

Utrecht University
Faculty of Humanities



M.A. Thesis
Gender Studies

Transfeminism as a Social Movement: The Struggle to Fight for
Trans women's Rights in Indonesia Post 2016 LGBT Moral Panic

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This Thesis was written in completion of the Master's Program in
Gender Studies Utrecht University

Submitted to the Department of Media and Cultural Studies - Gender
Studies

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2020

Abstract

The condition of the LGBT community in Indonesia has worsen over the years, especially for trans women. In my first encounter of trans women group in 2011, trans women are longing for peace and fulfill of their human rights and away from the discrimination. Five years forward, in 2016, this condition has worsened, and the LGBT moral panic emerged because an Indonesian campus created a study group for gender and Sexuality. This moment triggers mass organizations, and media to spread hate and discrimination against the LGBT community. This happens because Indonesia society still fears and denied gender and sexuality outside the heteronormative system. One example of many cases is how in February on the same year, a hardline Muslim group were trying to close and destroy a safe haven of Islamic trans boarding school for trans women community in Jogjakarta. However, the trans women community manage to rebuild their school on the following year. This thesis tries to uncover the condition of trans women in Indonesia how trans women fight back against the system and manage to rebuild themselves from the LGBT moral panic, and how they fight the heteronormative system.

The concept that are used to uncover the phenomena are transfeminism and social movement. I use this concept to analyze on whether the fight of heteronormativity that is happening in the country could be identified as transfeminism movement in Indonesia. The research's objective is not to redefine the Indonesian trans women movement, but to expand and shine a light of the situation. This research points out the fight for social change that trans women in Indonesia are doing such as providing safe have to learn, pray, and survive. Expand their capabilities, while at the same time use their capabilities to make social change to educate society about trans women lives and rights, while also forming networks to enforce equality.

Keyword: Transfeminism, Social Movement Trans women, heteronormativity, LGBT community, LGBT moral panic, Trans Activism

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I want to thank God for the strength He has given me to finish this thesis. My family and relatives for their continues support, love and their belief in me. Especially my mom and dad. Thank you so much for your endless support. Furthermore, I want to thank my supervisor Prof. Dr. Berteke Waaldijk for her continuous support and her luminous and constructive inputs. Thank you for the direction and guidance, every questions, discussion comment and suggestions that helps me to think forward and spark ideas for me and help me very much in finishing my thesis. I would also thank my previous supervisor Dr. Katrine Smiet who also helped me in shaping the earlier process of this thesis.

I would also thank each and every trans women activists, and LGBTQ+ activist that helped me finish this project. Mr. Dede Oetomo, from GAYa Nusantara Surabaya, Ms. Rebecca Nyuei, from Sanggar Swara organization Jakarta, Mrs. Shinta Ratri from the Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding school, Ms. Alya from Ikatan Waria Yogyakarta, Mrs. Ruly and Mrs. Vinolia Wakijo from Keluarga Besar Waria Yogyakarta organization. Thank you for each of the help these amazing activist has given me through each of our interview. It is an honor to be able to hear the inspiring stories of triumph that each of the activist have shared with me. I hope that this project could do the stories justice, I hope this thesis could help even in the littlest way possible to share each of the empowering stories, and shine a light on the issue of LGBTQ+ rights issue in Indonesia, and how it is important for each human to be treated equally.

My friends who supported me through thick and thin in the process of finishing my thesis. Fitri Junica, Sansan Casella, my longtime companion from Undergrads days. Lena, and all the students from the MA program Thank you for your support and guidance, discussion and shared ideas that helped me shaped the thesis. Agnes and Kak Febi from church who gave me support and kindness during my stay in The Netherlands, Thank you so much for your kindness.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

1.1 Background

“Peace for me, is when we as trans women could live freely, as we are. When we can access our rights without any obstacles from other people, and instead receiving acceptance and support, that’s what I called peace -Vinolia Wakijo, 2011”

That was one of the sentences from my field assignment study in 2011, when I was attending my undergraduate school of International Relations in Universitas Gadjah Mada Yogyakarta, on my course of Introduction to Peace Study. We were asked to interview communities asking about their own definition about peace, and what peace meant to them. My workgroup and I decided to interview a community of trans women called *Keluarga Besar Waria Yogyakarta (Kebaya)* or Trans Women Family of Yogyakarta.

This was a statement from the founder of the organization, Mrs. Vinolia Wakijo. The sentence was a statement of hope that trans women were longing for their rights to be fulfilled and for them to have the liberation of their gender expression, and just simply to be respected as human beings. This statement also made me reflect as an Indonesian and as a student on the current condition of trans women in Indonesia. Eight years since the interview was conducted, it is far from the concept of peace. In fact, in recent years, trans women are more prone to violence and injustice than before. I wonder what triggers the situation to happen?

Unfortunately, the main cause was the moral panic around LGBT that hit this country. It all began in January 2016 where a study group from University of Indonesia, known as the Support Group and Resource Center on Sexuality Studies of the University of Indonesia (SGRC-UI) focusing on gender, sexuality, feminism, body rights, patriarchy, women, and reproduction rights received attacks and harassments over social media. It all started when a poster of the LGBT peer support network was made by SGRC-UI and Melela.org, a local LGBT organization. This poster contained stories of LGBT individuals coming out to their relatives. The poster became viral in social media and caught the public attention, The University of Indonesia quickly responded to that case and stated in their statement that the organization did not have any affiliation to and a legal permit of the campus.

Moreover, the Indonesian media quickly reported SGRC-UI claiming that it was a pro-LGBT organization in a negative way, as written by an Indonesian media *Republika* news on 22 January 2016. When it became viral, the authorities began noticing and started condemning the organization. The Minister of Technology Research and Higher Education Mr. Muhammad Nasir reproated the allegedly LGBT organization and all its activities on campus. He claimed that the organization would encourage the behavior of same-sex relationships among students and wanted to ban the organization. Furthermore, some of the members of the Indonesian parliament also issued negative statements against the matter and towards the LGBT community. (Tirto, 2016). This could be identified as the climax of what had happened to the LGBT community. The impact of these moral panics and viral situations has also affected the existence of trans women until now. Trans women have to face and deal with violence and discrimination even more.

Just one month after the SGRC -UI case, in February 2016 according to Mrs. Shinta Ratri, a trans women activist and also the founder of Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School for trans women in Jogjakarta, there was an attack on her school carried out by conservative groups that forced her to close the school. According to Mrs. Ruli, a trans woman from Kebaya organization Jogjakarta and a trans activist who knew about the situation, the Islamic boarding school was closed by a conservative group called Front Pembela Islam (Islamic Defender Front) which was known all over the country as a radical group. The group did not agree with the idea about trans women being in their neighborhood and doing their activities in the Islamic boarding school, even though the activities did not violate any laws (Ruli, 2018). More to the story, according to an Indonesian news outlet, *Tirto id* the group committed the assault because they believed that trans women formed their own understanding of Al-Quran allowing LGBT and same-sex marriage. Even though according to Arif Nuh Safri, a religious teacher in that school, who has been teaching in since 2010, the allegations were false, and there was no agenda; these trans women just wanted to study Islam (Tirto, 2019).

Unfortunately, these attacks keep increasing, over the years. According to *Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Masyarakat Indonesia* (Indonesian Society's Legal Aid, 2017) in 2017 alone, there were 973 cases of violence and discrimination against LGBT in Indonesia, with transgender women being the highest number of victims with a total of 715. These figures only consisted chiefly of reported cases of trans women abuse in the country. In 2018 new cases emerged. On January 27, 2018, for example, a couple of trans women were attacked by police and sharia law defender when they were just working in a beauty salon, (South China Morning

Post, 2018). Another case occurred in November 2018 in the city of Lampung, where three trans-women were hosed down with water as part of cleansing by public order officers. And the lists of cases were still being compiled, with some reported and some were not. (Jakarta Post, 2018).

As seen in cases of these incidents, the government fails to protect the victims of violence and injustice, instead, some government officials are creating a negative narrative against the LGBT community. However, amidst all the episodes, the process of empowerment and resistance have taken place. For example, in the case of Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding school of Trans Women in Jogjakarta, Mrs. Shinta Ratri, the founder, and her friends rebuilt and reopened their school for trans women. Because of the lack of intervention from the society and the government to help trans women communities, they rebuilt themselves and took matters into their own hands. Shinta stated that their community was now trying to be silent, and flying under the radar at work. Shinta and her friends have gradually reconstructed the school so that it can still provide sanctuary for trans women to pray, gain skill for work, and start new programs to protect them from becoming the victims of violence (Shinta,2019). What Mrs. Shinta and her friends did, opening and rebuilding the Islamic Boarding school for trans women so that they could safely pray and learned again has the same principle with a movement that is currently existing in the western world, known as transfeminism.

Nevertheless, what is the concept of transfeminism and how it is different from what trans activism has taken place in Indonesia? Transfeminism and it's trans feminist activism is slightly different from trans activism. As Susan Stryker, Professor of Gender and Women's Studies at the University of Arizona and is Visiting Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Yale University, stated that transgender activism is the advocacy of legal and social change that transgender people do to change the discrimination and oppression they have suffered, as a result of their difference from what other people understood about gender. (Stryker, 2014). Transfeminism itself originated from the word transfeminism from Spain. This movement first emerged in the 1980s during a series of feminist working group meetings (*Jornadas Feministas*) for the inclusion of trans women in politics. Over the years the concept is used globally to fight issues such as capitalism, post-colonial, anti-racist, anti-institutional and leaderless social movements. (Lopez, 2019: 1619). In the United States, The movement was coined by United States activist and Feminist, Diana Courvant and Emi Koyama, in 1992 in the context of their intersectional work on trans, intersex, disability, and survivorship of sexual violence, However, the term was expanded inside and outside the United

States because of Emi Koyama's work on *Transfeminist Manifesto* in 2001. Several years after that, Julia Serano, a United States writer and activist also develop *Whipping Girl: A Transsexual Woman on Sexism and the Scapegoating of Femininity* (2007) which brought transfeminism into a wider scope. (Stryker and Bettcher, 2016, 11). Julia Serano also has another take on transfeminism which is on her second book *Excluded* (Serano, 2013).

Moreover, transfeminism itself, according to the *Transfeminist Manifesto* by Emi Koyama, is a movement by and for trans women who view their liberation to be linked to the liberation of all women and beyond. It is believed that transfeminism is an extension of feminism. It does not replace it. It is also accepted that each individual has the right to define his or her own identity without violence and discrimination (Koyama, 2003, 245-246). While Serano's take on transfeminism is that it is indeed a trans perspective on feminism, but she also stated that transphobia is intertwined with sexism, which creates many forms of sexism, and also that racism, classism, and ableism are intertwined with each other and create the oppression that many trans individuals had to deal with. (Serano, 2013, 677).

From the explanation above, it can be seen how the description of transfeminism is in line with the current situation in Indonesia. As Mr. Dede Oetomo, a well known LGBT activist from GAYa Nusantara organization stated that trans women in Indonesia are prone to violence and discrimination and cannot fully access their rights, because of their gender expression. Many of them are also marginalized economically. Furthermore, the upper-class sensibility intertwined with religion in the majority of politics creates bigger oppression on trans women. This confirms what Julia Serano believes that multiple forms of sexism create oppression on trans women. However, we also understand, what Emi Koyama means when talking about trans liberation created by trans individuals. It can be comprehended how Mrs. Ratri, creates spaces so that trans women can be liberated from the discrimination, and can freely pray, and learn without any disturbances.

Before leading to the research question, I would like to clarify that besides trans women, trans men are also part of the trans community facing discrimination from Indonesia's society because of heteronormativity. The impact of heteronormativity does not just affect trans women, but trans men as well. It is important to analyze how this heteronormative system has also affected trans men. Danny Gordon, Msc from School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, Scotland, UK and Mario Prajna Pratama a trans man activist from Arus Pelangi, an Indonesian LGBT+ organization have conducted research on

trans men in Indonesia. In their article entitled *Mapping Discrimination Experienced by Indonesian Trans*FtM Persons*. They explained that the trans women movement has already existed in Indonesia for four decades, since 1969, but a similar movement for trans men in Indonesia does not exist. (Gordon and Pratama, 2017, 1283). It brings about a problem for trans men, as they have a lack of information regarding their identity, so they have to search through the internet when it comes to their trans identity, health, and medical issues. They may need to search hormonal treatments on the internet and have to inject themselves. In workplaces, they have to be secretive, because once they come out with it, their job can be at stake. Some of the trans men are afraid to honestly reveal this condition to their family, because the religious institutions and family members are going to force them to obey heteronormative norms (Gordon and Pratama, 2017, 1291-1294).

Knowing that condition, this thesis acknowledges the issue of trans men and heteronormativity in the country, as the discrimination is based on the same roots of heteronormativity. Furthermore, as Emi Koyama stated in her trans manifesto, that transfeminism is liberation for trans safety and liberation. Thus, trans man liberation is important to be discussed as well. Even though this thesis will mainly focus on trans women, it will try to provide trans men perspective on the struggle. The reasons why this research cannot be as deep and as complete as the trans women movement are: first, there are a lack of data and study of trans men in Indonesia. This is also the issue raised by Gordon and Pratama in their research; there are extremely limited numbers of studies focusing on Female and Male trans communities in Asia (Gordon and Pratama, 2017, 1294). Besides lack of literature, the second reason is according to Gordon and Pratama that even though the trans women movement has established since 1969, such movement has yet to emerge for the trans community in Indonesia (Gordon and Pratama, 2017, 1294). Because there is no emerging movement, it becomes difficult to see how they fight heteronormativity through social movement. Hence, the thesis will focus on the trans women's movement, as a direction to see Indonesia's condition after the LGBT moral panic, and how the movement fight against it. Concurrently, it is hoped that a connection between trans women and trans men in this struggle can be identified.

1.2 Research Question

Accordingly, the transfeminism concept and the cases of Indonesia are the rationales why I formulated this question : **Can the concept of ‘transfeminism as a social movement’ be applied to Indonesia’s current trans women activism against heteronormativity and LGBT moral panic?** In addition, the sub questions are as follow:

- a. Who conceptualizes transfeminism as social movement? How do these authors do this?
- b. What do the trans activists tell about their transfeminist activism in Indonesia?
- c. Can these activities be seen as forms of transfeminism to weaken heteronormativity as described by authors who analyze transfeminism.

1.3 Objective of Research and Structure of Chapters

The objective of this research is to investigate the trans feminist movement on whether it is applicable to the issue that Indonesia now currently facing. Because as explained above, there are some similarities between the trans activism in Indonesia and transfeminism movement that developed in the western countries. Furthermore, the research is created because of the urgency of trans rights in Indonesia, and the need to improve trans women as equal as other Indonesian citizens. The research is conducted not to redefine the trans activism that has existed over the years in the country, but to give an expansion of the movement, in hope that this research will bring about a positive impact and more awareness regarding the reality of trans women communities in Indonesia. Therefore, this research will mainly use the narrative and stories from six LGBT rights activists from three big cities in Indonesia. First is Mr. Dede Oetomo from *GAYa Nusantara* organization in Surabaya, next are Mrs. Vinolia Wakijo and Mrs. Ruli from *Keluarga Besar Waria Yogyakarta (Kebaya)* / Trans Women Family Yogyakarta. Ms. Alya from *Ikatan Waria Yogyakarta* (Trans Women Association Yogyakarta) and Mrs. Shinta Ratri also from Yogyakarta, she is the founder of *Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School* for trans women, and last but not least Ms. Rebecca Nyuei from *Sanggar Swara Transchool Jakarta*.

