her career and never thought about getting married until her parents demanded her to do so. At the age of 29, she finally married a good, responsible, and religious man, and had two children from her partner during the relationship. However, she did not feel happy with her husband not because of his attitudes against her instead of her attraction is not directed to the opposite sex but to the same-sex person. This example reveals that, in general, heterosexual marriage is not the desire of a male or female homosexual but rather heterosexual norms where marriage occurs between a man and a woman.

One of the reasons for LGBT people in Indonesia having difficulty expressing their sexual orientation or gender identity is the government's

mistaken assumption. The government suspects that LGBT people and their movements are trying to change the sexual orientation of heterosexual Indonesians to homosexuality. This is as said by a spokesman for the Indonesian president as reported by the voaindonesia's website. He said that "as citizens, whoever they are will be protected by their rights, regardless of their sexual preferences. ... But if LGBT means mass movements to influence other parties to be the same as them, then there is no room here." This statement is not only wrong but also dangerous for LGBT people. The president's spokesman tried to lead heterosexual Indonesian public opinion as if the existence of gay people would lead to changes in the sexual orientation of heterosexual communities and their next generation. This can cause mass concerns within the community and lead to the rejection of homosexual people by heterosexual society.

The conclusion in this section is that sexual minorities in Indonesia find it difficult to express their gender identity or sexual orientation either in public space or private space because Islam that is homophobic religion dominates Indonesia and some religious-nuanced regulations and organizations do not accept their existence. Therefore, they choose to hide their identities and attractions from the homophobic social environment to avoid deadly social negative responses, such as persecution.

Third Gender and "Waria" in Indonesia

Waria has become part of several cultures in Indonesia. However, Boellstorff (2004, p. 162) explained that *Waria* is not banded to certain tribes or

communities in the country. Since the beginning of the 19th century, the Dutch colonial government called them *Bantji Batavia* who worked in the entertainment world, like dancing on stage. Some studies show that experts have different opinions about the definition of *Waria*. Liem (2012, p. 1) associates *Waria* with transgender which means "individuals who are uncomfortable with biological genitalia and gender norms that conflict with gender identity," for this phenomenon, while Kartono prefers the term transsexual which can be defined as "a symptom in someone who feels they have a sexuality that is different from their physical structure" (Koeswinarno, 1996, p. 4). Besides, Boellstorff chooses the term "male transvestite" for *Waria*, which is a combination of the words *wanita* (women) and *pria* (men). He also explained that *Waria* is not a part of third gender, but rather male femininity because "the concept of *[W]aria* operates within the orbit of male gender" (Tom Boellstorff, 2004, p. 162).

The Attitudes of Indonesian towards Homosexuality

The global community has different opinions and attitudes regarding the existence of homosexual people. These differences can be influenced by personal preferences, religion, culture, human rights, or science. However, it is clear that religion plays a significant role in this regard. Thus, most religious people, such as those who are influenced by the teachings of Christianity and Islam, are highly likely to reject the existence of homosexual people on this earth. In this section, I would like to discuss the attitudes of society towards LGBT people in Indonesia.

Like people in other parts of the world, Indonesians have differences of opinions and attitudes about non-heterosexuality. Novetri (2003), for instance, conducted a research in 2003 to trace the acceptance of homosexual male by the people in Surabaya Indonesia. She found that there were at least four attitudes of the Surabayans towards homosexuality: normative, inclusive, legal, and conservative. Normative group regards gay men and women as not in accordance with the prevailing social norms or with acceptable sexual behaviour by the society; inclusive group accepts the existence of gays as longs as they do not disturb the lives of others around them; while legal group considers homosexuals to be part of human rights, therefore their rights must be protected and their existence must be recognized; fourth, conservative group views homosexuality as a source of infectious diseases, such as HIV/AIDS. Besides, the last group considers homosexuality to be a sexual deviation, abnormal, violation of human nature, moral decline, mental disorders, source of various diseases, etc. (See also KPPPA, 2015, p. 13).

Statistically, there is no official source regarding the number of heterosexual people who are homophobic and/or heterosexist in Indonesia. Some levels of society openly express their resistance to non-heterosexuals. Generally, the homophobic Indonesian people are originated from government, religious, and education institutions. In 2016, various anti-LGBT campaigns arose in Indonesia. For example, the Minister of Education and Higher Education Muhammad Natsir criticized an internal organization at the University of Indonesia that provided information and counselling on gender and sexuality to students. He associates the

organization with LGBT and said that they are "not in accordance with Indonesian values and morality" (Kwok, 2016). In line with Natsir's statement, the Minister of Defense Ryamizard Ryacudu viewed LGBT phenomena as a part of the proxy war launched by Western countries to control certain countries without the involvement of their soldiers in this kind of war. In addition, he argues that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people are more dangerous than nuclear weapons. Therefore, Ryacudu advises heterosexual people to be aware of people or communities who are fighting for LGBT rights in Indonesia (Tempo.co, 2016).

The rejection towards sexual minorities is also launched by the majority religious in Indonesia, Islam. This religion expressly rejects homosexuality in both private and public spaces. For his believers, a gay man or woman must be healed and returned his or her sexual orientation to its 'default', which is heterosexuality. It is well known that Indonesia is home to most Muslims in the world. Therefore, the rejection of Muslims towards non-heterosexuality is influenced by their religious teachings. These teachings affect the understanding and attitudes of its followers. For example, in 2014, *Majelis Ulama Indonesia* (the Indonesian Ulema Council, MUI), a "non-governmental organization that accommodated *Ulema, Zu'ama,* and Islamic scholars to guide, foster, and protect Muslims throughout Indonesia" (MUI, n.d.), issued an MUI Fatwa Number 57 Year 2017 concerning "lesbian, gay, sodomy, and sexual abuse." They prohibited all LGBT activities and declared that they are part of crimes. For those who are involved in these activities, both perpetrators and victims, can be sentenced to

death (Harahap, 2016, p. 235). Specifically, in 1980, the MUI held a second National Conference and issued a fatwa concerning sex reassignment surgery (SRS) or improvements in human genitals. One of the points from the discussions stated that the reassignment of human's sex from male to female or vice versa was prohibited because it was contrary to Islamic religious texts (Harahap, 2016, pp. 235–236).

The dominance of Islam in the lives of Indonesian Muslims has also influenced the thinking and understanding of its followers on various matter, including LGBT. *Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Masyarakat* (The Community Legal Aid Institute, LBHM) reported that since 2017 Indonesian heterosexuals have a new stigma towards LGBT people. They assumed that LGBT causes natural disasters. An Islamic site hidayatullah criticized Ulil Absar Abdala's question on Twitter, "if God really punishes Sodom for LGBT, why does He not condemn countries that tolerate LGBT now?" (personal translation) Setiawan criticized Abdala's statement and argued that sin, including sin because of being a homosexual, leads to [natural] disasters, and several disasters occurred because of the sin of God's servant (Setiawan, 2018). Because Islam strictly prohibits same-sex attractions, Siraj says that Islam be categorized as a homophobic religion (Siraj, 2012, p. 449).

In addition to the homophobic attitudes from government officials, religious institutions and people, the university became another heterosexist domain. Recently, in March 2019, University of North Sumatera dismissed all members of the Student Press at the campus' internal organization because a member of the

organisation published a short story about homosexual female. The university regarded it as an attempt to "promote LGBT and pornography." Moreover, the student President of the university uploaded a video on the "Pema USU" Instagram account. In the video, he said that he "rejected the existence of LGBT ideology that develop on the green campus of University of North Sumatera in any form" (Zuhra, 2019).

Furthermore, some regulations in Indonesia discriminate against non-heterosexuals, such as the marriage institution. According to *Wetboek van Strafrecht* or the Indonesia's Criminal Code, particularly in the Marriage Law, stated that marriage can be accepted and legalized if it is comprised of a man and a woman. The content of the 1974 Marriage Law Article 1 state that "marriage is an inner and outer bond between a man and a woman as a husband and wife with the aim of forming a happy and eternal family based on the One Godhead" (Mustaqim, 2016, p. 37). In Article 2 of the law states that "marriage is legal if carried out according to the law of each religion and its beliefs." Therefore, this regulation, which cannot be separated from the intervention of religion and beliefs, only recognizes and legalizes heterosexual marriage while homosexual marriage is unacceptable and against the law.

