



The Threat of The LGBT Community in Indonesia And How Muslims Should Act

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Abstract

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) has become a polemic in global politics due to the rapid growth of this movement in various parts of the world. The entry of LGBT in Indonesia is considered as the actualization of freedom over sexual orientation. On the other hand, LGBT also receives a lot of opposition because Indonesia is a country with a majority Muslim population. This paper aims to explain how massive the LGBT movement is in Indonesia and how Islamic organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah deal with it. This study uses the concept of the role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) as a tool to analyze these problems. The method used is a qualitative method using literature studies through online searches. The recommendation of this research is that Islamic organizations should work more comprehensively to curb the growth of the LGBT movement in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Indonesia, Muslim Groups, Threat of LGBT.*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the LGBT phenomenon has been in the public spotlight after several countries in the world, both Western and Asian countries, legalized same-sex marriage. In Indonesia, the majority of people see LGBT existence as a negative, abnormal, sinful act, and damaging to social and religious norms. However, until now Indonesia does not have a law regulating homosexuals other than Law No. 1 of 1974 concerning marriage. The law regulates legal and recognized marriages as marriages between heterosexual couples (Triastuti, 2021).

In Indonesia, the LGBT phenomenon cannot be categorized as a criminal act because there are still pros and cons regarding the issue. Many parties recognize the existence of LGBT

as based on human rights, while on the other hand there are those who reject it on the basis of cultural and religious norms (Manik et al., 2016). Despite facing rejection from the majority of the public, LGBT development in Indonesia continues to increase over time. According to a survey conducted by the CIA in 2015, Indonesia is the country with the most LGBT population after China, India, Europe, and America. In addition, several independent survey agencies at home and abroad stated that 3% of the Indonesian population is LGBT. This number means 7.5 million of the country's 250 million inhabitants (Santoso, 2016).

Indonesia has diverse religious organizations, including those owned by Islam such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah. The presence of the organization is expected to be able to find solutions to LGBT problems in Indonesia. To analyze the above problems researchers use the concept of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). NGOs play a role in community development programs (Development Program). NGOs usually provide assistance, education and provide economic assistance to the community. In terms of politics and policy, NGOs do a lot of advocacy or efforts to fight for certain issues. Advocacy activities can be carried out in various forms such as campaigns, protests, debates, and publications. In addition to advocacy, lobbying activities are also carried out by NGOs to policymakers, both government and international organizations, as a step to support the struggle fought by NGOs (Ahmad & Potter, 2006). In general, the purpose of this study is to explain how massive the LGBT movement in Indonesia is and how NU and Muhammadiyah should act.

METHODS

This research uses qualitative research methods as a research technique that helps researchers interpret data in descriptive form or words. Through this qualitative type of research method, namely to gain scientific insights related to problem issues and provide detailed explanations of the research topics raised (Bakry, 2016). The narrative analysis method as part of the qualitative research method is used to understand and analyze the perspectives and behaviors of the largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia, namely NU and Muhammadiyah, in response to the LGBT phenomenon that is increasingly pervasive in the norm and cultural system in Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

LGBT ACTIVITIES IN INDONESIA

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LGBT in Indonesia should be seen as an iceberg phenomenon because what appears on the surface seems small, while what has not been revealed is very significant. From the early 2010s to 2016 the growth and new LGBT community experienced a significant increase (Ridwan & Wu, 2018). The LGBT community has spread throughout Indonesia, especially in major cities. For example, in Bandung there are about 6,000 LGBT members. Meanwhile, in Medan the number of LGBT has reached 1,680, most of them are high school and undergraduate graduates. Meanwhile, in Banda Aceh, LGBT members were reported as many as 500 people (Muhibbuthabry, 2019). In general, Indonesian people consider LGBT to be taboo and oppose this behavior because it is considered incompatible with religious and cultural norms (Arifin & Satria, 2020). The two largest community organizations in Indonesia, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, categorically reject LGBT and all matters related to it. LGBT is considered a form of deviation and violates Human Rights (HAM).