Furthermore, this research will examine and analyze the activities of trans women and their activism as well. The purpose is to show to Indonesian public and others that trans women communities are empowering themselves, educating societies, and also helping others to be empowered. Hopefully, this could help to debunk the negative stigmas and heteronormative narratives created by the heteronormative system to spread fear and hatred towards the trans

community. At the same time, this research intends to reveal the resistance that Indonesian trans women create against the heteronormative system and its institutions that have existed and have explicitly and implicitly oppressed trans women communities. In answering the questions above and in order to obtain the research objective, I will divide the research into four chapters. The first chapter will discuss the background and reason behind the formulated research question. In the beginning of this chapter I explain my reason as a researcher why I have chosen this topic. I will briefly elucidate my background and point of view and why I have selected the topic of transfeminism and the cases of Indonesia's trans activism. Next, in this chapter I clarify the current situation in Indonesia regarding the trans women. Besides the background, I will also elaborate briefly on the definition of trans feminism, the connection of these issues and the importance and the objective of this research.

The second chapter will answer the first sub question on who conceptualizes trans feminism and how the authors conceptualize it. This chapter will focus on the concept of trans feminism and social movement to analyze the case of Indonesian trans women activism. Firstly, this chapter will continue to explain what trans feminism is. This part will consist of the definition of transfeminism from literatures of Emi Koyama : *Transfeminist Manifesto* and Julia Serano's : *Excluded* and another book titled *Whipping Girl: A Transsexual Woman on Sexism and the Scapegoating of Femininity*. In addition, the history of both thinkers are going to be unfolded. Their thinking will be elaborated to see the differences and similarities between the two, and whether both support each other in defining transfeminism. Furthermore, this part will discuss trans feminism as a part of social movement. The explanation of social movement will be based on Donatella Porta Della and Mario Diani's Literature on *Social Movement : An Introduction*. The topics which will discuss about social movements are: the definition of social movement, what makes a movement a social movement, and the objective of the movement itself. From these literature reviews I will analyze whether transfeminism is a part of social movement. After discussing transfeminism and social movement, this chapter will also include the methodology of findings for the case of Indonesia. The methods will focus on qualitative methodology, literature and online research, and interviewing six activists who are part of five different organizations in 3 big cities of Java. Those organizations are Sanggar Swara from Jakarta, GAYa Nusantara from Surabaya, Jogjakarta Trans Women Asociation (IWAYO) , Jogjakarta Trans Women families (KEBAYA) and Al-Fatah Islamic School for trans women.

The third chapter will discuss the second sub question focusing on trans activists and their activities. To answer the question, the result of the references and interview data will be analyzed. It will be started from the heteronormative reality and struggle that trans women lives in, and ended with how trans women use their power to resists and fight against the system. First, this part will show the cases of heteronormative society in Indonesia and what triggers such discriminatory environment. The analyses will talk on the issue of social, politics, religion, culture and class. It will explain the laws and policies that Indonesia has on the issue of human rights and protecting minority, and also reveal the reality of trans women in Indonesia based on the interviews that I have conducted with trans activists.

Furthermore, I will analyze the situation, and the trans activism in Indonesia with the concept of transfeminism and social movement that has been discussed in chapter two. There are two cases of trans activism that will be discussed and analyzed. The first case is trans spaces, and how they are used as the empowerment tools and to fight against heteronormativity. This part will discuss examples such as education spaces, health, and activism, and how these trans spaces influence the society around them. The second case will be discussing about the cooperation between trans women and other human rights movements, International organizations, and feminism and how both feminism and transfeminism complete each other as a movement and help both to fight against patriarchy and heteronormativity in Indonesia. In this chapter, I would also include a brief explanation about trans men struggle and their effort to fight heteronormativity. Finally, the fourth chapter will conclude the discussion and analysis of the argument on whether trans feminism is an applicable concept to Indonesia's society on the issue of trans activism. This chapter will give recommendations and suggestions to Indonesian society concerning the issue of trans women. With hope that this recommendations and suggestions will make Indonesian society realize the urgency of this matter. This part will discuss the hopes of trans women for Indonesia, as well.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review, Methodology and Method of Findings

2.1 Introduction

As understood from the first chapter that this chapter will discuss the issue of transfeminism, its origin, and its conceptualization into a social movement to fight heteronormativity. This chapter will elaborate the concept of transfeminism, social movement and heteronormativity. In the first part, the concept of transfeminism and its origins will be discussed based on the perspectives of two authors and thinkers, Emi Koyama and Julia Serano. Emi Koyama in transfeminist manifesto confers the definition and principle of transfeminism. Julia Serano's book entitled *Whipping Girl a Transsexual Women on Sexism and the scapegoating of femininity* and her second book, *Excluded* will be explored. The discussion on Emi Koyama's and Julia Serano's works will elaborate not only the concept of transfeminism but also, the oppressions and discriminations, and why they happen according to transfeminism. This part will include the definition of Heteronormativity by Saskia Wieringa and the connection of the issues that transfeminism is trying to fight against. Finally, this discussion will be connected with the concept of Social Movement based on Donatella Porta Della and Mario Diani's Literature on *Social Movement: An Introduction*, and analyze how the concept of transfeminism is defined as a social movement that can weaken heteronormativity

2.2 Literature Review : Framing Transfeminism as a Social movement to weaken heteronormativity

Firstly, we have to understand the concept of transfeminism itself. As discussed briefly in the first chapter, this term and movement was first articulated in the 1980s, on Spain feminist working group meetings, and was called *transfeminismo* and was used for the inclusion of trans women into politics. Years after this concept was created, transfeminism has become a culture of resistance to many issues such as migrants, anti-racist, postcolonial and many others. Thus, there are a lot of understanding of what transfeminism is. However, this chapter will only focus on Emi Koyama and Julia Serano's take on transfeminism, and moves on to the conceptualization of transfeminism as a social movement-based Donatella Porta Della and Mario Diani's Literature on Social movement

Emi koyama is Asian-American and is a multi-social justice activist and writer synthesizing feminist, she identifies as dyke queer, sex worker, intersex, genderqueer, and crip

politics. She develops a website called eminism.org where she posts writings, presentations, and articles relating to her involvement with feminism, or as she calls it, putting the Emi back in Feminism. Emi also founded the Intersex Initiatives, an organization for activism and advocacy for people born with intersex conditions in Portland, Oregon. She was a former intern at Intersex Society of North America from 2001 to 2002. (Intersex Initiative Website). In 2001, Emi released an article titled *Transfeminist Manifesto* in her website eminism.org, this article was also published in the book “Catching a Wave: Reclaiming Feminism for twenty-four century” edited by Rory Dicker and Alison Piepmier on 2003

According to the manifesto, Transfeminism is a movement by and for trans women who view their liberation to be linked with the liberation of all women and beyond. This movement opens to queers, intersex people, trans women, trans men, non-trans women, non-trans man and others who want to be an alliance to trans women and consider the liberation of trans women as part of their liberation. Transfeminism is the extension of feminism. This concept does not intend to replace feminism, instead, transfeminism is trying to advance feminism with the coalition and working with others to ensure the liberation of trans women and non-trans women alike, and asks that non-trans women also stand for trans women. Transfeminism embodies feminist coalition politics in which all women from different backgrounds stand up for each other. (Koyama: 2003: 245).

Inside the manifesto, there are several principles of transfeminism. First, transfeminism believes that each individual has the right to define his/her identity and expect society to respect them. Second, transfeminism believes that trans people have the right to decide on their bodies. No political, medical or religious authority can control the decision regarding their bodies. The third principle is that transfeminism believes that no one should be coerced into or out of personal decisions regarding her/his gender expression as either a “real” man or “real” woman. The same goes for the feminist issue. No individual is coerced to see if he/she is qualified to be a “real” feminist. This is because, in this manifesto, Koyama has described how some trans women have to pass a certain standard of binary, from some feminist groups asking on whether trans people can pass the standards. Sometimes this can affect trans women's safety so that they have to negotiate their need for safety and comfort. For that reason, transfeminism asks women and trans women to examine heterosexist and patriarchal gender mandates that unconsciously or consciously manifest ourselves, and what actions should we take concerning that issue. At the same time, transfeminism believes that women are not responsible for eradicating every

patriarchal stereotype and that even if the women are making personal decisions to comply with certain gender roles. (Koyama, 2003:244-262)

The manifesto also discusses issues that trans women face, for example, the question of male privilege. Koyama discusses how some radical feminists have accused trans women and men of benefiting from trans privilege. Koyama explains how this statement just enables more discriminations against trans women. What is happening is that trans experiences represent a dynamic interaction between male privilege and the disadvantage of being trans at the same time, because some trans women have “passed” as men at some point in their life. (Koyama, 2008, 247). However, Koyama also adds that any person who has a gender identity that matches the sex attribute to her or him has the privilege of being non-trans. There are differences in all women and trans women's experiences, and instead of accusing one another, transfeminism believes in honoring those differences, since trans women come from different backgrounds. So, trans feminists have to confront their privilege and expect non-trans women to acknowledge their being trans. (Koyama, 2008.248).

Moreover, in her text, Koyama also argues about gender and sex and how transfeminism holds the belief that femininity cannot be defined in a single concept, which means there are many ways to become a woman, and that whatever belief a person has on femininity does not make them less of a feminist than other women or trans women. As there are many ways to become a woman, this also leads to the belief that gender and sex are socially constructed. transfeminism believes that trans people construct their own gender identities based on what is comfortable and sincere to them. Transfeminism dismantles the normativity of sex and gender (Koyama, 2008, 249)

Besides, it is also needed to be acknowledged that trans identity is diverse. Some trans individuals live as different sex from what was assigned to them by medical authorities, either with or without medical intervention, while others are identified with neither sex or with both sexes. From that point of view, it is no surprise that transfeminism stands to confront any social and political matters that narrow every woman's choice. And, the movement is trying to create a safe environment in which every woman's choice is honored, while also challenges the system that limits the choice to them. Additionally, Koyama talks on the issue of body image; it is where the needs of body and comfort collide with transfeminist politics. Koyama explains how many trans women stay closeted during the process of their transitioning and feel ashamed about the situation, (Koyama, 2008. 250)

The reason is that society's view of binary gender roles forces trans women to fulfill those gender roles, and modify their bodies to fit with it. So, transfeminism challenges people to consider ways in political and social factors that influence the decision. On the other hand, it also demands respect for every trans woman's decision regarding their body, and that we should fight against the institutional enforcement of gender roles. And, at the same time, we have to support all individuals of their rights over their bodies and provide peer support on the issue. We can each challenge society's assumption of sex and gender, forming a rebellion against the normative system, because of various forms of activism, including transfeminism all attack different portion of the heterosexist patriarchy. (Koyama, 2008,251-252)

This heterosexist patriarchy is the source of problems, discrimination, and violence against trans women which Koyama discusses further in her article. She wrote that feminists had studied that violence against women was not an isolated event, but rather as a systematic function from the patriarchal system to make women subjugated. Trans women are being attacked because they live as women, even further if the attacker tries to rape trans women and found out that the victim has or used to have "male" anatomy and fueled more violence by homophobia and transphobia. (Koyama, 2008, 252)

Moreover, murder cases of trans women are rarely taken seriously by the authorities, especially if the victim are working in prostitution. The problem is that hate groups often cannot separate between gay guys and trans individuals when they commit hate crimes. Besides, Koyama states that trans people are more vulnerable to be attacked because they are more visible than gays. Accordingly, transfeminism believes that violence against trans people is an exceptionally important issue and it needs to be addressed urgently. Therefore, a cooperation among domestic violence shelters, rape crisis center, and hate crime prevention programs, should be promoted. Educating agencies about trans women should be encouraged as well. It is equally important to make people understand why trans women should be served well. Koyama encourages trans women to help other trans women in need, and trans women should join this organization to fight against hate crimes. Besides hate crimes, Koyama also realizes how economic violence can affect the life of trans women (Koyama, 252-253).

In her manifesto, Koyama talks about reproductive choice and health. Transfeminism is fighting for the rights of women to have their reproductive choice regarding birth control, abortion and resisting forced sterilization and forced abortion for less privileged women. Nevertheless, transfeminism also fights for the right to refuse hormonal and surgical

intervention including for intersex and that transfeminist should join reproductive choice organization, and learn to join women health movement. Furthermore, Koyama ends this part by saying that “*transfeminism insists that trans-sexuality is not an illness or a disorder, but a part of wide spectrum of society and ordinary human experience*”. At the end, transfeminism believes that it is time to call for action, and build alliance especially with feminism, because trans women need feminism as non-trans women do. Besides, transfeminism believes that a society in which cross-gender identities are honored will treat gender fairly, because the issue here is the existing gender hierarchy. Consequently, trans women need cooperation with feminist movement. From the manifesto, it can be understood that the core of transfeminism is to create liberation towards trans women so that they can enjoy social, political economy, and health without facing discrimination from the society. It can be seen that cooperation with feminist movement is extremely essential when it comes to the movement. This is because both movements have the same enemy, the heterosexist patriarchal system (Koyama 2008, 255-256).

This same thinking, is present in one of the chapters of Julia Serano’s book entitled *Whipping Girl a Transsexual Women on Sexism and the scapegoating of femininity* and her second book : *Excluded* . Julia Serano herself is a writer, performer, speaker, transgender activist and feminist and biologist from Oakland California. She earned a PHD in biochemistry and muscular biophysics from Columbia University and researched genetics and developmental and evolutionary biology at the University of California, Berkeley for seventeen years (Transforming Conference: 2018). In addition, she hosts and organizes *GenderEnders*, the performance series that features the work of transgender, intersex, genderqueer, artist and allies and has produced 20 shows. She is very active in trans activism and has given talks in universities, and events (Juliaserano.com),

In *Whipping Girl*, Serano states that the book is to debunk the many misconception and myths of being trans women, and how trans women are being ridiculed because they “choose” to be trans women than a man. This challenges those who glorify maleness; being feminine is being weak, artificial and vulnerable. Because of these assumptions, there are still many discriminations against femininity and they are being tolerated by society, even among those who believe in equality (Serano, 2008, 4). On that account, using this book Serano wishes to break the stereotype. Therefore, she argues that certain aspects of femininity as well as masculinity are natural and can both precede socialization and supersede biological sex. That is why according to Serano, feminists should not only focus on issues of the female body. And,

transgender activists should not only focus on binary norms, because gender equity can only be achieved towards the empowerment of femininity (Serano, 2003, .6).

Serano also writes trans woman manifesto which contains her idea about the situations of trans women and the challenges that they are facing. First, Serano characterizes a trans woman as any person who was born male, but who identifies as and/or lives as a woman. There is no qualification into being a trans woman, there is no “passing as” because it is a sexist idea to reduce a woman just based on the biological attribute. Furthermore, Serano also explains how trans women become the marginalized group, as trans women have been systematically pathologized by the medical and psychological institutions, ridiculed by the media and have become the victims of violence, and rather than given a voice to speak, trans women are treated as research objects by some people (Serano, 2003, 11-12).

Serano explains how trans women face gender binary-based prejudice such as cissexism, misogyny, and transphobia. Transphobia is defined as the fear of, or discrimination against people whose gendered identities, appearance or behaviors are different from society’s norm. In this part, Serano clarifies how transphobia is so rampant that it put a lot of pressure on individuals to conform to the norms, expectations, restrictions associated with the sex at birth. There is also cissexism, which is defined as the belief that transsexuals identified genders are inferior to, or less authentic than people who are not transsexuals and whose gender identities aligned with their birth sex. The justification of this discrimination is based on the thinking that a trans person’s gender is not real, and trans people attempt to validate their gender as “natural”. The third prejudice is misogyny coming from oppositional sexism, which is the belief that males and females are exclusive, genders that have unique attributes, abilities, and desires. This type of prejudice is punishing and dismissing the genders that fall outside the binary categories, and threaten the idea that men and women are the opposite sex. Another tool to enforce this is traditional sexism, a belief that maleness and masculinity are superior to femaleness and femininity (Serano, 2003:12-13).