The conclusion of this section is that Indonesian people have different opinions and attitudes about LGBT. Although some Indonesians have a positive opinion of this, the majority of Indonesians, especially those who are religious, tend to reject LGBT people in the country by labeling various stigma, such as

abnormal, sexual deviation, a source of infectious diseases and disasters, sexual

misconduct, etc.

Indonesia, School of Thought and Perceptions of Muslims

In the context of Indonesia itself, Shafi'i school of thought dominates over

the country (Azizy, 2002, p. 21). Thus, those who are committing homosexual

acts should be punished like an adulterer, which is sentenced to death, according

to this school of thought. However, this mode of punishment cannot be applied to

the perpetrators who committed same-sex acts as Indonesia only legalizes capital

punishment for certain types of crimes, such as premeditated murder, terrorism,

and the distribution of illegal drugs. In these cases, the Court can revoke

someone's right of life and then sentence him or her to death.

In addition to that, although Shafi'i school of thought influences majority of

Muslims in Indonesia, some regions and Islamic organizations in the country do

not follow this school of thought. Muhammadiyah, which is a major Islamic

organization in Indonesia, for instance, issued a fatwa about their position towards

existing Islamic schools of thought. In its official site (Majelis Tarjih dan Tajdid,

2016), they said as follows:

> *"[Muhammadiyah] does not bind themselves to one of existing schools of
> thought, but their opinions of these schools can be taken into consideration
> in determining the law, as long as it is in accordance with the soul of the al-
> Qur'an and al-Sunnah or other bases that are considered strong."*

With regard to the perceptions of Islamic people in the country, whether it is

progressive or conservative that dominates the country, it can be seen from the

fall of Soeharto in 1998. The image of Islam changed significantly before and

after the incident. Martin van Bruinessen said that Islam transformed drastically in the country from "tolerant and inclined to compromise" to being "conservative." Before his fall, Islam was displayed with an image that was "liberal, tolerant, open-minded" through well-known Islamic figures, such as Nurcholis Madjid and Abdurrahman Wahid. After his fall, Islam turned aggressive in their actions in some cases, such as inter-religious conflicts, jihadist movements, terrorism, etc. In the period of 2001-2002, an attempt to include a reference to Shari'a in the Charter of Jakarta into the Indonesian Constitution was rejected by *Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat* (People's Consultative Assembly, abbreviated MPR). However, in the following years, some Muslim-dominated regions in the country began to establish Shari'a nuanced regulations instead. Therefore, I concluded that Indonesia is currently dominated by conservative instead of progressive Muslims.

Summary

In summary, this chapter discussed the theoretical framework and related literatures regarding Islam, homosexuality, and minority stress theory. Islam regards homosexuality as a sin against God and should be punished in particular ways, such as caning. Indonesia is dominated by Islamic religion that affects social and cultural norms as well as people's worldview, including what is accepted and not accepted. Thus, as Islam rejects male-male intimacy, most Indonesian people, especially those who are heterosexuals and Muslims, stigmatize and discriminate sexual minorities because they are not in accordance

with the noble teachings of Islam. This homophobic or heterosexist attitudes

among Indonesian Muslims lead to various problems among homosexual

individuals in the country. Some of homosexuals believe that Islam does not

dispute homosexual believers while others believe that Islam strictly rejects

homosexuality. In this case, Muslim homosexual males may employ various

strategies to deal with the problems when they were living as a homosexual male

and Muslim amidst religious heterosexists in Indonesia.

Chapter 3

Findings and Discussion

Introduction

In this chapter, I will describe and discuss what I found through semi-structured interviews on seven participants with aforementioned criteria (see Chapter One).

Findings and Discussion

The themes emerged in the study are categorised into two section: problems and strategies. Both sections have several themes (see Table 2) and those will be described in detail in the following section. In addition to that, I will discuss the findings after describing them.

Table 2

Problems and Strategies

#	Problems		Strategies
1	Rejection	1	Self-acceptance
2	Isolation and Feeling of Loneliness	2	Self-control
3	Concerns	3	Positive Reinterpretation
		4	Seeking Social Support
		5	Concealing
		6	Conversion
		7	Migration

Table 3

Problems Faced by Muslim Gay or Bisexual Men in Indonesia and What Strategies They Use to Deal with These Problems

Solutions	Problems		
	Rejection	Feelings of Isolation and Loneliness	Concerns
Self-acceptance	X		
Self-control	X		

Positive Reinterpretation	X		
Seeking Social Support	X	X	
Concealing			X
Conversion	X		
Migration			X

Figure 1

The Problems and Solutions Found in the Present Study
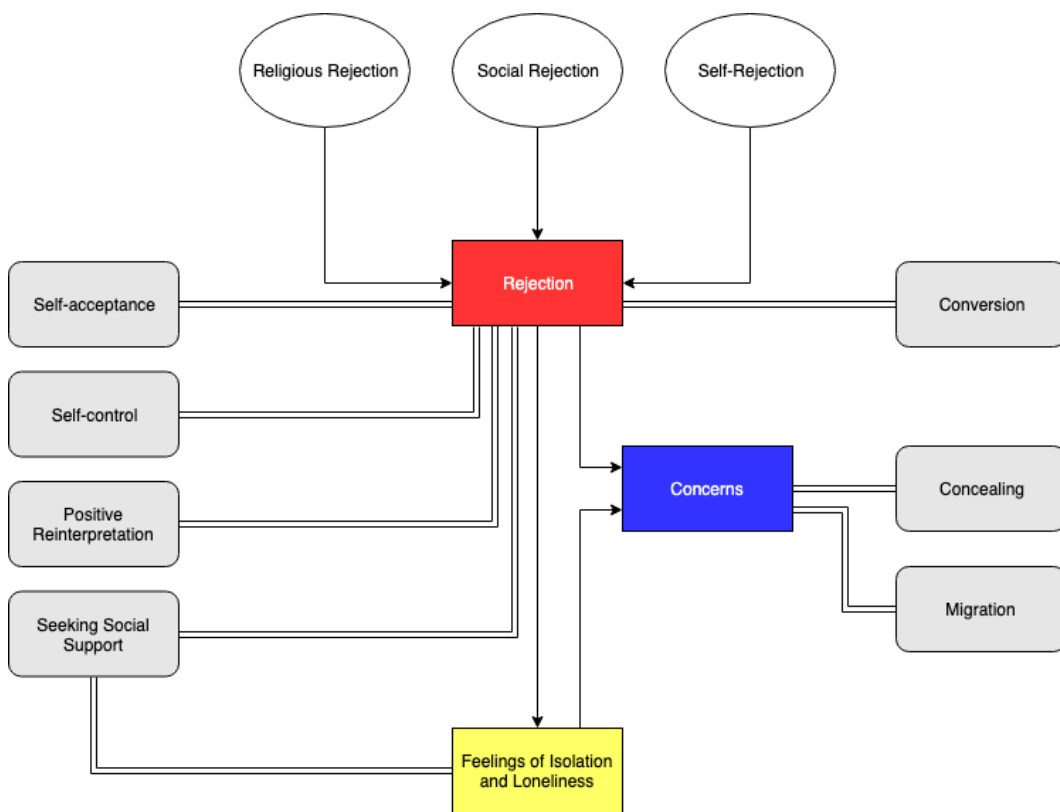
Problems

Rejection

The first theme that emerged in the study is called "rejection" which is contained several problems related to it of the participants because of their sexual status. The problems include stigma, prejudice, sexual harassment, and humiliation. As Siraj said that "Islam is inherently a homophobic religion" and its teachings towards same-sex desires and acts are obvious, which are not in support of homosexuality. Besides, sexual minorities are unacceptable humans in a particular society and sometimes these attitudes manifest in many different forms as stated previously. Both religion and society that are against same-sex desires and acts contribute to the internalized homophobia among sexual minorities and in some extreme cases it can lead to the self-rejection of their sexual orientation. Thus, it can be said that the problem of rejection consists of three forms: religious, social, and self-rejection (See Figure 1).