According to these two organizations the principle of human rights is "keeping offspring" (hifd an-nasl) thus LGBT behavior is so contrary to that principle that it should be rejected (Muttaqin, 2016). In addition, NU and Muhammadiyah also consider that LGBT is a behavior that is not in accordance with human nature (Putra, 2022). Although the majority of Indonesians reject LGBT behavior, the development of the LGBT community in this country grows year by year. Here are some of the LGBT movements and its activities in Indonesia:

Ardhanary Institute

Ardhanary Institute is a movement that was founded on November 14, 2005. The purpose of forming this organization is to build positive public sentiment towards Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender (LBT). More than that, the Ardhanary Institute is a safe space for those who are disenfranchised by their sexual orientation. To achieve this goal the Ardhanary Institute has made a number of efforts for the creation of safe spaces for those who are marginalized.

Some of the things that this movement has done to carry out its vision and mission are advocacy, socialization, and empowerment movements (Shelter Asia, 2019). In advocating Ardhanary Institute takes a scheme of approach by being present in the community. The strengthening of this network is also evidenced by the increasing number of lesbians because this program monitors the importance of personal relationship involvement that occurs in society as a form of achieving targets (Setiawati, S., 2017). With the slogan "Free To Be Me", the Ardhanary Institute campaigned to the world that sexual diversity is a right given to humans in expression. Not only that, the statement that you love yourself more is also one of the

programs carried out by the Ardhanary Institute. In essence, the forum given by the Ardhanary Institute has a large scale, looking at the timeline that has been recorded in Setiawati yang's work entitled *Social Network of Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Organizations: A Case Study of the Ardhanary Institute Organization in Jakarta (2017)* the network owned by this movement even reached an international forum because of the many representations of the Ardhanary Institute Indonesia in the event. Furthermore, institutions that champion the existence of women's rights and progressive sexual diversification have created units that assist in carrying out their duties, principals, and functions as a place of refuge for the marginalized. The units are classified into three (Setiawati, S., 2017). First, the Legal Aid Society (LBH) which in this case assists the process legally with the constitution in force therein. The services facilitated by the Ardhanary Institute in this regard include consultation and assistance in cases that intersect with applicable law. Second, the Integrated Service Center for Women and Children Empowerment (P2TP2A) as a service for those who provide services in the form of psychological and medical dialogue provided at several points in Indonesia. Third, the Integrated Crisis Center (CCP) and the Integrated Service Center (PPT) are services that provide rapid response services when there are cases of violence in general and domestic violence (KDRT). It contains mitigation to conduct medical examinations and counseling. conduct training on the importance of having an understanding of the struggle for the rights granted to us as human beings. The Ardhanary Institute has issued a number of reports and policy briefs on anti-violence against women. A clear proof of the Ardhanary Institute's rejection of violence against women and marginalized people is the publication of a book entitled "Yogyakarta Principles"

Arus Pelangi (Rainbow Flow)

Arus Pelangi is a non-profit organization founded on March 10, 2006 in Jakarta with a federation that focuses on advocating for the rights of individuals and communities with SOGIESC (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Expression and Sexual Characteristic) oppressed in Indonesia. Arus Pelangi adheres to the values of non-discrimination, pluralism, non-violence, independence, inclusion, solidarity, collectiveness, democracy, transparency and accountability. Arus Pelangi's mission is: (1) to encapsulate, empower, and strengthen oppressed people based on SOGIESC, (2) to take an active role in the policy change process that protects the human rights of oppressed people based on SOGIESC, and (3) to play an active role in the process of raising public awareness and the process of accepting SOGIESC-based people in the midst of society (Arus Pelangi, 2019).