Consequently, society ridicules trans women, not only because they live outside the binary gender spectrum, but also because trans women show femininity. The term as Serano stated is misogyny. It’s when trans women are ridiculed for wearing a dress and showing their femaleness. By doing this, trans women challenge the supremacy of maleness, that is why to control the “threat” trans women’s posing the culture and society portray trans women in a traditional sexism way. First, the media makes trans women hyperfeminized by showing trans

women as wearing make-up, high-heels, and dresses in a derogatory way. Second, the media hypersexualize trans women. They create imagery depicting trans women as sex workers, and sexual deceivers. Third, the media objectify trans women's body by saying trans women surgery is a man-made vagina, without any further discussion. This is limiting trans women to just "body parts". These situations are what drive trans activism to challenge masculinity and maleness as inferior to maleness. This is why trans activism is at its core, a feminist movement. (Serano, 2003, 15-16). Furthermore, in her second book, *Excluded*, in chapter five titled *Transfeminism, There is No Conundrum About it* according to Julia Serano, transfeminism is a trans community taking on feminism. She believes sexism has multiple, connected forms. She states that transfeminism believes sexism taking on many forms, for example, heterosexism, the belief that heterosexual is more legitimate than same-sex relations. Another example is monosexism, a condition in which people who are attracted to only one gender are more valid than bisexual and pansexual, or masculine-centrism, in which masculine expression is more legitimate than feminine gender expression. (Serano, 2013, 677)

Furthermore, she explains that transfeminism also sees the issue of class and racism that do not act individually and are connected with these many forms of sexism (Serano, 2013: 685). Early transfeminism framed that those forms of sexism took place because of a gender binary system in which any individuals that do not conform to the existed gender binary is going to be excluded by society. The gender binary will exclude any individuals that do not comply with the feminine or masculine spectrum as their biological sex (Serano, 2013: 686-687). Other than that, transfeminism also focuses on the institutionalized cissexism, a form of sexism that is conducted by non-trans/ binary individuals. This form of sexism is known as cissexism or transphobia, and this can occur through individuals, organizations and the government. Serano further explains this situation. She talks about how these types of discrimination are what transfeminism is trying to fight against.

In her second book entitled *Excluded*, Serano explains how transfeminism recognizes numerous forms of sexism besides traditional sexism in which women are seen as inferior to men. She believes that there are multiple, connected forms of sexism. She states that transfeminism believes that sexism takes on many forms, for example, heterosexism; it is a belief that heterosexual is more legitimate than same-sex relations. Another example is monosexism, in which people that attracted to only one gender are more legitimate than others, the male-centrism. In the book, she also talks how transphobia is connected with classism and institutionalized sexism, which create a belief that the marginalization of trans women are

connected with class and economic issue so that trans women in the lower class are more prone to discrimination. (Serano, 2013, 679). Furthermore, she also discusses the reason why she explains these systems and forms of sexism, and how institutionalized sexism affected trans women, and how these issues should be a part of the feminist movement as well. Since in the past, feminists dismissed trans feminism due to “male privilege”, Serano’s explanation is also to show different experiences that trans women face and to clarify many types of discriminations that trans women have to deal with. All of these circumstances should be the concern of the feminist movement as well. (Serano, 2013, 725).

What Serano has described in her book has been put into a system by the gender-binary society. The system is defined as a heteronormativity. Saskia Wieringa, a professor at the University of Amsterdam, is a professor in the field of Gender and Women's Same-sex Relations Cross-culturally. She has published multiple articles on the issue of gender and sexuality in Asia (Universiteit Van Amsterdam, 2019). In 2012, Wieringa published an article about the Heteronormative system entitled *Passionate Aesthetic and Symbolic Subversion Heteronormativity in India and Indonesia*. In that article, she defined heteronormativity as erotic, sexual and affective practices, the norms governing and institutions that uphold them. This system of normativity is applied in daily life, including institutions, laws, regulations and reproductive lives of the society, and it influences moral and personal people's lives as well. (Wieringa, 2012, 518). She further explains how the core of the heteronormative system is formed by sexual differences and gender relations both conceptualized as the binary system and produced under the assumption that humanity naturally only consists of females and males. The system does not allow other than these variations. Heteronormativity also believes in the separation between “normal” and “abnormal” in which the “abnormal” category is usually blurred, and eventually, transgender and intersex bodies have disrupted this binary system (Wieringa, 2012, 519).

Thus, these authors have clarified how transfeminism works. Emi Koyama explains in detail the principle of transfeminism, how it has an objective to create a safe environment for trans people, non-trans and non-binary individuals. The principle consists of rights to define identity, rights to make their own decision about their bodies, and how transfeminism challenge the system of heteronormative. While in Julia Serano’s book, she approaches trans feminism as broader version of feminist issue and focuses on explaining the heteronormative system that creates discriminations for trans women, and how feminist should overlook this issue; she uncovers issue like class, maleness, and the binary system, the superior-inferior system

between binary and non-binary that affect trans women's lives. The heteronormativity system explained by Wierenga has given further clarification on the transphobia, cissexism, traditional sexism, and transmisogyny that creates discriminations against transwomen. They are all connected under one system, which is heteronormativity. These authors have given a clear explanation of what transfeminism is and what transfeminism challenges.

But how will transfeminism weaken the heteronormative system? As is known, the theme taken from both Julia Serano and Emi Koyama's text on transfeminism is about trans activism. It is used as a culture of resistance against many issues, such as sexism, racism, pro-immigrant, and even as a way to criticize government policies. Since the creation of the transfeminism movement in Spain, the original objective was to create inclusion for trans women in politics. Therefore as the resistance and movement that creates social changes from the start, can transfeminism be conceptualized as a social movement? Will this help transfeminism weaken heteronormativity?

But how will transfeminism weaken the heteronormative system? As is known, the theme taken from both Julia Serano and Emi Koyama's text on transfeminism is about trans activism. It is used as a culture of resistance against many issues, such as sexism, racism, pro-immigrant, and even as a way to criticize government policies. Since the creation of the transfeminism movement in Spain, the original objective was to create inclusion for trans women in politics. Therefore, as the resistance and movement that creates social changes from the start, can transfeminism be conceptualized as a social movement? Will this help transfeminism weaken heteronormativity?

To answer this, the concept of social movement has to be defined first. Fortunately, Mario Diani and Donatella Porta have defined this concept. Donatella Della Porta is a professor of political science, Dean of the Department of Political and Social Sciences and Director of the Ph.D. program in Political Science and Sociology at the Scuola Normale Superiore in Florence, where she also leads the Center on Social Movement Studies (Cosmos). (ISTR Montreal, 2018). On the other hand, Mario Diani is a professor of Sociology at the University of Trento, that he joined in 2001 and where he served as head of the Department of Sociology and social research and as dean of the Faculty of Sociology in the university (University of Trento, 2019).

In their book entitled *Social Movement; An Introduction*, they define a social movement as a particular social process, consisting of mechanism in which the actors engage in a

collective action in which they are engaged in a conflictual relation with clearly identified opponents, linked by informal networks, and share a collective identity. In this context, conflictual relationships mean as an oppositional relation between actors who seek to control the same stake, either political, economic, or cultural. (Porta and Diani, 2006: 364). Furthermore, the social movement also discusses dense informal networks considering how the system of networking within a social movement works. In that matter, the social movement consists of both individual and organized actors. Even though they have a separation of autonomy, the actors of social movement exchange resources, coordinate strategies and initiatives. Only then it can be claimed as a movement.

The social movement also centers on collective identity which is a shared identity. A social movement process is in place only when collective identities develop going beyond specific events and initiatives because collective identity brings a sense of common purpose and shared objectives. This creates linked activism between the actors that can make the movement stronger as they create their bond over identity. The collective identity also means that a social movement is in place only where collective identities develop, which is beyond any events and initiatives. (Porta and Diani, 2006: 377-378). Collective actors are connected to each other in terms of alliances and identification of explicit opponents (Porta and Diani, 2006, 416). Social Movement tends to invent new disruptive actions challenging the states on issues of law and order. (Porta and Diani, 2006, 483)

As seen, from the explanation of Diani, Porta, Koyama, Sorano, and Wierenga we understand that transfeminism is a movement aiming at giving inclusiveness to trans women, in a society that is based on binary values. It indicates that transfeminism challenges society constitutes a demand for a social change. Furthermore, this movement has a collective identity, and an objective to fight for women's liberation, which linked to the liberation of all women. Furthermore, as Koyama and Serano have explained, all individuals can join this movement in support of trans liberation, and third, which indicates the dense informal networks. Since the networks can be individuals or organizations, transfeminism does not limit anyone who wants to join the movement. Correspondingly, from all three authors, it is understood that heteronormativity/ transphobia is the identified enemy of this movement. We can see how, transfeminism slowly began to conceptualize not only as trans activism and the extension of feminism but also at its core, as a form of a social movement.

2.3 Methodology and Method of Findings

I choose to develop this research with a qualitative methodology. There are several objectives of qualitative research. First, qualitative research seeks depth and intimate information about a smaller group. Second, qualitative research aims to understand the reason behind how and why people behave and think as they do. The third objective of qualitative research is to research structural and processual issues. Since qualitative research has its critiquing function, it seeks new discoveries, rather than just verifications. It looks for new social structures, new ways of interpreting process or social changes. This may involve modification or new ways of thinking to already existing ideas (AM Ambert, PA Adler, P Adler, DF Detzner, 1995, 881). Qualitative research is meant to focus on deeper analysis and descriptive part on an issue. Based on this definition, the qualitative method used in this research will also analyze the process, the reason, and the structure of the case study and see the possibilities of social changes within the studied phenomena.

Additionally, the qualitative method will be used alongside with a feminist approach. As the feminist methodology is not reserved for women, and the feminist method also provokes new questions and new ideas for the research. Moreover, the feminist inquiry is attentive to several points when it comes to analyzing a phenomenon. First that there is power in all visible forms. Second, there are boundaries and their potentials for exclusion, marginalization, and incomplete or superficial inclusion. Third, knowing that within that power there are relationships of power between the people including men or women from a different economic background, the researchers and research subject. The fourth that the role of self-reflexive humility in maintaining attentiveness to these concerns. These four are referred to as feminist research ethics (Ackerly, 2008: 31). So, with this explanation in mind, as it can be seen that a qualitative methodology and feminist inquiries can be used as a tool together to build this research. Since both of the approaches can be used to explain a phenomenon of process, structure, and social changes. Both are used to analyze how the phenomena happen, and why they come into being, and with feminist inquiries, those are explained through power relations among people, and to explain the effect of that power relations on issues like exclusions and marginalization.

In explaining the power relations, and analyzing the social changes that happen between the actors of the issue discussed in this thesis, I also use several methods to find data and ideas for this research. First, since this research is based on literature findings of LGBTQ literature

in Indonesia, I will use books, journals, and reports on the issue of transwomen's rights in Indonesia. Further, I will also use documentaries from LGBTQ+ Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Indonesia to collect unbiased perspective of transwomen in Indonesia. I will also use several government reports to see what perspectives the government has regarding this issue.

This research will also use documents of government policies and findings to see what stand the Indonesian government has towards Indonesian transwomen communities. In conducting my interview for this research, I use the semi-structured interview. According to Hesse-Biber, a semi-structured interview is done when the interview is performed with a specific interview guide and a list of questions. The order may not be precise, however, the information needed is covered. In this type of interview, the interviewer gains some control over the flow of the interview, and in the way the interviewer wants the interviewee to answer the questions. Furthermore, this system accepts spontaneous questions or replies from the interviewee or researcher. So, it is not highly controlled by the researcher (Hesse-Biber, 2007:115).

In the interview, I have chosen six different sources from five various organizations. These organizations are some of the many LGBT and Transwomen organizations that have been working hard to ensure the rights and safety of other transwomen and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and other queer communities in Indonesia. I interviewed five trans activists and one gay and LGBT activists from five different organizations. The first source is Mr. Dede Oetomo who is the founder of GAYa Nusantara Surabaya, a pioneer organization of gay and LGBTQ+ organizations in Indonesia. This institution was established on 1st August 1987. It focuses on the issue of LGBTQ+ rights, advocacy, service, and education on the issue of LGBT community to societies. It uses advocacy from campus to campus, and conduct researches on the issue of human rights and LGBTQ+ issue. This institution builds networks with other local and international organizations such as Human Rights Watch, UNAIDS, International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) and many others. Mr. Dede Oetomo is one of the most renounce gay activists in Indonesia. He is very well known for his advocacy on this issue since the Soeharto era and is now still fighting on this issue.

The second source for my interview is Ms. Rebecca Nyuei, a trans activist from Jakarta. She focuses her work on the issue of trans and education. The Trans-School organization was created for trans women's education and empowerment center in 2011, due to the absence of

an education facility for the trans community because the government does not protect and ensure the rights of the trans community as it should be. Therefore, trans women in Jakarta established a Trans-school to empower transwomen and educate them about themselves. She involves in a lot of LGBT activism and educating the society concerning the issue of trans and the understanding of gender.

The next interviewers that I contacted were trans activists and trans women from Jogjakarta. Jogjakarta is very well known for its trans-community. This city is thriving on becoming an education and student city so that trans women in Jogjakarta have the chance to create an open discussion and advocacy from campus to campus. With a more eager to learn and open-minded society, trans women have the opportunity to introduce the trans women of Jogjakarta. The organizations that I conducted an interview with were *Ikatan Waria Yogyakarta (IWAYO)*/ Trans Women Association Jogjakarta, *Keluarga Besar Waria Yogyakarta (KEBAYA)*/ Jogjakarta Trans Women Family, and Al-Fatah Islamic school for Trans-women, the first all trans women Islamic boarding school.

Mba Alya is the current chief of IWAYO (*Ikatan Waria Yogyakarta*)/ Trans women Association Yogyakarta located in Jogjakarta, Central Java, Indonesia, and Ms. Rebecca, a member of IWAYO. The organization was formed in 1982, but in 1992 was permanently closed due to lack of members and activities, and it wasn't until 2010 that the organization was re-opened. The organization is focusing its activism on the issue of trans women and their rights in Jogjakarta. They are now focusing on the topic of getting a proper identity card for transwomen and maintaining close relationships among the members trans women groups that live around the City. The second organization in Jogjakarta is called *Keluarga Besar Waria Yogyakarta (KEBAYA)*/ Jogjakarta Trans Women Family, with Mrs. Vinoa and Mrs., Ruly as my informants. Created in 2005, by Mrs. Vinolia Wakijo, the organization focuses on health issues of HIV/AIDS on trans women, and the rights of transwomen in Yogyakarta. In addition, KEBAYA contributes in educating society, schools, and arranging seminars in the issue of transgender and its understanding, so the younger and aspiring generation will be more willing to accept transwomen as a part of society.