Religious rejection

In the first place, all participants certainly felt that religion has caused the rejection against their sexual orientation in which its noble teachings and majority of the believers' state that homosexuality is not accepted at all. Although they did not cite any passages from an Islamic literature, but they realised that Islamic teachings reject same-sex relationships. Below is quotes from the participants to demonstrate how religion does not accept their sexual status.

"Allah created Adam and Eve, not Adam and Adam"

Even though all participants agree that Islam forbids homosexuality, in this study they expressed it in many ways and in their own words. In this part, a participant strongly believes that in the light of his religion, his sexual orientation is prohibited. This theme is captured in the following response:

> *"Religion (Islam) always says that homosexuality is prohibited ... because Allah (God) created Adam and Eve, not Adam and Adam" (P1)*

"We are part of the story of the Prophet Lot"

Essentially, the rejection of religion against gay men comes from religious scriptures. In Islam, the story of the Prophet Lot and his people in the past often associates with homosexuality in which gay people were punished by God because of their deviant sexual behaviour. Thus, a participant is of the opinion that homosexuality is wrong if it is related to the story of the Prophet Lot. These are quotes from the related participants to demonstrate how the story of Lot and its community influence his understanding of homosexuality in the perspective of his religion.

> *"So, in Islam, we are part of the story of the Prophet Lot, if Islam said that homosexuality is wrong, so it is wrong." (P2)*
> *"Because if we talk about homosexuality in Islam, it must be something wrong ..." (P2)*
> *"Many Islamic teachers when I was in middle and high school spoke about homosexuality and it is forbidden in Islam, contrary to human nature. They used the story of the Prophet Lot to justify this prohibition. So, I can't deny that homosexuality is forbidden in Islam." (P7)"*

"Islam said that Islam embraces and nurtures humans, but in reality, it does not"

Many people believe that religion teaches goodness and Islam, in particular, indoctrinates its believers that this religion teaches love to all God's creatures in

the universe. However, a participant felt disappointment and said that Islam was not what it said about itself because in reality it does not embrace gay people.

> *"From elementary to high school, my religious life was normal. But, since I went to college, my religiosity declined drastically. I was a Muslim. I felt that Islam seems judgemental towards LGBT people. Islam said that Islam embraces and nurtures humans, but in reality, it doesn't." (P3)*

"God who created us, not our will to be gay"

Religion portrays being a homosexual as bad. A participant expressed how stereotypes in the light of religion lead to the self-rejection with regards to homosexuality. He felt that Islam regards his sexual status as bad and is not permissible. However, he believed that his religion only forbids same-sex acts and not same-sex desires.

> *"According to Islam, if it's according to our religion, homosexuality is bad. Moreover, those of us who have studied religion must know that there is no place in religion for homosexuality. ... What is not permissible in homosexuality is its behaviours, while its attractions may be allowed as long as he doesn't do same-sex behaviours. But, what percentage of the people don't do that? Probably from hundred percent of homosexuals, only one percent [of the population] do not engage in sexual intercourse. Thus, that which is not allowed for homosexuals is the sexual intercourse. ... God who created us, not our will to be gay." (P4)*
> *"Being gay is a destiny of God. He created us like this, then why He should punish us for what He has determined?" (P7)*

As the participant three's statement, participant four believed that what should be avoided is not its people, but its same-sex behaviour. He said as follows.

> *"Apparently, all religions forbid homosexuality. I mean it's not homosexual people to be avoided or hated; it should be its sexual behaviour, its free sex that should to be avoided, not the person." (P3)*

61

Social rejection

Society shows negative responses against gay. The participants expressed how society label gay people with various stigma, such as sick, scumbag, "belok" (curve or blend), acts of devil, etc. With regards to the term "belok", in Indonesia it is an antonym of the word "straight" in homosexuality. Literally, this term can be translated into the word "curve" or "blend". Thus, I chose these words to indicate that homosexual people are not straight, but they are "belok" or "curve" even though it can be translated into just "non-straight". These stereotypes affect Indonesian gay and bisexual men's perception about their sexual orientation. If they differ from society who are predominantly heterosexuals, they would be viewed as being sick and then rejected. In this part, I will describe the research findings regarding how negative social perceptions against LGBT people lead to the rejection of the people because of their sexual status.

"Don't stay with me anymore!"

Family is a smallest community in a society. The rejection of homophobic family against a non-heterosexual member within it in extreme cases it leads to the expulsion of that kind of family members. In relation to this, a participant described how his mother expelled him from his home once other family members realised that his son was attracted to a man and involved in same-sex behaviour with the man. It occurred when his ex-girlfriend came to his house and met his mother. While crying, she innocently told his mother that the related participant had been attracted to a man and carried out "something" with him.

After he came home from a beach, he found his ex was crying in front of his

mother. Immediately, his mother drove him away from the house.

> *"and finally, my ex-girlfriend told my mother what I have done with my ex-boyfriend and ... my family could not accept it and finally there was one statement spoken by my mother, 'do not to stay with me anymore!'" (P1)*

"Homosexuality caused earthquake in Yogyakarta and the Tsunami in Aceh"

Homophobic and heterosexist society who is religious believes that

homosexuality in a particular region can cause a natural disaster, such as

earthquake, Tsunami, flooding, etc. These stigma and prejudice showed the

rejection of society against LGBT people, including gay men. A participant felt

that other people did not accept his sexual orientation as there are a lot of stigma

and prejudice against homosexual people in society.

> *"People always call us crumb. Moreover, some people said that homosexuality caused earthquake in Yogyakarta and the Tsunami in Aceh. All of these were happened because there were many LGBT people, homosexuals. I felt scared, bro." (P2)*

"What make me not-straight might be a genie or because my religion was lacking"

In a strong religious influenced family, a homosexual member may be

stigmatised and prejudiced in religiously terms because of his or her attraction.

Homosexuality is considered an act of demons, jinn, spirits, or lack of religion. In

this case, such a family will suggest the member who is homosexual to be cured

in a religious matter, such as *Ruqyah* which is exorcism in Islam. A participant

experienced this where his family realised that he was a homosexual and then

suggested him to be healed religiously.

> *"... what could make me 'belok' (curve/not-straight) might be a genie or because my religion was lacking. If it's a matter of prayer, I used to pray ...*

Immediately, I was suggested by another family member... to perform a ruqyah... *well, I just followed him, whatever." (P1)*

"I had performed Ruqyah, *I believed that the problem was not the devil inside me, but my psychology" (P1)*

Although World Health Organisation (WHO) has removed homosexuality from the list of mental illness, he was of the opinion that his same-sex attraction is not caused by spiritual beings, such as demons or spirits, but rather psychological or mental issues within the individual. In a certain case, homosexual people are often called by homophobic people as sick, particularly in their mental or psychological aspects. Similarly, the participant experienced this when he studied together with his male schoolfriends at his home, another family member was suspicious of their friends and said that the participant might be "sick" again.

"... and my brother concluded that I was back again, I was sick again, I turned (not-straight) again ..." (P1)

Self-rejection

As it illustrated in Figure 1, the problem of self-rejection among homosexual individuals in this study is caused by social and religious rejection. These sources of rejection affect homosexual people to accept their sexual orientation and in some extreme cases these lead to self-loathing among homosexuals. All participants in the study experienced self-rejection as domain where they live in and religion they believe do not allow this kind of sexuality in negative matters, such as condemnation, sexual harassment, stigma, etc. In this part, I will describe how participants in the study faced this problem.

"I reject myself who was attracted to male"

When religious doctrines and people reject people with same-sex desires, homosexual people tend to reject themselves and flooded with a lot of questions with regards to their attraction. A participant stated that he rejected the fact that he was attracted to male alongside to female.

> *"I like not accepting this... even I reject myself who was attracted to male at first. ..." (P1)*

"There is something wrong with me"

To reject their sexual orientation, homosexual people would be labelled as wrong sexual orientation when they lived in a strong heteronormative community in which heterosexuality is true and default sexual orientation of humans while homosexuality is wrong one. Thus, homosexuals may attack themselves with the stigma given by the homophobic and heterosexist society. Some of heterosexuals may advise homosexuals to be cured by means of consultation with mental health experts like psychologist. Below are quotes from the participants to demonstrate how "there is something wrong with" them.

> *"I am confused like there is something wrong with me ... I realised that this (same-sex attraction) is wrong ..." (P1)*
> *"I accepted my sexual orientation in the first semester of 2016. Before this, I still had no courage to accept it. I said that this is wrong or not, this is wrong or not, but at the time I thought it was wrong." (P2)*
> *"Honestly, I still refuse my sexual orientation because I might be a kid yesterday afternoon, how come I think about it like this" (P1)*
> *"It's like there's something weird in me. Why I was like this, why I was like this. Then my best friend at the time of elementary school graduation advised me to consult my problems to psychologist, 'try to go to a psychologist!'" (P3)*

"I got showered many times because I felt dirty"

In addition to see "wrong" in some homosexuals when it comes to religious understanding, they may feel dirty because they have 'wrong' sexual orientation.

For religious homosexuals, it could be a serious problem as showed in a participant in the study. When he realised that he was attracted to male instead of female, he tried to "purify" himself with water until he finally realised that it was useless.

> *"I felt closer to God when I was in elementary and middle school because my friends motivated me to pray. now I feel different from the old one, who still worship God more often. Now, I sometimes feel very dirty, I feel that what we have done is dirty. I also understand religion, but I am still doing this (same-sex sexual intercourse). Thus, I'm now confused." (P4)*
> *"... in 2012, I felt dirty; I felt so disgusted with myself that I got showered many times because I felt dirty. Seriously, I felt really dirty, I felt really disgusted with myself." (P4)*
> *"I felt strange, a little disgusted with myself and unclean. I deny myself that I'm attracted to the same sex." (P6)*

"I felt guilty"

Homosexuals are seen as sinners by religious people, especially Muslims, where the God's punishment to the Lot's people is caused due to the sin of homosexuality. These homophobic messages are then conveyed to and internalised in the mind of Muslim gay men when they are attracted to men, thus they reject themselves for being gay.

> *"I know that Islam forbids homosexuality. I felt guilty when I know that I was attracted to men instead of women. I felt comfortable with them." (P7)*

Feelings of Isolation and of Loneliness

In the online dictionary of Cambridge, the word "isolation" has several definitions: "the condition of being alone, especially when this makes you feel unhappy" or "the fact that something is separate and not connected to other things". This word as well can be defined as "the condition of being separated from other people, towns, countries, etc." (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.-b). From

these definitions, although all of them are correct, the last one is the fittest one in this study. Meanwhile, the word "loneliness" can be defined as "the state of being lonely" (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.-c). Even though social isolation is often linked to loneliness, they are different in nature. The former fundamentally means a person who is lacking of interactions with others in which this kind of communication is essential for all human beings. To do so, there are a lot of means, such as talking with other people virtually or personally, directly or indirectly. Meanwhile, basically, the latter can be understood as a one's feeling of being disconnected from others even though a myriad of people surround him or her. It can be triggered by various reasons, such as a feeling of loss, such as a loss of faith, family and friends, and in extreme cases it leads to depression among these individuals. In this part, I will describe how the participants experienced the feeling of social isolation and loneliness because of their sexual and perhaps religious status.

"I did not have male friends to be my roommates"

A homosexual man in certain ways has a more feminine look rather than a masculine look. A feminine homosexual man is stereotyped by a society and tend to be socially isolated because the former has different expression with majority in the society which makes him feel alone. A participant described how people's attitudes around him affect such a feeling of isolation and in some cases, it may lead to the feeling of loneliness in the related participant. Consequently, he kept a distance from his friends so that he was not able to share his sexual orientation

related problems and kept them secret as the best he can. The following quotes represent this problem.

> *"... At the time of high school, my school held a study tour to Bali. I didn't have male friends to be roommates. ... One room contained four people of the same sex, man with man and woman with woman ... And then finally, because I had a female best friend, her boyfriend contacted and asked her to help me to be allowed to stay in her room ..."* (P3)
> *"Then, there were religious discussions in my school in which girls and boys are mixed. Well, I didn't have male friends, so it's like I was just alone. ... Usually when the fasting month there was always a 'pesantren kilat'* (*short term religious schools in the fasting month for Muslims*), *I went to the mosque, just lean on the wall, alone."* (P3)

"Nobody can understand this!"

Being a homosexual minority in a homophobic heterosexual society may face serious challenges in regard to his or her sexual status. He or she finds it difficult to make a friend with others who has similar sexually preferences. He or she may be worry if the people would break down his or her "secret" so that other people realise it. Meanwhile, other homosexual people are not easy to find out in a society. As a result, he or she may think that no one can understand the topic of the problem. Similarly, a participant in the study expressed how he finds it difficult to share his problems in relation to his same-sex desires. For instance, he assumed that his family would not understand the subject of this matter.

> *"I have no friend to share my problems and everything because if I told my father, he might not understand all problems in my life"* (P1)
> *"Previously, I had a problem with my ex-boyfriend, I was angry and really stressed but I did not know who I should to tell because usually I and my friends always discussed regarding girl-related problems while what I wanted to talk about was a man. Finally, I chose to keep the problems to myself"* (P1)

68

Concerns

In an online dictionary of Cambridge, the word "concerns" means "to cause worry to someone"; "to be important to someone or to involve someone directly" and "if a story, film, or article concerns a particular subject, person, etc., it is about that person or subject" (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.-a). Even though there are no real threats to homosexual people, they have a lot of concerns because of their sexual orientation and negative social perceptions of it which eventually affect their psychological health. These concerns can be caused by the fact that society surely does not accept sexual diversity, such as homosexuality, and stigmatises, prejudices, and probably discriminates them in the society. Therefore, homosexual people will generalise their negative perceptions to those who are considered heterosexuals in origin, which is homophobic people and heterosexists. In this study, I found that some participants have concerns in relation to their sexual orientation caused by homophobic attitudes of heterosexual Indonesian people against them in many domains, such as school, university, work place, etc. In this part, I will describe participants' concerns when it comes to worry something with regard to their sexual status.

To begin with, family is an important place for many people. It provides attention, care, support, love, protection, etc. Children are highly likely to rely on their parents to provide aforementioned positive things. Similarly, for those with same-sex attractions in this study portray family as the most important thing in their life even though they are not in favour of homosexuality for various reasons, such as religious traditions and social or cultural norms. Some participants have

concerns to those who have already known their 'true' sexual orientation if they tell 'the secret' to others who are homophobic. Their negative responses will experience distress, anxiety, and fear of people. These concerns might be caused by homosexual people who generalize the negative perceptions against Indonesian heterosexual people who are considered homophobic in nature because of strong heteronormative and homophobic understandings in the society. Below are quotes from the related participants who experienced this problem.

> *"I don't want to share this story to my 'normal' friends because I'm worried if they cannot accept this and then avoid me and eventually uncover my secret to others. It's a danger." (P3)*
> *"I'm also worried of my sister if she knows I'm gay. She must be angry and then there will be a problem in my family because of this. I don't want to have a problem among them." (P3)*
> *"I don't want to say that I'm gay to others because I'm worried they will be called me 'homo' and it will become a problem for me. Actually, I don't think of myself about this problem, but I think of my parents' feelings too. Their feelings will break if they know I'm gay. If people know I'm gay, they will not only humiliate me, but also my family. I did it because I love my family more than me." (P4)*
> *"I had ever liked a heterosexual man. Every day I often bring lunch for him. One day, he said, 'seneng yo karo aku (in Javanese language)?' (do you like me?) I replied, 'Don't get over yourself!' I'm afraid he changed his attitude towards me. I was afraid that if he knew that I was gay it would backfire for me and my friends would surely know and if they knew it would be spread to other people and then people in my village also would know as well. I'm also worried about parents too if they know I like this." (P4)*

From the last statement, participant four expressed the important of family in his life. He loves his family more than himself. Thus, he tends to keep his sexual orientation secret to heterosexual people for various reasons. First, he keeps his parents' feelings if they knew he was gay. Second, he is worried that people would know it and humiliate him because of it.