The third sources are from Jogjakarta resulted from my interview with Mrs. Shinta, the co-founder of Al-Fatah Trans women Islamic boarding school. The school was built in 2008 by Mrs. Maraini and Mrs. Shinta. Mrs. Shinta is now the head of the organization. This organization focuses on the issue of trans rights concerning religion. This Islamic Trans

Boarding school was started in 2006 when a group of trans women gathered after the Jogjakarta earthquake. They held a prayer event with K.H Amroli, an Islamic teacher around the area. Seeing the impact and enthusiasm of that event, the religious teacher brought up the idea of once in a month gathering, and from then they started to build the school to pray and learn together. Before the school was established, these trans women did most of their prayers at home rather than in the mosque, because they experienced a lot of discrimination when praying in the mosque with people around the area. As a result, the Islamic school for trans women emerged to give trans women the opportunity to freely pray, learn and study about their religion without any discriminations and interruptions. This school also offers training for trans women and advocacy to the outside world. By using these interviews, I will analyze and see the reality of trans women in the big cities of Indonesia through their voices, and see how they develop trans activism and programs within the heteronormative society in Indonesia. Furthermore, using this interview, I will analyze, whether the concepts that I have explained above, can actually be applicable for the case of trans women in Indonesia.

CHAPTER III

Discussion

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the condition of trans women in Indonesia. The first chapter will explain the heteronormative condition that trans women communities have to face. It will discuss how heteronormativity has influenced the social, political, economic, and cultural aspects of society and how heteronormativity has created a negative impact on trans women's condition in the country. In the next part of the chapter, I will discuss and analyze trans women's activities and activism in the country, and how it is used to weaken heteronormativity. In addition, I will analyze the concept of transfeminism applied in Indonesia concerning the case of trans activism.

3.2 Persecutions and Discrimination Situations in Indonesia against trans women

As known from chapter one, there is a lot of discrimination and violence that has happened to the LGBT community since 2016. The cases of SGRC-UI and Al-Fatah Islamic boarding school, both being forced permanently closed by Islamic hardliners following negative statements from government officials have been the living proof that LGBT rights in the country are in crisis. Dede Oetomo, the co-founder from GAYa Nusantara stated in our interview, that many times his organization wanted to create an LGBT event, the police alongside religious hardliners group were trying to stop the event. He said: *"We've been stopped three times by the police, this makes it difficult for the community to get excited to create a discussion or event because they fear that the event will be stopped eventually, and many times the police will side to the mass organization"* (Oetomo, 2018)

During the interview, Mr. Oetomo explained that Trans women have very little access to human rights and that the government only provides very little assistance when it comes to trans women. Mr. Dede then continued to give examples of how trans women were being detained by government institutions. He informed that there was a trans woman detained by Public Police Officer in Surabaya, for going outside after doing an entertaining show at a wedding. Another case was in Lombok, where a school teacher who was identified as a trans woman was forced to change clothes like a man. In Bali, some temples forbid trans women to enter the place. In *Nganjuk*, a small city in East Java, a trans woman has done a procedure of

sex change, but this cannot be legalized by the court because the judge was cooperating with Front Islamic Defender, a radical Islamic organization. (Oetomo, 2018)

Another case is about Mrs. Ruly, a trans woman from Jogjakarta who was also detained when she was busking on the streets. In our communication prior to the interview with Mrs. Ruli, I got the news that she was detained. I was arranging our phone interview in May 2018, but then Mrs. Ruly stated that she was detained by Public Order Enforcers (Satpol PP) because of busking on the streets. She affirmed that she was detained for three months. Then, I tried to contact her again and interviewed her in July. In the interview, Mrs. Ruly revealed that this is a common thing happened in the region, where the law is misused to control the LGBT community. The local regulations no 1 of 2014 of Jogjakarta city which is supposed to regulate and control people who are homeless and scroungers, but in reality the law is used to capture and criminalize trans women who are busking/singing on the streets (Ruly, 2018). Based on those cases, Mr. Oetomo further said that trans women have no protection in Indonesia. There are many examples of regulations which stated that any Indonesian citizen's right is protected, but those are just on paper. (Oetomo, 2018).

As Mr. Dede Oetomo has confirmed, Indonesia has regulations on the issue of human rights and discrimination. Indonesia's constitution has its definition of discrimination and a set of regulations upon these matters. In the constitution number, 39 year 1999 chapter one article one on the issue of human rights stated that: *"Discrimination is any direct or indirect restrictions, harassments, or exclusions based on the differentiation of race, ethnicity, group, class, social and economic status, language, sex, and political believes causing reduction, deviation or deletion, in the recognition, implementation and use of human rights and basic freedom in the lives of individuals or collective in the sector of politics, economy, law, social, cultural and other aspects in life."*¹ Furthermore, the constitution continues to state from section 5 to 7 the right to live, the right to be protected by the law and international law that has been accepted by the Indonesian government that those protections are not in favors of anyone or any groups²

Besides the constitution, the fundamental constitution of the 1945 constitution of Indonesia article 28 C stated that every person deserves a right to develop themselves through the fulfillment of their basic needs. They have the right to education and the right to benefit

¹ Indonesian Constitution Number 39-year 1999. On the issue of Human Rights Chapter 1 article 1

² Ibid, section 5-7

from science, technology, art, and culture to improve the quality of their lives and their welfare. In the section of 28 D, it is said that every person has the right to be protected under the law. These laws and policies show that Indonesia has already possessed the instruments for LGBT inclusiveness and that every citizen's rights are protected and appreciated under these laws. In the Article 33 of Law Number 39 Year 1999 concerning Human Rights stipulates that: "Every person has the right to be free from torture, punishment or cruel, inhumane, degrading treatment and human dignity³ or in the Law Number 12 Year 2005 concerning Ratification of Civil and Political Rights, Article 17, reads that no one shall illegally interfere to someone's private matter, whether it is their name, their family, their household or his good name.⁴ However, as we have seen in many cases above, many trans women face violence, and punishment because of their sexuality. These laws and policies did not prevent all those politicians' statements, public order police officers 'brutality and many other actions committed by governmental and non-governmental institutions from discriminating trans women. Even though there are many policies and laws for Indonesia to start developing inclusions initiatives, there is almost no effort from the government and the society to give the transgender community a chance.

The violence occurs because of the heteronormative system, as explained by Wieringa as a system of erotic, sexual and affective practices, as well as the norms governing and institutions that uphold them. This system of normativity is included in daily life, including institutions, laws, regulations and reproductive lives of the society, and influences moral and personal people's lives as well. (Wieringa, 2012, 518). Koyama also has explained how this heterosexist patriarchy system is systematically using discrimination and violence to subjugate trans women. Moreover, she agrees that trans women are attacked because they live as women, and are more visible so that they are prone to attack (Koyama, 2008, 252-253). Therefore, the laws are not applied to trans women, as the government uses these laws to control the femininity and femaleness of trans women; they are being detained mostly because they want to show their identity in public, like busking, performing, or entering public places. This is when the society and government consider their gender identity as a problem, they consider this a threat to their established society, and then use their institutions to control trans women.

The fact that Indonesian society and government only recognize females and males as both gender and sex has a negative impact on the trans community. Farida Hanum, a professor

³ Law Number 39 Year 1999 concerning Human Rights Article 33

⁴ Law Number 12 Year 2005 concerning Ratification of Civil and Political Rights, Article 17

from State University of Jogjakarta (UNY) stated in her book that lack of understanding between gender and sex comes into being because there is no clear definition of both sex and gender. There is no clear explanation of the issue of gender and the connection of this concept towards social issues. She continues explaining that many Indonesians nowadays still do not quite comprehend the separation between sex which is a biological matter, and gender which is socially and culturally constructed. However many people still believe that both are the same, that gender is similar to biological sex. Some even called it “kodrat” which means God-given positions (Hanum, 2018:5-8)

As a result, the relations between masculinity and femininity cannot be reversed. For example, the women’s *kodrat* is to become a caregiver, while men’s is the sole provider of the family. (Hanum, 2018:5-8). This system clearly glorifies masculinity and heterosexuality, and anything outside these established masculine-feminine relations is disregarded. The lack of understanding and the growing heteronormative system have put trans women in a disadvantaged position. In our interview, Mr. Dede Oetomo stated that Indonesia has only recognized females and males. Societies may understand what trans women are, but they are still marginalized. Consequently, trans women are more prone to discrimination and are in many cases unprotected. They are detained, dealt with violence, and even worse are flogged in the Aceh region. (Oetomo, 2018).

The heteronormative system of glorifying only male and female and the fear of trans women’s femaleness have affected trans women's lives and their rights to have an education, steady jobs, healthcare and identity cards, all public facilities that are supposed to be easily accessed as an Indonesian citizen. And sure enough, trans women cannot have access to a healthcare facility, education, identity card, or proper job. For example, concerning the identity card, Ms. Rebecca Nyuei in our interview stated, *“It is a complicated issue. See, if we talk about identification cards for trans women especially in Jakarta, you have to understand that Jakarta is a big city. Many trans women come here from other cities, or small towns; sometimes they were underage when coming here. Their families have outcasted them from their homes, and they do not bring any documents. However as we may know, to move and stay in Jakarta and get a letter of domicile, and further access to health and other public services, you have to provide a family card, and when you are being outcasted it is impossible to provide such documents”* However Ms. Becca also added that this was not one hundred percent the government's mistake. It was the system. However, she also added that in some areas in Jakarta, if they succeeded in making the identification card, some of the authorities would later ask for

the trans women to wear masculine garments instead. She concluded that this was not entirely the government's fault; this was about the existing system, and those trans women were marginalized from the start. (Nyuei, 2018).

Mrs. Ruly, a trans woman activist from Kebaya organization Jogjakarta clarified about the same situation, in which some trans women's administration has become untraceable because they have moved from their city and stayed in Jogjakarta for years. As a result, many of them could not access public healthcare. Currently, Mrs. Ruly is discussing the matter with the local government. However, there is still no development of the issue. (Ruly, 2018). The difficulties of having an identity card were also expressed by my other informants. Mr. Dede Oetomo confirmed that it was difficult for trans women to have an identity card. Sometimes, trans women have to do advocacy and lobbying first in order to receive an identity card, which is what Mrs. Ruly is currently doing. She is now trying to lobby the government on the issue of identity cards. Mrs., Ruly, a trans woman activist from Kebaya organization Jogjakarta confirmed a similar situation, in which some trans women's administration has become untraceable because they have moved from their city and stayed in Jogjakarta for years. As a result, many of them could not access public healthcare. Currently, Mrs. Ruly is discussing the issue with the local government. However, there is still no development of the issue. (Ruly, 2018). Another confirmation on this issue highlighted by Ms. Alya as well. She is a member of the Trans Women Association of Yogyakarta (Ikatan Waria Yogyakarta/IWAYO). She clarified that one of the objectives of her organization is to give access for trans women to receive identity card when I asked if she was also advocating for her identity card to be aligned with her gender identification, she answered: *"it doesn't matter if the identification card lists us as the opposite gender. What matters is that we can access public facilities especially health facilities."* This indicates how important it is to have an identity card for trans women since this card is the bridge to make use of many public services that they should receive from the government.

Furthermore, an Indonesian feminist online news coverage, *magdalene.co-shared* data obtained by GWL -INA a national LGBTQ+ rights organization that conducted research in 2017. It was reported that there were 989 trans women respondents and 34, 1 percent of the respondents stated that they did not have an identity card. This survey was carried out in four big cities in Indonesia. They are Bandar Lampung, Jakarta, Bandung, and Manado. The outcome of the research has become an issue not only in these four cities in Indonesia but also nationwide. The news coverage has also reported that the problem revolves around rejection

and discrimination by their families and environment leading to the absence of any document, although there has been a reform towards the procedure of obtaining the identity card. Furthermore, it was informed that the Indonesian government has simplified the procedure of obtaining an identity card for every citizen in Indonesia. Unfortunately, this issue has not been properly disseminated to the trans women community (Magdalene, 2019).

As explained before, one problem leads to another and the importance of this identity card is affirmed through a Human Rights Watch book report entitled *Scared in Public and Now No Privacy* which stated that in Indonesia to get health access you have to be registered and included in a family unit card. Moreover, Dr. Sandeep Nanwani, a doctor who frequently visits the Kebaya organization has stated in the report that for waria or trans women, to be registered in a family card is a complicated matter, because most of them have been estranged from their family (Human Right Watch, 2018:16). The identity card is not the only crucial issue that trans women community has to endure in this country. Proper Job and education are some of the issues that my informants have pointed out. In our interview, Ms. Rebecca Nyuei stated that it was difficult for trans women to earn a proper job. Since many of them have been outcasted, they don't have a chance to continue their education. Many of them are only elementary or junior high school graduates, while only a few of them have finished high-school or go to the university. Even if they go to school, they have to face bullying in school for being too feminine. Also, schools mostly forbid them to dress as a girl, and force them to dress as a man, or else they will be punished. This condition affects their future, and their opportunity to get a job. Since they do not have any higher education, they cannot work in a fixed income occupation. Instead, many trans women in big cities like Jakarta, Jogjakarta, Surabaya and other big cities in Indonesia work as sex workers or busking on the streets. (Nyuei, 2018).

This is an inevitable cycle for trans women in Indonesia. Ms. Rebecca also pointed out in our interview that many trans women in Jakarta were struggling economically, due to working in non-fixed income professions. This was in line with the data provided by Atma Jaya University Jakarta in 2015, in which 67% Trans women in Jakarta were working as sex workers, 27 % of them are busking on the street, while only small percentage work in companies, saloon, and small businesses. Furthermore, the data from Sanggar Swara Trans School stated that the young trans women in Jakarta do not possess fixed income. 94.2 % of trans women's average income in Jakarta is around IDR 500.000– IDR 1.000.000 (31 -62 euros) per month. 96,4% of them live alone, while the rest may live with families or relatives. (Magdalene, 2018). What concerns Ms. Rebecca is that many trans women cannot be

employed, because they do not have an identity card, gain support, and acceptance from society and family (Nyuei, 2018).

According to Mrs. Vinolia Wakijo from Kebaya, a trans women organization, a similar case happens in Jogjakarta. In our interview, she stated that: *“over 200 trans women in Jogjakarta, only approximately 15 of them have made it to success. This is because economically trans women are under the poverty line; they try to make a living by selling food/ goods, busking in the streets, or becoming a sex worker. Those are what trans women mostly do. But they do not get a steady income from the job. The government has provided help. We were very grateful when the social services from the government helped trans women in Jogjakarta by arranging training of cooking, saloon and how to sew. However, it did not work very well. When trans women want to create a business out of the training, they will need a substantial amount of capital, which they do not have, they cannot save up with their current job. Sometimes the government helps to provide the tools to trans women, but they are just the tools, which sometimes cost around three to five million IDR (Indonesian Rupiah) (200 -300 euro) while to open a business you need to have around five to ten million (300-600 euro). This is certainly challenging for trans women because they do not have enough savings. In addition, most of the trans women are scared to open their businesses over rejection, discrimination, and they are worried if the customers do not want to come“*

Mrs. Ruly then gave an example of the training in our interview. *“In 2016, the government tried to give training in Jogjakarta, but they limited the participants to around thirty to sixty trans women who were qualified to do the training. At that time, there were around 365 trans women, and many of them have lived for years in the cities, but they just sat and watched when the help is given. This training, in my opinion sometimes works sometimes not, because sometimes many trans women do not have the mentality of how to be a professional business, or they do not have the funds to start, because they still struggle to begin with”* Ms. Rebecca Nyuei from Sanggar Swara organization and Ms. Alya from IWAYO also gave their opinions on this situation. Ms. Alya said: *“The government gives short training, like half of the training. For example, they give a week of training and that is it, but it is difficult for us because we need funds to open a saloon, especially the equipment”* Ms. Rebecca from Sanggar Swara added an explanation to this problem. She said: *“In my opinion, the programs that social services create see trans women as a social welfare problem group regulated in either 2006 or 2007. Since then, they approach trans women in the wrong way. They give training that is quite stereotypical like a beauty salon and make-up training. Sometimes they*

(the social services) provide tools for trans women like a beauty salon or make-up tools. But, they do not understand how trans women struggle to live in their small homes, in the alley. It's difficult enough for them to eat, let alone to open a beauty salon. Sometimes the solution that the government offers to us is not what we need; the approach is already wrong from the start, so does the application" When asked if the government is the problem for not comprehending the situation correctly, she answered: *"yes. I am sure when the government created programs, they do not involve trans women. It's like manplanning; they do not understand but they give a solution. How do they know what trans women need when they do not listen?"*

From these stories, there are three things that can be concluded according to transfeminism. First, class, sex, and gender have become tools to discriminate trans women. As Julia Serano has explained, she believes that the marginalization of trans women is institutionalized and connected with class and economy issues (Serano, 2013: Ch: 5). This can be seen from how trans women are trapped in under the line of poverty, and the training provided by the government does not help to cut the cycle of poverty. They do give assistance, but it does not have a long term impact or influence on trans women's life; frequently, it is just a onetime training. Second, as Julia Serano has said the traditional sexism makes attempt to dismiss trans women by using the media to create a hyper-feminine image of using high heels, and wearing makes up in a derogatory way (Serano, 2016:15). The same method has been used by the Indonesian government, by only giving stereotypical training. The trans women are pictured as hyperfeminine, by giving trans women beauty salon, cooking, and make-up training. As Ms. Nyuei said that these trainings are based on stereotypes, which means the government is just confirming their own narrative and their own image on what trans women are capable of. Third, as Emi Koyama has stated, transfeminism believes that trans individuals have their own rights to their own bodies and identity. No one should be forced to have a personal decision over their gender identity; no political, medical and religious authority can affect the decision. (Koyama, 2003:244-262). As can be seen, the government is trying to be in control over trans women live without even involving any trans women in the process.