70

Furthermore, a participant described his experiences when heterosexual

people and his family knew his attraction towards a man. His ex-girlfriend tells

his parents that the participant had a relationship with a man and had engaged in

sexual activities with the man. It happened when he broke up with that ex-

girlfriend. When he was at home and saw his ex and mother gathered, his mother

expelled him from home. It made his heart broke because he has good relationship

with his mother previously. This story relates to other participants' stories when it

comes to "coming out" to heterosexual people which shows "a danger" of telling

to those who are heterosexuals in Indonesia about sexual orientation related

problems.

> *"and finally, my ex-girlfriend told my mother what I have done with my ex-boyfriend and ... my family could not accept it and finally there was one statement spoken by my mother, 'do not to stay with me anymore!'" (P1)*

Although participant one's life story might be a foundation for other

Indonesian homosexuals to worry about telling his experiences as gay in the

country to heterosexual people, it cannot be generalized to everyone over the

country. Some participants explained that they are worried of their family

members whether they are in support of this or not. However, when a family

member of him knew it, he or she showed a positive response. Thus, his concern

is gone. Below are quotes from the participants who have these stories.

> *"When I was in Malang (East Java), ... I told my sister, 'I was so upset because of my boyfriend.' My sister shocked and asked, 'When did you like a guy for the first time?' I then told my story with my ex-boyfriend. After that, I realized that my sister also actually liked that man. She said, 'Are you seriously going out with him?' I said, 'Yes.' She asked me again, 'Then, what have you done with him?' I replied, 'Something.' She was shocked and I was scolded. She then said, 'You may be gay but I wish you should not be infected with the virus (HIV), you also don't mess up!' It means it's like*

doing silly things that harm myself and harm my family, ... She said, 'Do you already know how our family is, right?' My sister is a hard person, ... but she acted normal regarding homosexuality, he said, 'I remain to embrace you, you are still my little brother!' At that time, I cried. "I still love you no matter how you are, I still accept you, you are my little brother." After that, we were crying together. ... Finally, she said, 'If you have any problems, please let me know.'" (P3)

"my family is not homophobic at all because my father often interacts with various kinds of people and activities. For example, a man plays at a girl's house. Daddy is normal." (P2)

In several parts of Indonesia, a single man is now allowed socially to play with a girl in a home with locked door. If it is happened, people will be suspicious of the man. This is a social norm in the country that might be influenced by religious traditions in which it teaches religious people in the country to not interact with the opposite sex if they have no relationship like marriage or family or what so-called as "mahram. In Indonesia, this term can be defined as prohibition of two or more opposite sexes to interact as it is not allowed in religious teachings unless they have a relationship such as family or marriage. It can be allowed religiously if a woman is accompanied with allowed persons like her husband or father.

Furthermore, marriage is a union of two people and should be legalised by the state where they live. It is a sacred relationship for certain people. Similarly, a participant explained his concerns of rejection carried out by the state when it comes to same-sex marriage. Indonesia only recognise heterosexual marriage in which same-sex union cannot be legalised because Indonesia laws regarding marriage literally state that such an institution can be carried out only between man and women. The following quote represent this problem.

"Homosexual relationships cannot last long-term. What's the name? We cannot get married and the most painful is the feeling of wanting to have someone we love but we cannot. We cannot be with people we love, we will not be able to get married because we live in Indonesia. So, we will never get married unless in the Philippines or in European countries ..." (P4)

Strategies

Problems faced by Muslim gay and bisexual men in a strong homophobic and heteronormative environment should be faced in order to survive. Therefore, they will employ various strategies to deal with them. In this part, I will describe the experiences of the participants in the study when it comes to dealing with the problems in relation to their sexual and religious status.

Self-Acceptance

Self-rejection as described previously comes from religious and social rejection which stigmatise, prejudice, and discriminate non-heterosexuals in a society. It leads to the internalised homophobia among them. Similarly, some participants explained that they have solved the problem of rejection with their own strategies. The following quotes are evidence of their solutions in order to accept the fact that they are attracted to men.

"I like not accepting this... even I reject myself who was attracted to male at first. But, that's how it is, what can I do, I have been really comfortable with men" (P1)
"My heart had struggled between desire and religion. 'What should I do?' But, now I think I have to live as it is." (P4)
"So, I thought this feeling could be lost. In fact, the feeling of same-sex desire is getting bigger. Finally, I just have to accept this. There is no outside influence. This is just my inner conflict." (P4)
"At that moment, I was stressed because of the conflict between my desire and religion. On the other hand, I do understand, this desire is not allowed in my religion, Islam. So, I'm confused. Finally, there is an inner war (perang batin). But, I enjoy being gay." (P4)

Self-Control

For some homosexual males, being a gay man mean being a good patient from homophobic attitudes of people around them. They must control their emotions, especially their anger, when heterosexists show their negative responses against them. Otherwise, conflict between homosexual and heterosexuals will occur which in some extreme cases it will widen to the national level and eventually homosexual people will be harmed. Therefore, the best solution for them to deal with homophobic behaviours is to control themselves. Below is quotes which represent this strategy.

> *"Just kept patient! just ignored them! I always ignored them. He did not know the inside of mine, so just let him talk, and ignore him. However, I would still be nice to you, what you want to do to me, just ignore him what he said." (P1)*
> *"My friends at school always insult me because I look a little feminine and often hang out with the girls. It makes my heart hurt. I cannot fight them. I can only be silent and patient, ignoring them." (P7)*

Positive Reinterpretation

Society in particular country portrays homosexual people as bad, negative, dirty, abnormal, and other negative words. These stereotypes are common in strong heteronormative environments like Indonesia and lead to various problems, such as psychological health, among LGBT people. This strategy is employed by some participants to deal with the problem of rejection. When religion and society stigmatise and prejudice them in many ways, some Muslim gay men in this study reinterpret about themselves with regards to their sexual orientation in a positive approach.

"I can benefit others, ... I can share rice and alms to people in need, socialize about the dangers of free sex and drugs. I feel useful and they will feel my contributions without having to know my identity." (P2)

"Even though I look like an effeminate man, but I have achievements. I thought what should I do, I had to show my talent, but what was that? Finally, there was an extracurricular activity in the field of film at school and I joined the club. When I joined this club, I participated in four competitions related to the film and I won two of them. See! I can boast of school with my achievements even though I am underestimated by my male friends. Although I look like an effeminate man, but I want to have many achievements at school." (P3)

"I am Muslim, but I will not accept the explanation of the clerics who corner homosexuality. Thus, I reinterpret every verse related to homosexuality. In essence, I seek justification from al-Qur'an *for my sexual orientation" (P5)*

Seeking Social Support

Support and acceptance of people to homosexual people can contribute to their confidence in a society regardless of their preferences, including sexual orientation. It is highly likely to happen if they live in an environment that supports and accepts them as they are. Living in the midst of anti-LGBT people can cause internal problems among homosexuals. Friend and family members are two important elements in their life to seek support and acceptance for their sexual status in a strong heteronormative society. The following quotes represent how this strategy employed by the participants.

"When I broke up with my boyfriend, it became a problem with me. Actually, I felt I was really stressed at that moment. Finally, it was like I want to tell this problem to be relieved, then I told one person, she was my sister-in-law" (P1)

"When I broke up with my boyfriend, I felt sad and cried all night for several weeks because of this until I told my mother that I had a boyfriend. She cried when she knew it then she said, 'it is okay.' After that, I always share my problems about men with my mom and she was very helpful. He had no problem with this." (P7)

Concealing

All participants have concerns of rejection from heterosexual people, including their family. Some have come out to a family member of him to deal with this problem besides the feelings of loneliness while one participant went through bad days in his life, which is expelled by his mother from home. Participant four is still worried about his family because he already knows that his family is homophobic. He assumed it when they were watching a news on television depicting a sodomy case and his parents showed negative responses to it. Thus, he has been hiding his 'true' sexual orientation from his family members who are considered homophobic.