The government is trying to marginalize trans women using its political power, and creating an issue of fear so that the society resent the LGBT community. This has a significant impact on the development of Indonesia as a country. First, it will affect Indonesia's economy. According to M.V. Lee Badgett, Amira Hasenbush & Winston Ekaprasetya Luhur in their 2017 research on the Economic effects and LGBT exclusion in Indonesia, excluding LGBT individuals from their rights to health, education and employment could lead to an impact on

the Indonesian economy. Due to the fact that the LGBT community is a part of the Indonesian community so that the LGBT community becomes the human capital that can affect the economy. For example, the field of education is used to develop skills and basic knowledge for human capital and can contribute to goods and services, and excluding the community from such rights reduce the human capital. Furthermore, if the members of the community have some skills, they still face discrimination in terms of employment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. In the end, they will end up working in the field that is not based on their skills. As a result, economic productivity can be affected negatively. (Badgett & Hasenbush & Luhur, 2017:1-13)

Moreover, denying rights for trans women is equal to letting the circle of poverty exist in this community. Ms. Rebecca Nyuei from Sanggar Swara stated that the government wanted to dismiss trans women; they do not want to acknowledge us. We've been deprived of various public access, we're bullied in school. In addition, the requirements of state employment prohibited LGBT individuals to join and that is a very discriminative regulation. (Nyuei, 2018) The circle in which trans women get disowned, living on the streets, working as a sex worker, and become victims of violence or health issues because of the unsafe work environment. Not only that this could influence human capital and the Indonesian economy, but excluding trans women from their fundamental rights could lead to health risk. Many trans women work as sex-workers, and they are working in an unsafe environment without any supervision and caution from the authorities, and most of the commercial work fields are unregulated. This could lead to a higher number of sexual diseases, and increase the number of violence, and an unbroken circle of poverty. These are what the country should be concerned about. It is evident that this heteronormative system is designed to control the sexuality and gender of trans women by limiting their rights and using violence so that they fear their gender expression and conform to the heteronormative standard that the government has created.

What causes this cycle of marginalization to happen? Mrs. Ruly stated that this all happened because the government system in Indonesia is still dominated by a particular community and individual that has their interest. There's an inequality in the parliament, where the majority dominates, and that makes it difficult for the minority to give their voice over the majority's interest. (Ruly, 2018). While Mr. Dede Oetomo explained that this happened because there is a sensibility of the upper-middle class alongside religious conservatives that make an effort to control this situation. He further stated that some trans organizations had to change their name. The government did not want to recognize the third gender in a law document, or

the word “*waria*” in the document since it will automatically mean that the government officially admits the existence of the third gender. He continued explaining how it is different from the word “*gay or lesbian*” where you can easily find in the law of pornography of 2008. This is because a gay or a lesbian is still a woman and a man despite their sexuality (Oetomo, 2018). The anti-pornography regulation of 2008 understands that lesbian and homosexual sex is deviant sex acts, and this already contradicts many international human rights that Indonesia has to agree on. Furthermore, the World Health Organization has confirmed that the same-sex orientation relationship is normal human behavior. The anti-pornography regulation becomes the key to police shutting down and raiding seminars, gatherings that are connected with the LGBT community both private and public.⁵ (Human Right Watch: 2017).

The situation has not changed even though the president has given his statement. On October 2016, Mr. Joko Widodo, The President of Indonesia finally made a comment in an interview with the BBC saying: “*The police must act to protect them, there should be no discrimination against anyone*” Unfortunately, this statement was followed by another statement saying: “*In terms of our belief the LGBT lifestyle isn’t allowed, Islam does not allow it.* (BBC, 2016). A statement like this does not mean any action will be taken care of by the government to protect the LGBT community. The president has raised the issue about protection to all, however, he has failed to give the protection to the trans community and other non-binary communities. This is because of the absence of actual laws and regulations that are protecting trans women and other LGBT individuals, and consequently, violence against this group keeps increasing, despite the president's remarks. These situations are in line with what Human Rights Watch has stated in their report that the government has been unsuccessful to give its international commitments while allowing hatred and institutionalized discrimination against LGBT through decrees and legislative proposals. (Knight, Harsono, Bauchner, 2016:9).

This kind of system is the most dangerous because it can lead to multiple sexism and discrimination. Serano has explained why trans women are prone to marginalization, and violence by society. Repeatedly, trans women are treated as research subjects by researchers. Others just place trans women under their microscope and dissect, assign and direct trans women’s life without giving trans women an opportunity to speak. These occurrences have

⁵ Human Rights Watch Letter to Indonesia National Police Headquarters on May 27, 2017 in Scared in Public and Now No Privacy” Human Rights and Public Health Impacts of Indonesia’s Anti-LGBT Moral Panic book report

resulted from the system of multiple binary sexism. What happened in the system of heterosexist or binary system is oppositional sexism, a belief that males and females are exclusive and the only ones that can experience desires and have valid attributes for it. Because of this belief they are punishing those that fall outside the binary category. Society is scared of something that is outside the binary system, and that creates transphobia. It creates cissexism, the belief in which transgender's identity is not as authentic as people in the binary system. They consider transgender as inferior to them and create a system to reinforce their validation of "real" gender. Cissexism also occurs when transgenders are denied their basic needs because of their identity. At the same time, there is also misogyny, the system that dismisses femininity and femaleness. Trans women are ridiculed and discriminated because of their femaleness, and by embracing femaleness, trans women cast a shadow against the male hierarchy system (Serano, 2016: 11-14)

The impact of the system has divided the society's reaction towards the LGBT community, especially on trans women. In 2016, based on the data taken from Equilibrium Journal of The Muhammadiyah Makassar University Faculty of Education on the issue of trans women in the political sphere, 46% of the respondents strongly agree that transgender is against the social norm, where 35% of them agree, and 15% disagree; only 4 percent of the respondents strongly disagree. (Tirto.id, 2017). The way that society shows opposition to the existence of non-binary individuals in Indonesia hasn't changed much. The following survey was conducted by, the Saiful Mujani Research & Consulting (SMRC), an independent survey institution in Indonesia. The survey was carried out three times, in March 2016, September 2017, and December 2017. This survey consisted of 1220 responses. The results of the survey stated that: 47.5 percent of people strongly agreed, while 34 percent agreed that LGBT was against religious values. In December 2017, the survey also captured the result that 87, 6 percent of people felt threatened by the existence of the LGBT community. (Saifulmujani Research & Consulting, 2018)

In fact, the majority of the people reject any candidate of the presidency, mayor, or governor who is LGBT. However, the survey also concluded that despite the negative statement and reaction from the people, 50 percent of respondents agreed that LGBT communities are supposed to be protected by the government. (Saifulmujani Research & Consulting, 2018). Based on that survey, it seems that Indonesian's are quite divided when it comes to LGBT rights. Some of them may say that they agree with the community having equal rights as citizens. However, they reject the LGBT community based on their religious beliefs and do not

want to give a chance to the community for political representation, despite the importance of their voice to be heard by the government. So, in conclusion, they are still in doubt of giving the LGBT community full access to economic, political and social matters.

Furthermore, despite the president's comment on the LGBT issue, there are still regions that create regulations in their region/ city or province to constrain the trans community. Sadly, these cases have continuously been ignored, and instead of stopping the discrimination, local governments in several cities are making discriminatory regulations. For example, in 2018 some local governments of cities such as Cianjur, Depok, Pariaman and of provinces like West Sumatera have even formulated local rules to constrain the LGBT community in terms of their rights, work, and their expression. One local regulation in Pariaman city article 24 stated that "Everyone is prohibited from acting as a Waria who conducts activities that disturb the peace and public order." While in the region of Cianjur, The Regent of Cianjur has established an official letter, asking a mosque to deliver a sermon against the LGBT community (Tirto.id, 2018)

Additionally, in the 2019 election, the campaign used LGBT topics as well to create issues against each other opponents, so that the voters would be scared to elect their rival candidate. A supporter of Mr. Joko Widodo who is running for the second time campaign against Mr. Prabowo Subianto. For instance, according to Ms. Rebecca Nyuei, the hate statements and discrimination against trans women increased in the year of 2018. It was primarily because of the coming local election and presidential election soon in the year of 2019. Many politicians were trying to get sympathy from the people. These politicians were using the LGBT community as a tool for their politics; they gave a statement against the LGBT community to please the conservative society (Rebecca Nyuei, 2018).

Moreover, it is not only the issues of violence and policies that are created to control trans women, the government and the majority of society also try to change the narrative of Indonesian LGBT community, as if Indonesian trans women and other binary individuals were not part of the history and culture of Indonesia. Many Indonesians assume that the LGBT community is a part of western culture and lifestyle. Thus, many of them refuse and only accept heterosexuality (Hidayana & Alim, The Conversation, 2018). However, history stated otherwise, in fact, the existence of LGBT discriminatory laws and behavior was emerging during the Dutch colonialism era, On the contrary, before the era of Dutch Colonialism, Indonesia had a diverse gender and sexuality culture. (M. Irfan, Tirto, 2017).

This was confirmed by my informants. Mrs. Ruli has stated that there is a majority primordial group that prevents diversity, and it is very easy to incite the public to hate the LGBT community. Even though LGBT individuals are everywhere and maybe some of the families of these government officials could be identified as one and that could be happening, people do not want to consider that possibility. The LGBT community is not an unusual phenomenon, nevertheless, it exists in remote areas, and the tribes and ethnicity understand sexuality and gender diversity. This is something that has happened even before Indonesia gained its freedom. For example, in Sulawesi they have norms and their local religion, in Java there are ancient bible and books that acknowledge that LGBT has existed hundreds of years before all of this. So if people are saying that LGBT is a western perspective, that is completely wrong and that is a binary perspective that tries to kill LGBT character (Ruly, 2018)

As stated by Mrs. Ruli above, the society in the region of Sulawesi in Indonesia indeed acknowledges this. The *Bugis* ethnicity is the largest ethnic group in South Sulawesi, numbering around three million people. Most Bugis ethnicity is Muslim, but some of them still believe the pre-Muslim culture that they had and admitted five genders. Their language offers five terms referencing various combinations of sex, gender, and sexuality: *makkunrai* (“female women”), *oroani* (“male-men”), *calalai* (“female-men”), *calabai* (“male-women”) and *bissu* (“transgender priests”). Another example of transgender phenomena that exists in Indonesian culture is the ethnicity of *Ngaju Dayak*, there are the documented male *basir*, and female *Balian* who are entered by supernatural beings during rituals by their opposite gender (Zwaan, 2012:13-14).

A further example is a dance from Java, the *Lengger Lanang* which features a cross-dressing person/transsexuality trait in the dance (Vice, 2017). In addition the *work* and *gemblak* rituals from east Java involving homosexuality traits in the traditions (Wilson, 1999). These facts can easily debunk all the statements saying that transgenderism is not a part of Indonesian culture, while clearly, Indonesia has the roots of transgenderism/gender expression outside the binary system. All the facts mentioned have proved that Indonesia possesses traditional roots that speaks about transgenderism and other gender spectra, In other words, there are traits and proofs that LGBT is a part of Indonesian culture, and despite the narrative that the government and the mainstream media have tried to create, transgenderism and the LGBT community is not a western culture.

The politicized religion and conservatives are the ones that are changing the Indonesian culture. During the 2016 increasing hate against the LGBT issue, many dancers of Lengger Lanang were scared to perform in public because of the increasing hate of gender expression and LGBT issues. As a result, dance culture has slowly faded away from the public (Vice, 2017). The same situation goes to the Bissu tradition from Makassar South Sulawesi, this tradition and culture have been around for centuries, but they hid in the 1960s when the Islamists were ruling the South Sulawesi region. Then it was getting worse, and at the end of 2016, the Sulawesi police forbade the culture and sports event of transgender and Bissu in Soppeng because of the report of an organization stating that the events were contrary to religious values. (Rahad, Vice, 2017).

Besides disrupting the existing culture, the politicized religious norms exercised by the conservative religious group can be used to marginalize the trans community. In his story, Mr. Dede Oetomo recounted that, in many of their events collaborating with the LGBT community, the radical Islamic group was trying to cancel the events, and many times the police were working with the radical Islamic group (Oetomo, 2018). The incidence of Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School for trans women is one of the existing cases; the school was raided by a radical Islamic group. What the president and the government official have stated against the LGBT community, and how the regulations are created to marginalize trans women are also motivated by religion.

As Mrs. Vinolia from Kebaya Organization clarified in the interview: *“Kebaya Organization is trying to have a dialogue with several government organizations to notify their issues and problems such as identity card and education, even the informal education. Trans women want to be treated as Indonesian citizens because they are. However, there are some parties that like to disrupt the situation by bringing up the issues of religion, God, sin, Heaven, and Hell. They act like the LGBT community doesn’t have any religion and spirituality, but that is not the fact. Currently, there are a lot of people in this country have tried to be more religious and defend their religious values, but they don’t learn how to be human. I think they should learn how to accept diversity and learn to be human first, and then learning religion, so they could be religious and at the same time accepting diversity”* (Vinolia, 2018). As can be seen from the cases, religion is used by the heteronormative system to control trans women. As Saskia Wieringa stated in her essay *Passionate Aesthetic and Symbolic Subversion Heteronormativity in India and Indonesia* She explains that in her research religion is an important and sensitive issue. Yet instead of embracing and helping those who are in trouble,

religious officials abuse their power to “punish” those who fall outside the heteronormative society. Religion becomes a tool to oversee the interest of the heteronormative system. It brings shame and guilt as well. (Wieringa, 2012: 525)

There are some reasons that can lead religion and radicalism to grow and threaten the LGBT community and why more conservative Islam and extreme point of view grow stronger in this country. First, transfeminism believes that everyone has the right to define his/her identity and to gain respect from the society. Second, transfeminism believes that trans people have the right to make decisions about their own body and that no political, medical or religious authority take control of those decisions, regarding what trans people do with their bodies. The third principle is that transfeminism believes that no one should be coerced into or out of personal decisions regarding her/his gender expression as either a “real” man or “real” woman. In Soeharto’s era of dictatorship, many subject matters were being repressed. Religion, gender, and sexuality, freedom of expression was all being controlled by the government. Nonetheless, Indonesia gained its way back to democracy in 1998 with the fall of Soeharto, twenty-one years ago, which is still considered as new. After the fall, both the LGBT community and the Islamic hardliner's communities are allowed to grow. (Kyoto review, Paige Tan, 2018). That is one of the backgrounds of why according to the Human Rights Watch organization there has been a steady rise of intolerance on minorities, especially religious minorities. In a 2013 report, Human Rights Watch documented a systematic attack by militant Islamists, and the government did nothing to solve the issue. Also, in 2016 Human Rights Watch reported that there is a close tie between the Islamic groups and law enforcement. This makes the group can easily impose social sanctions and attacks on minorities (Knight, Kyle, Harsono, & Bauchner, 2016: 12). This confirms of what Wieringa has explained; how religion has become the tool to impose punishment to those who are marginalized, and how religious individuals abuse their power to disrupt the existing culture, changing their laws and regulations and create institutionalized discriminations once they have power or are in a position of power.

Concerning the issues of violence performed by the governmental institutions and trans women's rights, the trans women community has made an attempt to call for actions and ask the society and the government to stop the violence. According to VOA (Voice of America) news coverage, there was a petition made by SumpahPemuda.id against the violence experienced by trans women in Indonesia. The petition has two thousand signees and was planned to be sent to the Presidential staff. (VOA, 2018) Unfortunately, there has not been any updates on that petition, and reactions from the government either. This seems to be the pattern

in the Indonesian government's response to trans women. In my interview, Ms. Ruly, a trans women from Kebaya organization said that she was in the process of working and negotiating with the local government of Jogjakarta on the issue of identity card for the rest of trans women that could not process theirs due to being outcast, but until now, they are still waiting from the local government, and Ms. Ruly is still trying to negotiate with them. Ms. Ruly also added that even the United Nations had stated concern about Indonesia's violation against the LGBT community. However, there's no further action from the national government concerning this matter. (Ruly, 2018) In addition, Mr., Dede Oetomo has informed me that he and many other activists have been trying to negotiate with the society and the government to push the acceptance of the third gender to be recognized in Indonesia. However, this process is still ongoing. (Oetomo, 2018)

In conclusion of this part, there are some points that can be understood about the situation in Indonesia. Heteronormativity is utilizing multiple sexism to control trans women. Culture, religion, and norms are all tools to control trans women and marginalize them. At the same time limitation of rights such as health, education, economic stability, the rarity of identity cards have become a way for heteronormativity and its institution to “punish” non-binary individuals. It is very clear how the majority of the middle class and upper class are trying to create boxes to keep their heteronormative system in the place. They ignore pleas of peace from activists and overthrow those who are outside the binary. Concurrently, there is also the male-centric majority who does not like trans women showing their femininity and decides to limit their gender expression in public using violence and to change trans women's narrative in a negative light.

3.3 The Community Forming and Mutual Support Between Trans Women

What has happened in this country creates an extremely difficult situation for trans women in Indonesia. Fortunately, despite the situation, trans women mobilize support among them and establish a social movement and activism to change the heteronormative system. In Indonesia, the trans women movement has been set up before the occurrences that happened in 2016. It was the first pioneer of the LGBT movement in Indonesia. In 1969s, trans women established the Jakarta Transgender Association (Hiwad), with the support of then Jakarta governor Ali Sadikin (Arus Pelangi, 2015). According to Jakarta Post, since then some cities develop similar organizations. However, before the reform era, the LGBT organizations were controlled by the government, while after the reform era in 1998 LGBT organizations could

get political rights. The trans women, bisexual and lesbians even had the chance to join the women congress. Furthermore, in 2006 some organizations in Indonesia alongside other international NGOs signed the Yogyakarta Principles on human rights and sexuality, and a year after the GWL-INA network for transgender, Gay and MSM individuals was formed in 2007; the movement keeps developing ever since (Jakarta Post, 2015). Consequently, trans women are indeed a part of Indonesian society and have nothing to do with any western influences, as what the mass conservative presumes. The fact that the government has supported the pioneer organization in the past means that the government can have co-operated with the trans community. Since then LGBT communities have been starting to slowly emerge.

Places and facilities provided for trans communities also have emerged long before this 2016 moral panic. But since that period, these trans spaces have become more crucial than ever. Trans women in Indonesia need these places to seek help and a safe haven that will protect them from the heteronormative society. As known from chapter two, according to Emi Koyama, transfeminism is liberation from trans women for trans women, but this liberation is also viewed as a liberation process to all. It is open to all individuals who are supportive of trans women and are in alliance with trans liberation (Koyama, 2003. 245). According to the definition, there are two main focuses of the transfeminist movement. The first one is the empowerment process of trans women from trans women. The second one focuses on the connection of trans movement to other actors, such as feminism, because of the liberation of trans women linked to the liberation of all women, and other organizations and society. Based on these two main focuses this part will see if there are any reflections of similarities from the cases of trans movement in Indonesia.

The first case is a story narrated by Ms. Rebecca Nyuei, a trans woman activist from *Sanggar Swara* Trans School. Located in Jakarta, this school has operated since 2011 and in that school, trans women are educated about activism, the right to speak in public, and sexual violence. They were asked to visit The National Commission on Violence Against Women (*Komnas Perempuan*). The trans women receive religious studies with gender perspective from Islamic *Ustadz* (religious teachers) as well. The three-month alternative school program is arranged in a pageant-type form to grab the attention of young trans women to join the program. Moreover, during the interview, Ms. Rebecca Nyuei explained that many trans women were in doubt about their self-identity. Many of them have blamed themselves for being who they are. Some of them even said it further: "I'll be a trans woman my entire life, but in the end, I will die like a man". That is what the school tries to teach trans women how

to deal with the society around them, managing their economic situation, and being comfortable as themselves. Furthermore, Since Ms. Rebecca, herself has experienced the difficulties of both economically, and to deal with self-acceptance and trans women identity in the past, this Trans School is the one that brings her to her chosen identity as trans women / *transpuan*. Although she has involved in activism of trans rights, and violence against women before attending the school, being a part of this school has pushed her involvement to the cause. Consequently, she is now committed to providing skills and ideas to other trans women in Jakarta and the surrounding regions through Sanggar Swara Trans School (Magdalene, Diani, 2018).

Besides helping trans women in dealing with issues, such as human rights and education, there is also an organization In Jogjakarta that focuses on facilitating trans women and their relationship with religion. The organization is called The Al-Fatah Islamic School in Kotagede, Yogyakarta. This is the only Islamic school that enables trans women to study on Islamic faith, and also as a place of worship. The head and co-founder of this organization, Ms. Shinta Ratri in our interview, stated that one of the reasons this school was formed was because, many local mosques forbade trans women to take part in their worship, so the founders were hoping that this place could be a haven for trans women that needed a spiritual clarity, specifically in Islam. (Shinta, 2019)

Since then, the number of organization members has increased significantly. It is because this place teaches trans women on how to practice the religion, reciting the Holy Quran, and how to communicate with God. In this community, trans women are free to express their gratitude towards God. While most of the trans women pray with the *mukena* (an Indonesian Hijab- dress like worn exclusively for praying). Some of the trans women chose to pray as a man, as some of them believe that if they want to worship and communicate with God, they have to dress as their assigned birth and be a man. Thus, this is a safe environment for trans women to pray and express themselves. In this Islamic boarding school, the trans women are provided with the empowerment programs, so that trans women have skills to support their life instead of working as a sex worker since the job is dangerous and unsafe in terms of health and safety. Such programs like dancing, cooking, and makeup training classes are also available at the Islamic school, whenever they are not discussing religion. (Shinta, 2019)

The impact of what this school has given to trans women is quite significant. According to Mrs. Shinta, from 42 of the current members, some of the members of the school have changed their occupation from street buskers and sex workers into makeup artists, catering staff member, and masseuses, while some of them stayed in their current job. Mrs. Shinta said that even though this school taught about religion, she or the others never forced the members to change their occupations. Changing jobs should be based on their own decision. (Shinta, 2019). As further evidence from the school, I discovered a video from CNN documenting and interviewing this school. In the video, there were two trans women, members of this school sharing the story of how this school has changed their life for the better. In the video, three trans women named Novi, Jessica, and Nur confirmed that this place has helped them to acknowledge more about Islam, and they can learn, and worship safely without any outside judgments. Nur and Jessica also said that being in this Islamic school has allowed them to escape from their sex work past. Nur has moved on to cooking and catering, and she also offers a freelance bridal make-up. Other students such as Jessica too do more work in activism on trans health and HIV preventions; she also attended trans-school in Jakarta and worked in a couple of homeless shelters as well (CNN, 2019).

As Emi Koyama stated in her manifesto that transfeminism is about creating a safe environment and liberation for trans women, and as it can be observed from the organizations, trans women can freely do their activities without being afraid of who they are. Furthermore, each organization has its elements that are in line with the three principles of transfeminism that Koyama has mentioned in her manifesto. Those principles are the right to personal identity and to be respected by society, the right to self-governance over one's own body and no political, religious and medical matters that could do otherwise, and last principle is that no one should be coerced on their gender expression to be “real” women or “real men” (Koyama, 2003,244-262). The examples of these stories have indicated that transfeminism values are very present in the way trans women created their spaces. From these testimonies, both schools reflect the principle of transfeminism because first both Al-Fatah and Sanggar Swara are focusing on trans women identity. Trans school provides pageant shows, and also focuses on trans women rights and activism; trans women can learn about the issue of trans rights, and self-acceptance. Similarly, Al-Fatah Islamic School focuses on enabling trans women to worship, pray and learn about their identity in the Islamic religion. This school has given the chance for trans women to express their identity through different aspects. It gives a safe place for trans women to study. The school does not have passing and coercion. As narrated by Mrs.,

Shinta from Al-Fatah trans women can pray using mukena/sarong. It is their choice to pray as they want, without the need to “pass as a man” whenever they pray in a public mosque. Just as Sanggar Swara has taught trans women to be comfortable with themselves, and giving gender perspective of religious issues. In both places trans women do not have to pass the binary standard to be safe. The organizations also provide empowerment programs and training for trans women; the objective is to help trans women develop their skills and to help them economically. Moreover, the empowerment program has changed trans women's lives, because the program gives them the freedom to make their creativity and their own decision. Besides, they become more confident in their identity and have more confidence and freedom to express themselves as trans women.

In regards to the Islamic school of Al-Fatah, the impact does not only transcend the trans women as participants of the school but also part of a bigger society. The society around the Islamic School admits that shed a positive light for them to see that a *waria* wants to study religion. Because of the unique factor of this organization, it also creates news coverage from national to international media resulting in many non-governmental organizations becoming volunteers in this school. According to Arif Sitompul, the teacher that has taught Islam to all of these trans women since 2008, 50 organizations including state and private universities in Jogja have volunteered in the school. A volunteer named Idofi, a university student from Jogjakarta even confirmed that helping around the school in teaching Islam to trans women has opened his mind to diversity. The teacher, Mr. Arif further said that trans women have the right to worship, and gain knowledge about their God, and how that trans woman exists as a social phenomenon, and thus their rights needed to be accepted. Besides, these organizations give chances for students to volunteer for or research about the organizations. Similarly, many students from private and public universities assist with the spiritual needs of trans women in the Islamic Trans School (CNN, 2019).

Furthermore, other than focusing on the issue of trans women empowerment and Islamic studies, the Al-Fatah Islamic school provides services for trans women in crisis, and in need of help. As Emi Koyama stated that trans women are prone to violence, because in this misogynist society, they live as women, and in many cases trans women are being attacked by a man when they reveal their status. Besides, many murder cases of trans women that work in prostitution are often ignored by the media and authorities. Koyama has also realized that many cases of violence are fueled by homophobia and transphobia. Many of the actors of this violence could not distinguish trans and gays. Since trans people are more prone to attack, they

become vulnerable. Because of this, transfeminism believes that this is an important issue and that cooperation with domestic violence centers should be conducted. Hate crime prevention programs for trans women must help to organize and educate the existing agencies, and further developing trans-self-defense programs to fight this issue. (Emi Koyama, 2003, 253-254).

What Emi Koyama has explained about transfeminism fighting violence can be noticeable through the stories of Mrs. Shinta and her trans women community in Jakarta. Since the attack that happened to this school in 2016 by Islamic hardliners, the Islamic trans boarding school along with other trans organizations, and other institutions have done a lot for their safety. Mrs. Shinta told me that these programs were created to provide answers to the problems and issues that a lot of trans women are currently facing. For example, in the case of violence and injustice, the trans women of Al-Fatah Islamic School have worked alongside with other organizations such as the Sanata Dharma University faculty of Phycology, the Indonesian Legal Assistance Institutions (LBH), local hospitals and other trans organizations to create several programs.

In 2017, the organization created a safe house for trans women that needed a safe and confidential place for victims of violence and legal issues. In the house, they can seek comfort, do counseling safely and tell their stories. This program was designed in cooperation with Sanata Dharma University faculty of psychology. In 2018 they created a family support group, among members and trans women in Jogjakarta. The objective of this program is to give support and assistance for trans women who are being kicked out by their family members for coming out as trans. In 2019 the safe house expands, as a trans women crisis center was established. A center that revolves around the issue of violence against trans women that happened on the street. Besides, in cooperation with Indonesian Legal Assistance Institutions (LBH), the organization also offers legal assistance for trans women in situations involving the law, such as being detained for busking on the street or doing sex work on the street. The programs also assist trans women victims of violence or murder. Both programs are open to trans women nationwide, and a lot of cases have been handled by these programs. Also, Mrs. Shinta has explained the difference between a safe house and a crisis center. A crisis center is handling the issues, while a safe house is more like a secure place. To be in the safe house, the victim has to go through a procedure and has to receive a letter of recommendation from the national transgender association in Jakarta (Shinta, 2019).

Besides that, Mrs. Shinta has been aware of cases in which no one would help and take care of the deceased persons. Since there are stigma and discrimination given by society to trans women, in many cases when trans women died, their families do not want to accept them. In consequence, in 2018, this organization created a space for corpse handling training and working alongside local hospitals for this program. Other trans women communities from other regions such as Kalimantan, Jakarta, and Makassar have learned corpse handling at Al Fatah Islamic. Mrs. Shinta also explained how she received funding for all of these empowerment, training, and fighting against violence programs. This alternative job training, for example, the organization has received fund support from RFSL, an LGBT organization from Sweden. The organization has got the fund by writing a proposal that was later sent to RFSL. For many of their training, empowerment and trans support program, they usually create a proposal and send it to international LGBT organizations such as International Trans Fund (ITF) New York, ASEAN SOGIE Caucus Manila, RFSL Sweden, and many others. The period is usually for three to one-year events or programs. Since they do not receive any help from the local or national government, they have to seek for themselves. Moreover, they rely on students that donate while researching in the school (Shinta, 2019).

In regards to students and research, The Al-Fatah Islamic Trans Boarding school has established and developed programs to reach out to high school and university students. The trans school has several MoU with universities around Jogjakarta such as the Faculty of Political Science of University of Gadjah Mada Islamic State University, Jogjakarta, Christian University of Duta Wacana, and Faculty of Psychology of Sanata Dharma Jogjakarta. Usually, trans women will have a session to talk in classes regarding gender issues and trans women issues. Mrs. Shinta has clarified that this program is very essential since the students and academics are agents of change so that this program will eventually impact other generations of trans women. (Shinta, 2019).