> *"Actually, I don't think of myself about this problem, but I think of my parents' feelings too. Their feelings will break if they know I'm gay. If people know I'm gay, they will not only humiliate me, but also my family. I did it because I love my family more than me." (P4)*
> *"I act like a normal, so that no one suspects me that I'm gay" (P6)*
> *"Although I've talked about this to my family, but I'm still worried if my extended family realised it. I'm afraid they will be angry with me, advising me all the time. So, it's better for me not to tell them about this." (P7)*

Conversion

Participant three employed this strategy as he thought Islam is absolutely against non-heterosexual people and cannot be negotiated anymore, so that he can accept two conflicting identities or status. Thus, religious conversion is ultimately believed as the best solution for him to deal with the problem of the rejection from religious doctrines and people.

> *"Islam believes that LGBT is a bearer of evil, ... I then thought, 'Why is Islam like this, huh? Why is Islam so like this?' Many people said that Islam is a religion of peace, but why it treats LGBT people like this. From then on, I consider Islam as a strange religion. I mean Islam is not in accordance with its own teachings written in its book." (P3)*

Migration

Participant four believes that same-sex relationships cannot be continued to the higher level of relationship, which is marriage, in Indonesia because the Marriage Laws in the country unquestionably only recognise the union of heterosexual people, not homosexual. Thus, to deal with this problem, the participant has a plan to marry with his partner in anoother country or to live with his beloved one in other region in the country that is friendlier to sexual minorities.

> *"The only solution we have is that we have to accept our destiny. There is no real solution. ... I will feel disgusted if I marry a woman. I want to marry a guy, but I can't do it. Do we have to migrate abroad? I also think of my family. So, I feel confused. I can't possibly migrate abroad. One day, a Singaporean gay man offered me to go there (Singapore). He wanted to bring me there, ... invited me to live there together. I'm confused whether I have to join him or not, but I love my family. When I had been in a relationship with my ex-boyfriend in 2015, I felt also confused. We had a plan to marry. We discussed where we would stay after that. We planned to live in Bali because it was better for us to live as a gay. ... Islam is not the majority religion, but a minority in Bali. As far as I know there are many Hindus there." (P4)*
>
> *"I can't deny the fact that I want to live with my boyfriend and don't have to worry about the stigma or public perception of us. I plan to live in Bali or other areas where there are not many Muslims there. I also want to marry my boyfriend later in a country that has legalized same-sex marriage like Australia." (P7)*

Discussion

The research found that Muslim gay or bisexual men face many challenges because of their religious and sexual status in Indonesia. Islamic doctrines and its followers contribute to the high level of heterosexism in the country, thus sexual minorities experience barriers to live with those statuses. Social rejection was seen as an example of the problems experienced by homosexuals. It could be

77

defined as a person's tendency not to accept others in their groups or relationships (DeWall & Bushman, 2011, p. 256). In this kind of research, besides religiously rejection, the participants experienced social rejection which eventually leads to the self-rejection. These three types of rejection cause them difficulties to live as a gay or bisexual and Muslim in Indonesia. At the time of the interviews, the participants described their experiences of some of this rejection in several themes, such as "don't stay with me anymore", "homosexuality caused an earthquake in Yogyakarta and the Tsunami in Aceh" and "what make me not-straight might be a genie or because my religion was lacking". These three themes of rejections are closely related to sexual orientation stereotypes and could be categorised as social rejection that is related to religious traditions, natural disasters, and religiosity of the participants.

Homosexuals who live in a community with negative religious doctrines about homosexuality tend to prejudice them and they may regard their religion as oppressive (Pietkiewicz & Kołodziejczyk-Skrzypek, 2016, p. 1573). In this study, all participants believe that negative teachings of religion regarding their sexual orientation prejudiced them and they all agree that their religion is oppressive in various ways (see category of religious rejection). In order to deal with this problem, the participants employed different strategies, such as a positive reinterpretation and conversion. Some participants, although they realised that their beliefs do not accept their sexual orientation, still keep their religious identity while others decided to convert to other beliefs which are considered friendlier towards their attraction. From a series of the interviews, it can be shown

that these strategies aimed to deal with the strain between religious identity and sexual orientation of the participants that affects their psychology, such as distress. In this regards, Beagan and Hattie (2015, p. 94) state that "conflict between sexual or gender identity and religious teachings can significantly damage the psychological and emotional well-being of LGBTQ individuals" (see also Pietkiewicz & Kołodziejczyk-Skrzypek, 2016, p. 1574) in which homophobic religious believers use religious teachings to "oppress, coerce, and manipulate LGBTQ people through shaming, stigmatizing, rejecting, ousting, exorcizing, and ex-communicating".

Furthermore, LGBT in Indonesia is often associated with natural disasters, such as earthquake and the Tsunami (Zakiah, 2018, p. 15), in which in the perspective of Islam a disaster can be caused by people's behaviour, including same-sex acts. Muslims believe that homosexual acts lead to God's punishment, thus they tend to reject the existence of LGBT people in their territory to avoid it. It is consistent with the participant two's statement about how the perception of heterosexual Indonesians towards homosexuals, one of which is the notion that homosexuality is the cause of natural disasters in the country. Moreover, same-sex relationships are also associated with supernatural things in which the cause of homosexual desire in humans is the interference of jinn (genie) or demons. Therefore, religious people assume that gay people can be cured through *Ruqyah* or Islamic exorcism (Wibawa & Renaldi, 2018). In this case, participant one has done this but there were no results.

From the above statements, it can be concluded that religion plays an important role in the rejection of homosexuality and Islam in particular obviously provides no places for it (Janssen & Scheepers, 2018, p. 15; Siraj, 2012, p. 449). In the context of Indonesia, major religions in the country influence the heterosexism among people as Ichwan (2014, pp. 199–200) stated that Islam greatly contributes to the high level of homophobic attitudes among Indonesians. Thus, Muslim gay and bisexual men in the country face serious challenges because of their religious and sexual status, and they must know where they can express their sexuality to avoid undesirable problems, such as discrimination (T. Boellstorff, 2005, p. 577).

Regarding the feelings of isolation and loneliness, homosexuals will feel these feelings when they are worried to come out of the closet and people will not accept their sexual orientation. Therefore, they choose to hide their "true identity" which is gay or bisexual in the community. Soeker et all (2015, p. 16) found that gay men have a fear of disclosing their sexual orientation or exposing their true selves to the public because it may provoke discrimination from others. All participants experienced this problem, they felt socially isolated and loneliness. In order to face this problem, there is only one strategy available which is seeking social support. It includes acceptance of their sexual orientation by others, such as friends and family members. Nevertheless, if they live in a strongly heterosexist family, they may find other gay-affirmative supports that are able to hear their 'secret' stories. The purpose of this strategy is to relieve stress as a result of the feelings of loneliness and isolation. At the time of the interviews, some

participants spoke of feeling "stressed" because he was confused about whom he should discuss this topic. In relation to this, McDavitt et all (McDavitt et al., 2010, p. 14) state that young homosexual males avoid their heterosexist family members by "seeking support out gay-affirming individuals or organizations." Also, some participants shared their 'secret' stories to those who are gay or bisexual or are not homophobic while a participant went through bad days when he shared his sexual orientation problems with his heterosexist family member which lead to the family's full control of him.

The last category of problems found in the present study is concerns in relation to the ones' sexual orientation. Homosexuals "fear of rejection from family, clergy, and the religious community" (Pietkiewicz & Kołodziejczyk-Skrzypek, 2016, p. 1575). Some studies indicate that homosexual people living in a hostile environment have other concerns, such as a fear of verbal or physical abuse from heterosexists (Goh, Kort, Thurston, Benson, & Kaiser, 2019, p. 4), and they can lead to adverse mental health that is prone to depression and suicidal (Lee, Oliffe, Kelly, & Ferlatte, 2017; Paul et al., 2002), thus it can active self-protective strategies in order to protect themselves against potential bias.