As it can be observed, the story of Al-Fatah Islamic trans school, Sanggar Swara has unique and different ways to help trans women with their lives. What is more, the story is that these programs take place in other places as well. Another organization in Yogyakarta, called *Ikatan Waria Yogyakarta (IWAYO)*/ Trans Women Association Yogyakarta focuses on trans rights and also building communities and trying to solve the grassroots level of issues that are faced by trans women. They created communities so that trans women can share the problems they have to deal with while working as a sex worker in the city, or what they met when busking on the streets and have a stronger connection with each other Ms. Alya

explained, how their organization focused on the issue of community among trans women. In addition, they are active in trans rights activity, especially in the subject of the right for trans women to access facilities (Alya, 2018).

M. Dede Oetomo has recounted a story in the interview that he has discovered that trans places created by trans women are also a common thing in the eastern part of Indonesia. According to Mr. Oetomo, in areas like Ternate, the capital city of North Maluku province trans women help each other in terms of opening a business or searching for an occupation such as working in a beauty salon or a catering business. Trans women assist other trans women by educating them, improving the skills that they will need to survive. Additionally, he has stated that Ternate is different from the rest of Java, Jakarta and other more conservative provinces in Indonesia. He then continued saying that Ternate could be an option for any LGBT individuals who need a sanctuary. Mr. Dede Oetomo gave further information in his story, explaining how places like Manado, Kupang and Sorong Papua located in eastern Indonesia were friendly towards trans women and the whole LGBT community that he visited. The community said that they protected each other, and kept a respectful relationship with the society and the local government (Dede, Oetomo).

The story in Ternate is confirmed by Mrs. Kety Haji Jalla, a trans woman who serves her community there. She stated that in North Maluku, people are more open-minded and accepting of the LGBT community. She continued said that families don't easily disown her children just for being gay or transgender in Ternate. Furthermore, she has been active in politics. As a representative of a political party, Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), she won in 2009 election and got elected for the local house of Representatives (DPRD) of North Maluku, even though the governor of Ternate then was an *Imam*. Currently, she is managing and mentoring LGBT candidates from the party. Besides politics, she teaches makeup, and hair classes to her students (Thayer, 2019)

In addition, trans women and their organizations not only give assistance to the community but also are active in educating students on universities in terms of gender, trans rights and other issues that concern trans women and the LGBT community. The key people I interviewed from the organizations, such as Kebaya, Iwayo, GAYa Nusantara, and Sanggar Swara have mentioned that they have opened their doors to academics, students, and media outlets which are interested in conducting researches and writing assignments or articles about their work or organizations so that it can shed light upon trans women conditions. My

Interviews with Mrs. Vinolia, Mr. Dede Oetomo, and Ms. Alya, and the stories from Mrs. Shinta above have given me information that these organizations are quite active in giving lectures or becoming the speakers of a discussion in universities around Jogjakarta and Surabaya. The topic of discussion or lecture can be varied to LGBT rights. The topic of discussion may carry different issues, but it will be still connected with gender, sexuality and the rights of the LGBT community.

Trans women in Indonesia also focus on the issue of health. The issue of Health in Transfeminism is a very important issue. Emi Koyama confirmed in her manifesto that transfeminist could not expect people in power to take serious action towards trans women's health, and therefore trans women need to participate in the issue. Emi has explained further that transfeminism insists that transsexuality is not an illness or a disorder, but a part of the ordinary human spectrum and so medical treatment for trans women has to be accessible. Emi has suggested that trans women work with organizations and women's health movements to improve health treatment for trans women (Koyama, 2003:257). This transfeminist value has been applied in Jogjakarta, KEBAYA (Keluarga Besar Waria Yogyakarta) / Jogjakarta Trans Women Family. I have interviewed Mrs. Vinolia, the head of KEBAYA organization, talking about how the organization functions. Mrs. Vinolia has explained that this trans women organization focuses on the advocacy of health and HIV-AIDS preventions. Established in 2006, this organization provides health check-ups for trans women and also offers care for trans women who have been infected by HIV-AIDS. Currently, KEBAYA has two hundred trans women as its members. However, this organization is not limited to trans women. It also assists men, women and other queer individuals that have been infected by HIV/AIDS, or need help in particular. The organization will accompany the sick members to the hospitals, provide them with the national health card (BPJS). In addition, KEBAYA has established cooperation with local hospitals, and other local organizations such as IWAYO, GAYa Nusantara, and others.

They also work with the local government such as the local social services, or the local public health of Jogjakarta because the local government needs data from the organization. (Vinolia, 2019). Additionally, these organizations have received help from Dr. Sandeep Nawani, a doctor and a candidate for the Master of Global Health at Harvard University. Dr. Narwani helps trans women in Jogjakarta to get access to health care. He helps them look for the information regarding the health issues almost daily, and he also helps to connect Kebaya with the local clinic he works for, in Jogjakarta (Ozug, 2017). Mr. Ruli has explained that the organization gives aid to trans women by creating a campaign and dissemination regarding

HIV/ AIDS, distributing condoms on the streets for trans sex workers. The objective of this campaign is to inform trans women and other people the information about HIV/AIDS, the available treatments and also prevention (Ruli 2019). As it can be observed, the trans organizations of Sanggar Swara, IWAYO, KEBAYA, and Al-Fatah have become examples of how an organization is able to build a movement from the start. It all began from the common conflict of heteronormativity, and the common issue of trans women and lack of education building their identity and common purpose through empowerment programs, and finally having dense informal networks from either international organizations, local organizations or individuals to be a part of social change.

3.4 Trans Women and the Feminist Movement

Furthermore, trans women communities have worked side by side with feminism to fight heteronormativity. As Emi Koyama mentioned: “It (transfeminism) stands up for trans and non-trans women alike and asks non-trans women to stand up for trans women in return”. As stated in the previous chapter that this movement does not want to replace feminism, but rather this movement extends the feminist movement. The transfeminism movement itself embodies feminist coalition politics that consist of different women’s backgrounds (Koyama, 2003, 242). Moreover, Serano has explained how feminists should not only focus on female body image issues, and transgender activists should not only focus on binary norms because gender equity can only be achieved towards the empowerment of femininity. (Serano, 2016, 16). In addition, Serano has explained transfeminism which is based on the core of feminism, and it is linked with the feminist movement, especially the sex-positive feminist movement, post-modern/poststructuralism and intersectionality and that the movement is basically an extension of feminism and a fight against oppression and sexism. (Serano, 2013, kindle: 707)

In Indonesia, trans women are an essential part of feminism and vice versa. Ms. Rebecca Nyuei confirmed this by saying that feminism and trans women are both marginalized in Indonesian society. They are being discriminated against, and there has been a lot of physical and sexual violence that ciswomen, queer women endure, as so do trans women. Owing to the fact that they are going against the same enemy, which is the patriarchy. And as we can understand, the values that the Indonesian feminism movement has gone beyond traditional feminist issues. The movement touches on the problems of the LGBT community, environment, human rights, race, religion, and labor. Indonesia's feminist movement uses the intersectionality approach when it comes to feminism. When we were marching, or gathering

we are not only supported by feminist groups, but also by human rights and democracy, and also labor groups. Even though some people in these labor groups might resent the idea of working alongside trans women. However, it is a challenge that trans women must face, since in this movement not all individuals are as open-minded as others (Nyuei 2018). In addition, the women movement and trans women movement have been trying to integrate through The National Commission on Violence Against Women in which they have been including trans women in their campaign, and give a voice to trans women's issues. (National Commission on Violence against Women, 2019)

Ms. Rebecca has stated in the interview: *“Trans women are an important part of the feminist movement because as we understand that the society considers us as man, and we are supposed to be having masculine behavior, this act (becoming a trans woman) is shaming and insulting the patriarchy which becomes the reason of why the society is dismissing trans women. That is why, trans women are cooperating with women and the feminist movement, to destroy patriarchy. As simple as this. If Feminism is about fighting on the issue of equality, and you do not want to help minority groups being oppressed, and you are still using the “sex at birth” approach to fight in the name of feminism, then you are simply not a feminist”* This statement clearly in line with what transfeminism believes that the movement is about fighting various forms of sexism and that transfeminism is an expansion of feminism. This was agreed by Mrs. Vinolia when I asked her about their opinions on trans women and the connection to feminism. She has clarified that the link that trans women and the feminist movement have is significant because feminists are an ally to trans women by helping them and defending them (Vinolia, 2019)

All of these have been confirmed by many feminist platforms all over social media, and feminist organizations on the field. Social media has become a significant platform for feminism to give awareness on the issue of sex and gender. (Jurnal Perempuan, 2018) One social media platform with the username *@feminisyogya* gave an answer to my question regarding the relationship between the Indonesian Feminist movement and the LGBT movement. They responded that the LGBT community and feminist movement have the same purpose which is to create gender equality and that is also meant to protect the LGBT because they believe that we all have the right to be treated as humans. Another social media platform called *@indonesiafeminis* has also given an online platform in their discussion and interview with trans women, as a way to educate a bigger audience on the issue of trans rights. (Indonesia Feminis, 2018).

Furthermore, the values that the Indonesian feminism movement has goes beyond traditional feminist issues. The movement touches on the problems of the LGBT community, environment, human rights, race, religion, and labor. Indonesia's feminist movement uses the intersectionality approach when it comes to feminism. This is proven by what Ms. Rebecca has said in the interview, that when they are marching, or gathering they are not only supported by feminist groups, but also by human rights and democracy, and also labor groups, even though some people in these labor group might resent the idea of working alongside trans women. However, it is a challenge that trans women must face, since in this movement not all individuals are as open-minded as others. (Rebecca, 2018). Consequently, an expansion of transfeminism movement is very much needed in Indonesia, because these examples are proof that feminism and trans movement together are able to make the impact stronger. Furthermore, the women movement and trans women movement have been trying to integrate through The National Commission on Violence Against Women in which they have included trans women in their campaign, and have given a voice to trans women's issues.

Ms. Rebecca has said in the interview: *"Trans women are an important part of the feminist movement, because as we understand that the society considers us as man, and we are supposed to be having masculine behavior. This act (becoming a trans woman) is shaming and insulting the patriarchy; this is the reason why society is dismissing trans women. As a result, trans women are cooperating with women and the feminist movement in order to destroy patriarchy. As simple as this. If Feminism is about fighting on the issue of equality, and you do not want to help minority groups being oppressed, and you are still using the "sex at birth" approach to fight in the name of feminism, then you are simply not a feminist"* This statement is clearly in line with what transfeminism believes that the movement is about fighting various forms of sexism and that transfeminism is an expansion of feminism This was agreed by Mrs. Vinolia when I asked her about her opinions on trans women and the connection to feminism. She has stated that the link that trans women and the feminist movement have is significant because feminists are an ally to trans women by helping them and defending them (Vinolia, 2019)

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movement. They responded that the LGBT community and feminist movement have the same purpose which is to create gender equality and that is also meant to protect the LGBT because they believe that we all have the right to be treated as humans. Another social media platform called @indonesiafeminis also has given an online platform in their discussion and interview to trans women, as a way to educate a bigger audience on the issue of trans rights. (Indonesia Feminis, 2018). It is understood that in Indonesia, transgender issues are included in feminist issues, in fact, trans women are a big part of Indonesia's feminist movement. Indonesia's feminist movements have given platforms and voices. Both trans women and feminists work on programs and protest to raise awareness of trans women's rights. Feminist media in Indonesia, Magdalene.co.id tries to promote trans issues in each of their posts and articles (Magdalene.co, 2019). Feminist Journal called Journal Perempuan also writes on the issue of trans women in Indonesia (Jurnal Perempuan, 2019). Trans women supported feminists and so does the feminist movement,

The story of these empowerment programs, and cooperation with feminism, and trans women programs regarding health, and violence are in line with what Emi Koyama has described transfeminism and Donatella Porta and Mario Diani have explained about Social Movement. If we analyze further through the lens of social movement as stated by Donatella Porta Della and Mario Diani's Literature on *Social Movement: An Introduction*, a social movement is a process of social change. First, the process needs conflictual relations that they promote or oppose, and second, the process needs a dense informal network where individuals and organized actors exchange resources and still maintain their autonomy. Third, there is a collective identity; it develops and links other actors to a cause. It is strongly associated with connectedness. It brings a sense of common purpose and shared commitment. They also explain that collective identity can be developed in different occurrences, whether it is private or public (Porta & Diani, 2006, Ch 1.2.1).

As seen from the stories above, trans women do not wait for the existing organization to help them. They identify heteronormativity and patriarchy as the issues that cause the problem. They know the issues of violence, health, education, and economic empowerment are especially important. So they built communities, and programs around these issues. They provide a safe house, trans women crisis center and legal aids, trans school, and trans-Islamic school. Moreover, As Emi Koyama has explained, transfeminism believes in fighting trans phobia and sexism in the economic, social and political areas (Koyama, 2003, 255). The empowerment programs of these organizations have helped trans women to become

empowered economically so that they can establish their own small business, and change their occupation to escape the poverty line. Courses of how to manage your business, or how to handle your money that is provided in Sanggar Swara trans school (Nyuei,2018) and training courses in Al-Fatah, such as cooking, sewing, and makeup class, continue to be organized to empower trans people (Shinta, 2019). Other programs organized by KABAY organization are the health awareness programs, HIV/AIDS prevention, monthly/weekly checkup, and healthcare service.

At the same time, the communities and organizations use this empowerment program to reach out to trans women and help them gain their identity and confidence in free and encouraging space. Moreover, these organizations have given impacts on people outside trans communities by organizing dissemination to students and working alongside other organizations. Trans communities are trying to fight against the heteronormative norms that the society believes in, and giving the students a new understanding of gender, gender expression, sex, and sexuality. This effort has positively affected trans women, students and people around the area. In addition, in the fight against heteronormativity, it is perceivable how trans women also work alongside the feminist movement, through social media, protest, and dissemination.

3.5 Trans Man and the fight against heteronormativity

Despite the challenges of data that is discussed in the previous chapter when it comes to trans men, transfeminism and social movement, this subchapter would like to discuss the condition of trans men under heteronormative Indonesia. This subchapter would also discuss other issues that trans men face in fighting heteronormativity, and how they fight the issue. The impact of heteronormativity does not merely affect trans women; it can affect trans man. as well. It is important to consider how this heteronormative system has affected trans men, how this system has a negative impact on trans communities, and how this is linked with trans movement.

First, it is to be acknowledged that trans men experience discrimination and stigma as trans women do. The reasons why trans men experience discrimination are similar to why trans women suffer from discrimination. Factors, such as culture, politics, and religious norms have become the reasons for the discrimination for trans men in Indonesia. Indonesian trans men are considered sexual deviants, unnatural and contradicting the will of God. There is also the reason of gender binary, and almost all Indonesian daily life is influenced by the binary system

that only recognizes male and female (Gordon and Pratama, 2017 1286-1288), These reasons are in line with what has been discussed in the first part of this chapter. The heteronormative values along with religious institutions and majority politics have pushed and discriminated trans men further from the society, even though, trans men are part of Indonesian culture as discussed.