In this present study, some participants employ various strategies to deal with the problem where concealing and migration are considered the best strategies they have. With regards to migration, a participant believes that move from one area to another with his partner is beneficial to reduce religious heterosexism in the area in which Muslim dominated area tend to be homophobic rather than other religions. For some gay people, "migration is not always a

choice but also a necessity" to avoid discrimination in the area (Adihartono, 2015, p. 11). According to the participant's story, it is clear that migration not only aims to avoid discrimination, but also to avoid the domination of certain religions that are considered homophobic. Meanwhile, concealment of ones' sexual orientation from friends or family members is another valuable strategy which offers "a sense of security in a world that devalues and discriminates against those with a known stigmatized identity" (Goh et al., 2019, p. 4), and therefore sexual minorities are expected to prevent exposure to bias. Some participants employed this self-protective strategy is not only to prevent exposure to bias, but also prevent potential verbal abuse and other homophobic attitudes from society against their family and they fear of disappointing their family. Participant one went through bad days when his family members acknowledged that he was attracted to men and have done something with them, he was driven out of the house by his mother and lived alone in a boarding house. Thus, the strategy of concealing one's sexual orientation is deemed necessary to keep the feelings of or not to disappoint one's family.

Chapter 4

Conclusion

Conclusion

In general, this study had general purposes of demonstrating and analysing the lived experiences of Muslim gay and bisexual men in Indonesia. Specifically, this study was aimed to explore the dynamics within gay and bisexual Indonesians in relations to their sexual and religious status. Thus, the purpose is to reveal what problems or barriers or challenges they faced for being a gay or bisexual man and Muslim in the country that is flourished by homophobia and heterosexism and to reveal what solutions they employed to deal with those problems or barriers. Regardless of how effective the solutions are, this study was conducted to describe these problems and the solutions that have been experienced by the participants. Therefore, four gay and bisexual Muslim men who live in the homophobic and heterosexist society in Indonesia have been investigated through semi-structured interviews to provide valuable insights to this study.

In general, sexual minorities will face serious challenges when they live in environments with strong religious and homophobic traditions. Problems, such as rejection and sexual harassment, will arise among them because of their sexual and religious status. In order to survive in the society, the minorities must employ a series of strategies to get through their bad days, breathing in a homophobic atmosphere. The problems that arise and the strategies they use are the focus of this study by examining their lived experiences for being a Muslim gay or bisexual man in Indonesia. This study found that the problems faced by

homosexual Muslims include rejection, internalized homophobia, feelings of loneliness, concerns, religious doctrines, sexual harassment, prejudice, isolation; while the strategies they employed to deal with these problems include self-acceptance, self-control, positive reinterpretation, seeking social support, concealing, conversion, and migration.

The main problem among the participants is the rejection of both themselves and others. The self-rejection is related to the internalized homophobia within themselves, which was caused by religious doctrines and social perceptions against them. When religion and community stigmatize, humiliate, prejudice, and other forms of heterosexist attitudes the participants of being homosexual males, they might do the same things that are directed at themselves. Consequently, they have difficulties and in some extreme cases reject their desires. To deal with the problem of rejection, they employ various strategies, such as self-acceptance, self-control, positive reinterpretation, seeking social support and conversion. These strategies aim to accept the fact that they are attracted to same-sex persons, more comfortable hanging out with girls instead of boys, or of the opinion that their religion absolutely rejects their sexual orientation.

Furthermore, two other problems that are interrelated are feeling of isolation and loneliness. Some participants feel being socially isolated and loneliness. Social isolation among the participants in the study is caused by their tendency to hang out with a particular gender, which is a girls, and to look effeminate. These causes their male schoolmates to stay away from them so that they feel isolated from their same-sex friends. However, this feeling is also caused by their negative

thoughts about men who are considered as rude people. In addition to the problem of social isolation, feeling of loneliness is another related problem with the previous one. Some participants feel lonely as if there is no friend who wants to listen his problems. This problem is caused by their concerns for others when they talk about their sexual orientation related problems. Thus, they feel lonely. To deal with these problems, they employ only one strategy, which is seeking social support. In this strategy, the related participants share their problems with others, regardless of their sexual orientation. However, this way is vulnerable to getting rejection from their friends if they are homophobic and some participants experience this. Although these friends show homophobic behaviours, some participants keep sharing their problems with others who are considered able to understand their condition. As stated previously, this study does not focus on how effective the solutions are but rather to explore the problems they face and solutions they employ to deal with those problems.

Finally, another problem experienced by the participants is concerns. As this is not caused by real threats from the environment, some participants have sexual orientation concerns, including rejection, health, confidentiality, and prejudice concerns. To deal with these problems, the participants employ various strategies, such as concealing, and migration. The first two strategies are used by some participants to deal with the rejection concerns while concealing is employed to deal with prejudice concerns. These strategies look like plan B among the participants to prevent undesirable things from happening.

In summary, the study findings clearly reveal that many problems experienced by Muslim gay or bisexual men in Indonesia and what strategies they employed to deal with those problems. This study provides the evidence that homophobic and heterosexist attitudes still exist in the context of a Muslim majority country like Indonesia in which homosexuality is regarded as a sin against God, abnormal, scumbag, etc. These negative attitudes and perceptions affect the participants, especially their well-being, psychological, and physical health. These findings highlight the great need for these Muslim gay and bisexual men in Indonesia in order to help them overcome their problems by providing them with effective solutions according to their problems from their community or LGBT-friendly parties.

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Appendix A

Informed Consent (Bahasa Indonesia Version)

Saya mengundang anda secara personal untuk terlibat dalam penelitian

dengan judul "**A Descriptive Phenomenological Study of the Lived**

Experiences of Muslim Gay Men in Indonesia." Anda telah dipilih karena

sesuai dengan persyaratan penelitian. Kamu telah mengidentifikasi dirimu sendiri

sebagai seorang gay Indonesia dan telah sedang hidup sebagai seorang Muslim

juga di Indonesia. Sebelum anda setuju untuk terlibat dalam penelitian ini, saya

memohon anda untuk membaca lembar ini dan kamu bisa menanyakan

pertanyaan apapun mengenai penelitian ini jika ada.

Penelitian ini sedang dilakukan oleh Anan Bahrul Khoir, seorang

mahasiswa magister dari Fakultas Teologi dan Studi Agama-agama, Universitas

Groningen, Belanda. Sekarang, saya sedang menyelesaikan tesis saya untuk

mengetahui pengalaman hidup seorang Muslim gay Indonesia yang telah sedang

hidup di lingkungan homofobik.

Jika kamu setuju untuk menjadi partisipan dalam penelitian ini, saya

mengundang anda untuk berpartisipasi dalam wawancara sekitar 60 sampai 90

menit Bersama peneliti. Selain itu, kamu akan diminta untuk meninjau kembali

data yang dikumpulkan dari anda untuk menghindari ketakakuratan data.

Selama penelitian, kamu mungkin merasa kecewa atau tidak nyama dengan

beberapa pertanyaan yang ditanyakan oleh peneliti karena alasan-alasan tertentu,

seperti pertanyaan yang ditanyakan personal atau sensitif secara alami. Selain itu,

tidak ada keuntungan individu dan tidak ada imbalan yang akan kamu dapatkan karena berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini.

Mengenai masalah-masalah kerahasiaan, saya akan menyimpan data apapun secara privat, seperti rekaman audio, dalam penelitian ini. Juga, saya tidak akan menyebut informasi personal apapun yang dikumpulkan dari anda untuk memastikan kerahasiaan dan anonimitasnya. Rekaman audio akan dimusnahkan setelah penelitian diselesaikan. Akan tetapi, saya akan mengirimkan rekaman penelitian ke Universitas Groningen di mana saya sedang menempuh Pendidikan dan meminta mereka untuk menyimpan rekaman-rekeman tersebut secara aman dan jangan didistribusikan kepada peneliti-peneliti lain tanpa ijin.

Jika anda setuju untuk berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini, itu berarti partisipasi anda dalam penelitian ini adalah sukarela tanpa paksaan dari pihak manapun. Keputusan anda apakah menerima atau menolak undangan saya tidak akan mempengaruhi hubungan kita dan Universitas Groningen sekarang dan nanti. Selain itu, jika anda setuju secara sukarela untuk berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini, kamu diijinkan untuk tidak menjawab pertanyaan apapun yang akan ditanyakan atau membatalkan partisipasi kapanpun tanpa mempengaruhi hubunungan-hubungan tersebut.