This binary system has created many obstacles for trans men's lives. As stated by Mr. Caesar Abrisam, a trans male activist, in his interview online with the Indonesian Feminist YouTube platform, trans men only become visible to the public eye in 2014. So, it is relatively new to Indonesian society. The problem is that many Indonesian societies do not understand what a trans man is. They only understand transgenderism as in a male to female context. This poses a problem for trans men, as they are being questioned regarding their identity on a regular basis; they have to face an administrative situation like identity cards, airport security, and many others. Trans men receive discrimination from people around them, aside from being stigmatized, and kicked out by their family. Many of the families have a misidentified trans man as a lesbian and force them to marry a man, or even worse, some families try to rape trans men as a way to correct them so that they will get pregnant and then force to get married as a girl, and have a family. In addition, Caesar Abrisam has talked about how he and his friends tried to have a job while they were fresh graduates from university. Some of his friends revealed the information that they were trans men when they were being interviewed, and then they failed to get the job. Analyzing the environment of work before coming out as a trans man to his coworkers. (Indonesia Feminis, 2018).

Those obstacles are the reasons many trans men in the country are trying to be secretive because of the social consequences that they have to face in the country. Since the majority of Indonesians do not understand the concept of female to male trans identity, many trans individuals, are trying to pass the standard of communities. Many trans individuals in Indonesia use “passing” as the term among trans communities. Passing, according to Magdalene.co.id, an Indonesian feminist news outlet, is a condition in which people around trans individuals cannot identify them as either trans men or trans women. This “Passing” system is created by the binary system of male and female; a system that is quite dominant in Indonesia’s society. So, to guarantee their safety in Indonesian society and to be safe in their work environment, “passing” is their choice to do (Magdalene.co, 2018). This is clearly something that Emi Koyama is concerned about in her text, in terms of trans individuals that have to prove themselves as a real man or real woman. Koyama has also addressed how trans individuals

have to pass certain binary standards because of heterosexist patriarchy and ask transfeminism to examine this (Koyama, 2003, 244). Additionally, in the first section of this chapter, it has been explained how this corrective violence performed by family, or how the state is used to punish those who fall out of the binary system (Serano, 2016, 12).

With that condition, it can be concluded that what trans men have to face is also crucial to be addressed. However, as said before in this chapter, I have encountered difficulties to see how trans men are fighting the heteronormative norms and discrimination in this society. Lack of studies and information have become obstacles for me to see trans man activities struggling to fight heteronormativity. Although there are several trans men accounts in social media, lack of data and information, a movement has yet to emerge among trans men. This has been confirmed by Mr. Ryan Korbarri the chairperson of Arus Pelangi, an Indonesian Federation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexuals, Intersex Community. It is a national LGBT+ organization that was established in 2006. In an article from Magdalene.co entitled “*Berempati dengan Trans Laki-Laki, Menyuarakan yang tak terdengar*”/empathize with trans man, voicing the unheard. In the article, he explained how: Gay and Lesbians experience violence because of their sexual orientation, trans women because of their gender expression, and as for trans men he said: “*the problem that trans man community has is that there is lack of existence, and involvement by trans men communities in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender movement (LGBT) there are several internal conflicts that have made this community cannot put their voice together in one issue*”. He continued by saying: “*All these times trans men have only discussed the issue of transition to become a man, but other issues like access, body image, and other crucial things never made it into a discussion*” (Magdalene.co,2018)

However, despite the problem discussed above, trans men do have community all-around social media to promote equality, such as an Instagram accounts *transmen.id* and *transpria* where Indonesian trans men share their stories, promote equality, and also help share awareness on the issue of violence and discrimination that trans men and trans women face in Indonesia. Activists like Mr. Caesar Abrisam stated further in his interview with the Feminist Indonesia YouTube channel. He said that trans men are trying to work with the feminist movement and trans women movement. He explained how “*trans men have approached feminists and told them how they grew up as a woman in the past; they experienced difficulties to voice their opinions. Now, after they have transitioned to a man, they feel like they do not have room to speak on the feminist issue because they have been identified as a man, one thing*

that we would like to remind feminist is, trans men experience the same discrimination as women. Once our sex at birth is identified by people. I mean we are glad to be the supporting brothers of the movement because we are treated as a man, but please give us a room to speak about our struggle and difficulties as well“ (Indonesia Feminis, 2018).

This is the condition that trans men face in Indonesia. As told from the stories above, the discriminations and violence that happens to trans men have similar factors with what trans women are currently dealing with. Although the information of trans men are difficult to retrieve, and even though their movement is not as big as trans women movement or other movements in the Indonesian LGBT community, I have gathered some pieces of information indicating that there is a fight from trans men to eradicate the hate and violence caused by heteronormativity through social media and through feminist movement. They are trying to let the LGBT, the feminist movement and the Indonesian society understand the problems and issues that they have to deal with and how joining forces are able to help trans men communities. Thus, as transfeminism believes in a liberation (Koyama, 2003, 242) there should be a safe environment for all. Therefore, trans men have the right to own the transfeminist movement as well, to liberate them from oppression and discriminations that happen in the country

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

In regards to the previous chapters, it can be concluded that transfeminism can be applied to the conditions of Indonesian trans women activities. Several points support this statement taken from the previous chapters. Indonesia's current condition reflects the issues that are discussed concerning transfeminism. Transfeminism itself is a system of putting trans issues into a feminist perspective. (Serano, 2013:677). It is a movement by and for trans women who view their liberation to be linked with the liberation of all women and beyond (Koyama: 2003, 245). The movement emerged out of social movement roots which is a particular social process, consisting of mechanism in which the actors engage in a collective action where they are involved with a conflictual relation with clearly identified opponents, linked by informal networks, and share a collective identity (Porta and Diani, 2006: 364)

As Emi Koyama, Serano, and Wieringa discussed in chapter two, the heterosexist system has created multiple forms of sexism that have marginalized non-binary individuals. The system is called heteronormativity. Saskia Wieringa explained that this system of normativity is included in daily life, including institutions, laws, regulations and reproductive lives of the society, and influence moral and personal people's lives as well. (Wieringa, 2012, 518). This system created multiple forms of sexism such as cissexism, a belief where males and females are the only valid gender identity, where transphobia is the fear of and discrimination against trans individuals (Serano, 2016:12). These forms of sexism are rooted in Indonesia's society and have marginalized trans women communities in Indonesia.

Government institutions and society have discriminated against trans women and limit their rights in the country. There are issues of violence, economic violence, education, health, and an identity card that trans women have to deal with nationwide. They are being outcast from their homes for coming out as trans, they do not have any documents and live outside their homes. At the same time, they need an identification card to have access to public facilities. Trans women cannot access education because of their marginalized position. Even if they do, they will be bullied (Rebecca Nyuei, 2018). Laws are being misused to control and scare trans women. On paper, the government has to protect every citizen, but in reality, there are no protection programs for trans women (Oetomo, 2018). Moreover, since many of them cannot get access to better education, many of trans women end up working in a low-income job, such as busking on the streets and becoming a sex worker (Nyuei,2018).

Trans women are even forbidden to access their house of prayer without being told to dress as a man (Shinta, 2019). Furthermore, when the government offers assistance, surprisingly they will only provide one-time training, and tools with further impact, sometimes the training is limited (Ruly, 2018). The problem is that trans women have difficulty to survive due to their economic condition, let alone to open a business (Vinolia, 2018). The reason behind Indonesia's heteronormative condition is mainly because of religion and politics. Religions are a very important part of Indonesian society, and they are used to control and spread fear over society and binary individuals. Religion is used by the heteronormative system to oversee the system and punish non-binary individuals (Wieringa, 2012:525). This then formed a chain, where the religious majority rule over the minority and control their state of being without involving trans women's voice (Ruly, 2018). Besides not letting trans women get involved in the decision making that concerns them, the majority has created a narrative that LGBT is a western product (Vinolia, 2018). However, history has revealed different facts; there are many examples of tribes like the Bissu in Bugis, a priest with three genders tradition in Sulawesi and Langgar Lanang in Java, a tradition that tells a story of a man dancing like a woman (Vice, 2017). This is what Indonesia's condition currently in. They are trying to marginalized trans women because upper-middle-class society does not like to see trans women in public (Oetomo, 2018).

The reason why these situations are connected with the application of transfeminism in Indonesia is that these conditions are what transfeminism is trying to fight against. Emi Koyama has mentioned in her trans manifesto that there are three principles that transfeminism believes. Transfeminism believes that each individual has the right to define their identity. It also believes that no political, medical, or religious authorities can control trans individuals. Lastly, transfeminism believes that no one should be coerced on their personal decision regarding their gender expression (Koyama, 2003:244). According to Koyama, transfeminism believes that violence against trans women is an important issue to address by working alongside the existing organizations and creating protection and safety programs for trans women. In addition, she also discussed the issue of health and economic violence. Koyama agrees that it is important for trans women to fight for these rights because many trans women are being denied healthcare and marginalized economically just because they are different. (Koyama, 2003, 252-255). This is what makes transfeminism can be applied in Indonesia. The situation of the heterosexist has created a movement that is in line with the principle of transfeminism as a social movement.

We can see from the activities of trans women in Indonesia that I have had the chance to interview which are : Mrs. Ruli and Mrs. Vinolia Wakijo from Kebaya, (Trans women Family Yogyakarta) Ms. Alya from IWAYO (Yogyakarta's Trans Women Association) and Pesantren Al-Fatah (Al-Fatah Trans Women Islamic Boarding School), All three of the organizations are from Jogjakarta. Mrs. Rebecca Nyuei, from Sanggar Swara Jakarta, and Mr. Dede Oetomo from GAYa Nusantara Surabaya. These organizations have significant impact towards the trans movement and trans movement in Indonesia.

First is IWAYO, a trans rights organization which provides assistance for trans women regarding their daily issues, and offers help to strengthen their family groups (Alya, 2018). KEBAYA is fighting for the healthcare of trans women and helps and provides health check-up and issues on sexual disease and HIV-AIDS virus. KEBAYA is also fighting for trans women in Jogjakarta for their identity cards and provides training for them (Ruly, 2018). Another organization called Al-Fatah Muslim boarding school is providing spaces for trans women for praying and learning about Islam. This organization provides training for trans women to give them the skills to learn so that they can have better and safer jobs. Furthermore, the Al-Fatah Islamic boarding school provides a safe house and trans women crisis center for trans women with legal issues, and cases of violence, in response to the 2016 moral panic. (Shinta, 2019) These three organizations also provide advocacy for students and other parts of society, and fortunately, it has given an impact on the students and society around them to respect and appreciate trans women more. This is also what Ms. Rebecca Nyuei has done with her organization of Sanggar Swara in Jakarta. Her organization provides education on the economic issue, skills, and lessons on human rights for trans women through a pageant program. In addition, her organization has participated in discussions with feminist movements, women march, and also working together with social media feminist movement to raise awareness on trans rights. The Sanggar Swara provides advocacy as well for students and society (Nyuei, 2018).

Mr. Dede Oetomo, with GAYa Nusantara, a pioneer of LGBT organizations in the country also provides advocacy on the issue of LGBT for schools and universities. Besides that, he does advocacy to societies, governmental institutions working alongside international organizations such as Human Rights Watch, to report the condition of LGBT rights in Indonesia, and spread awareness on this issue. Mr. Dede Oetomo has connections with the trans movement all over Indonesia. He is close to Mrs. Kety, one of the trans women in Ternate, eastern Indonesia. He has informed that Mrs. Kety is running empowerment programs, skills,

and training, such as make-up and cooking class for other trans women. Mrs. Kety is also trying to manage a good relationship with the local government (Oetomo, 2018).

Furthermore, trans women not only support other trans women and create trans spaces but also fight alongside feminism, as they both are fighting the same roots, which is patriarchy. Moreover, feminism gives assistance concerning trans women's advocacy throughout social media, discussions, and women march so that education on the issue of trans women can reach the further mass. Feminism in Indonesia has always stated that feminism is not only about women, but also for all people, with all genders and expressions. Feminist movements include trans women voices in their journals, media, articles and university lectures in Indonesia. *Magdalene.co.id* and *Journal Perempuan* are two examples of feminists media that give information and advocacy on the issue of trans rights and liberation.

The stories above indicate that what Indonesian trans women do is transfeminism. Indonesian trans women have created safe spaces and a safe environment for fellow trans women. They can freely be who they are and can access education, even though it is a non-formal education, they can build up their skills and be empowered by their identity, they can pray easily without having to "pass as a man", and they can be legally protected, and escape the violence of society. These organizations also work with local and international organizations to reach the objective of fighting for trans rights. Some of them are still negotiating with the Indonesian government concerning the right to earn identity cards and the basic needs of Indonesian citizens. Trans women are also a big part of the feminist community here in Indonesia.

They are helping each other fighting the same enemy known as patriarchy. The writings of Emi Koyama, Julia Serano, Mario Diani, Donatella Porta, and Saskia Wieringa that form transfeminism as a social movement to weaken heteronormativity, can be read throughout the stories of trans women in Indonesia. How they build their organizations, caring and protecting trans women working with feminist groups, while also spreading the awareness of trans rights are all in line with the principle of transfeminism. However, some issues have a different context, such as the issue of feminist and trans women; how some feminists have denied trans women femininity, and called out male privilege, as they can be read from the stories that do not happen in Indonesia. Feminists and trans women communities are working together to fight the patriarchal system. In fact, in many discussions, women march, and all-around feminist media, are working to promote inclusiveness for all the entire LGBT community. And this is

what transfeminism is defined as a trans perspective on feminism, creating inclusiveness for trans women.

For trans men, there are several things that can be concluded. First, the comprehension of Indonesia's society on transgenderism as the only male to female has caused a negative impact on trans men and trans women. To trans women and trans men, this understanding means more discrimination. Both become the victims of violence and discrimination; trans women become more visible, and more prone to attack, while trans men become the victims of misidentifying rape, and forced marriage. All incidents are in the act of norms of heteronormativity to control trans man and trans women gender's expression. Second, besides having to deal with violence and discrimination, trans men have difficulty to obtain information about themselves to make society understand about trans men since they are indeed part of the society. This is something that needed to be concerned about. Any individuals that are in transition or thinking about transition, consider the information very important so that they can safely undergo their transitions. At the same time, society needs to be informed about trans men and trans women, and how they become part of society. Fortunately, trans men make use of the social media platform for this situation. Even though they have to deal with challenges to form a movement, they are trying to accommodate fellow trans men, and also finding networks through feminism, aside from some difficulties faced by trans men when trying to integrate with the feminist movement. For trans men, this is only the beginning of the movement. What they are trying to do is expanding the feminist movement into a trans perspective because that is what transfeminism is all about. As what Emi Koyama and Julia Serano have said, transfeminism is and expand trans perspective over feminist movement and that is what trans men and trans women are trying to do

Furthermore, as the case of trans men, I do hope for a future recommendation that there will be more research on the issue of trans men because I do realize that what I have researched is not in-depth and might not yet represent the emerging movement of trans men in the country. However, seeing a glimpse of the stories and conditions, it is also important to raise awareness and more visibility to trans men and their condition in heteronormative Indonesia with their emerging movement. Therefore it is recommended to do further research about trans men communities, accessing their problems, and understanding how they create social movement while claiming transfeminism.

Regarding the stories of struggle, trans women and trans men are working hard to break the binary system, stigma, assumptions of patriarchy, and heteronormativity. These systems destroy the Indonesian society, as they create barriers around individuals. These conditions and situations are resulted from many factors and actors, as explained above. The majority and Minority politics play a big role in the system, as well. What is happening in the country right now is a very important call for Indonesian societies, government institutions, and government officials. There is a call of action for the government to respond to trans women and men communities' pleas to access their rights as an Indonesian citizen and to be free to live without being fear of violence. The government should create protection policies over marginalized groups, do well-prepared research before giving training, or programs, and most of all get trans individuals involved in the decision-making process they go through to make policies concerning trans communities.

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