Jika anda memiliki pertanyaan-pertanyaan nanti mengenai penelitian ini, anda diharapkan untuk menghubungi saya melalui nomor WhatsApp +31618216690 atau nomor telefon +6282115419853. Juga, anda bisa menemui saya di *Institute of Southeast Asian Islam,* Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan

Kalijaga, Yogyakarta. Kamu juga bisa mengirimkan surel ke

ananbkhoir@gmail.com.

Kamu akan diberikan sebuah salinan dari informasi ini sebagai arsip

Pernyataan Persetujuan:

Saya telah membaca informasi di atas, menanyakan pertanyaan-pertanyaan

dan menerima jawaban-jawaban. Oleh karena itu, saya menyatakan bahwa

persetujuan saya untuk bisa berpartisipasi sebagai seorang responden dalam

penelitini dengan judul "**A Descriptive Phenomenological Study of the Lived**

Experienced of Muslim Gay Men in Indonesia." Saya menyatakan bahwa

partisipasi saya dalam penelitian ini dilakukan secara sukarela tanpa paksaan dari

pihak manapun.

Saya benar-benar mengetahui bahwa data penelitian mengandung informasi

personal saya. Oleh karena itu, saya mengijinkan peneliti untuk menggunakan

informasi saya apapun dan data yang diperoleh dari saya untuk digunakan demi

kepentingan penelitian. Selain itu, saya mengijinkan peneliti untuk menggunakan

alat perekam apapun selama sesi wawancara untuk memastikan ketepatannya saat

melakukan analisis data. Oleh karena itu, saya setuju untuk berpartisipasi dalam

penelitian ini.

Tanda tangan responden: _____ Tanggal: _____

Appendix B

Informed Consent (English Version)

I personally invite you to be involved in this research entitled **"A Descriptive Phenomenological Study of the Lived Experiences of Muslim Homosexual Men in Indonesia."** You have been selected as you are in accordance with the research requirements. You have identified yourself as an Indonesian gay and have been living as a Muslim as well in Indonesia. Before you agree to be in this study, I ask you to read this form and you may ask any questions regarding this study if you have.

This research is being conducted by Anan Bahrul Khoir, a master student in the Faculty of Theology and Religion Studies, University of Groningen, the Netherlands. Currently, I am working on my master thesis to explore the lived experiences of Indonesian homosexual Muslims that have been living in a homophobic society.

If you agree to be a participant in this study, I would invite you to participate in a 60 to 90-minute interview with the researcher. Additionally, you will be asked to review the collected data from you to avoid inaccuracy.

During the study, you may feel upset or uncomfortable with some questions asked by the researcher because of several reasons, such as the asked questions are personal or sensitive in nature. Moreover, there are no individual benefits and no any payment you will receive for participating in this study.

With regards to confidentiality issues, I will privately keep any data, such as audio recording, in this study. Also, I will not mention any personal information

collected from you to ensure its confidentiality and anonymity. The audio recording will be destroyed once the research is complete. However, I will send the research recording to the University of Groningen where I am studying and ask them to store it securely and not to circulate it to others without any permission.

When you agree to be participated in this study, it means your participation in the research is voluntary without any coercion from any parties. Your decision whether or not accept my invitation will not affect your current or future relations with me and the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. Additionally, if you voluntarily agree to be participated in the study, you are allowed to not answer any questions that will be asked or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationship.

If you have any questions later regarding this study, you are encouraged to can contact me through WhatsApp number +31618216690 or phone number +6282115419853. Besides, you can meet me at the Institute of Southeast Asian Islam, State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta. You can also email me at ananbkhoir@gmail.com.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information, asked questions and received answers. Therefore, I hereby declare my agreement to be able to participate as a respondent in the study entitled "**A Descriptive Phenomenological Study of the**

Experienced Experiences of Muslim Gay Men in Indonesia." I declare that my participation in this study I did voluntarily without coercion from any parties.

I did realize that the data containing my personal information. I therefore permit the researcher to use any information of mine and data obtained from me to be used for research purposes. Moreover, I allow the researcher to use any kind of audio recording during the interview session to ensure its accuracy while analysing. Therefore, I agree to participate in this study.

Signature of the respondent: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C

Information Sheet

A. Personal Information

    Full Name   :

    Place and Date of Birth   :

    Age   :

    Religion/Beliefs   :

    Marital Status   :

    Education   :

    Job/Profession   :

B. Parents Information

    Mother's Name   :

    Mother's Job/Profession :

    Father's Name   :

    Father's Job/Profession   :

C. Interview information

    Date   :

    Time   :

Appendix D

Interview Guide

1. Could you please describe your experiences of being a gay or bisexual Muslim in Indonesia from you were a child to the present?
    a. How was your gender or sexual expression from your childhood to the present?
    b. Could you please tell me the coming in process as a gay or bisexual man?
    c. Could you please tell me the coming out process as a gay or bisexual man to others?
    d. What do you think of homosexuality in Islam?
    e. What do you think of homosexuality in your opinion?
    f. Could you please tell me the problems or barriers you have found because you were a Muslim gay or bisexual man? How did you deal with those problems?

Appendix E

Glossary of Terms

Bisexual: "a person who is physically, emotionally and/or spiritually attracted to persons of the same or opposite sex" (Anonymous, n.d.).

Closeted: "one's sexual orientation is concealed or presumed to be heterosexual. Because of repressive laws, discrimination in employment and housing, violence and harassment, and other kinds of oppression and abuse, most non-heterosexual people elect to closet themselves at some points in their lives or with some groups of people all their lives" (Anonymous, n.d.).

Coming Out: "the act of telling someone that one is lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or whatever. Usually it means making a public or semi-public declaration of one's sexual orientation" (Anonymous, n.d.).

Gay: "a male who is physically, emotionally and/or spiritually attracted to other males" (Anonymous, n.d.).

Gender Identity: "one's self-identification as male or female. Although the dominant approach in psychology for many years had been to regard gender identity as residing in individuals, the important influence of societal structure, cultural expectations, and personal interactions in its development is now recognized as well. Significant evidence now exists to support the conceptualization of gender identity as influenced by both environmental and biological factor" (APA, 2015a).

Heteronormativity: "a tidy binary of gender and sexual boxes into which people must fit: people must be either male or female" or "a standard to social interaction and legal and expected sexual" (Henrickson, 2013, p. 85).

Heterosexism: "the denial of rights and privileges to non-heterosexuals on a social level" (Simoni & Walters, 2001, pp. 160–161) or "a belief in the superiority of heterosexuals or heterosexuality evidenced in the exclusion, by omission or design, of non-heterosexual persons in policies, procedures, events, or activities" (Sears & Williams, 1997).

Heterosexuality: "

Homophobia: "prejudice, discrimination, harassment or acts of violence against sexual minorities, including lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgedered persons, evidenced in a deep-seated fear or hatred of those who love and sexually desire those of the same sex" (Sears & Williams, 1997).

Homosex: "person who main sexual or choice or fundamental orientation, either is manifested or done or not, directed to same-sex" (Oetomo, 2001, p. 6).

Homosexuality: "same-sex contact, either as a genital act or as a long-term sexual/erotic status. A homosexual person is able to fall in love with, and become the pair-bonded sexual/erotic partner of only a person of the same morphological sex" (Gooren, 2011, p. 793) or "a sexual orientation or choice that is directed to person or people who have same-sex or an emotional and sexual attraction to person or people who have same biological sex" (Kendall, 1998, p. 375; Oetomo, 2001, p. 6).

Outing: "to declare their sexual orientation publicly without their permission" (Anonymous, n.d.).

Internalized Homophobia: "the LGB person's internalization of society's negative attitudes and beliefs about homosexuality and directing these attitudes towards one's self" (Barnes & Meyer, 2012, p. 506).

Sexual Orientation: "a component of identity that includes a person's sexual and emotional attraction to another person and the behavior and/or social affiliation that may result from this attraction. A person may be attracted to men, women, both, neither, or to people who are genderqueer, androgynous, or have other gender identities. Individuals may identify as lesbian, gay, heterosexual, bisexual, queer, pansexual, or asexual, among others" (APA, 2015b, p. 862)