It currently has 20 members of the organization in 11 provinces in Indonesia. Some of the members of the Rainbow Current federation organizations include:

1. Violet Grey
2. Leto
3. Tarena
4. Cangkang Queer
5. Gaylam
6. Transvoice
7. Sanggar Swara
8. Yayasan Srikandi Sejati
9. Forum Komunikasi Waria Indonesia
10. Forum Komunikasi Waria DKI Jakarta
11. Ikatan Waria Yogyakarta
12. People Like Us Satu Hati
13. Rumah Pelangi Indonesia
14. Sanubari Sulawesi Utara
15. Komunitas Sehati Makassar
16. Kerukunan Waria Bissu Sulawesi Selatan

Figure 1.1 Distribution of capacity building of LGBT individuals/communities in the 2019 Rainbow Current

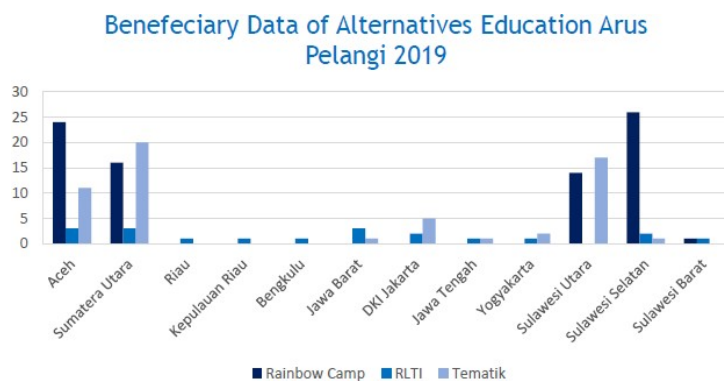


Source: Rainbow Flow Annual Report, 2019.

Arus Pelangi has a campaign program that promotes basic human rights and eliminates discriminatory actions against LGBT people. In 2019, an alternative education series for LGBTI individuals and communities in Indonesia has been designed by Arus Pelangi. The stages are as follows: First, basic education or also called Rainbow Camp/TransCamp/LBQ Camp/Miss Transpuan/ Transchool. This stage aims to increase the self-acceptance of LGBTI individuals and become the frontline in the LGBTI movement in Indonesia. The materials provided include SOGIESC, Human Rights, Roots of Bullying, SOGIESC-based Bullying, LGBTI Welfare and Quality of Life. Second, the further education series or called Rainbow Leaders Training Indonesia (RLTI). This stage aims to strengthen frontliners/leaders or prospective leaders from LGBTI communities/organizations in Indonesia so that they can lead and carry out their organization.

This education is carried out for a minimum of 6 months. The material provided is in the form of History of the LGBT movement, Critical Thinking Methods, Situation Analysis, Holistic Security, Advocacy, Campaigns, organizing, Appreciative Leadership, Organizational governance (program governance and financial management). In general, there are 3 activities, namely; intensive training, national internships and linking and learning. Third, thematic education that aims to increase the capacity of frontliners related to several topics related to strengthening the LGBTI movement. Such as, TOT, paralegal training, counselor training, holistic safety training, and others. Throughout 2019 Arus Pelang has carried out 5 times basic education, 1 time further education, and 4 times thematic education. The number of beneficiaries is 158 people in 11 provinces. Through this capacity strengthening, 2 new collectives were formed, namely the North Sumatra Transpuan Association (PETRASU) and Rumah Kita in Bengkulu Province. This training program was organized by Arus Pelangi to raise awareness among LGBT people about the importance of fighting for the basic rights of LGBT people. In addition, this program also aims to increase public awareness so that they are willing to know and accept LGBT people in society.

Figure 1.2 Rainbow Flow alternative education beneficiary data for 2019



Source: Rainbow Flow Annual Report, 2019

In addition to conducting campaigns, Arus Pelangi also conducts advocacy. Arus Pelangi has two types of advocacy programs, namely casuistic advocacy and public policy advocacy. Casuistic advocacy is the practice of handling cases against LGBT people, both litigation and non-litigation. Meanwhile, public policy advocacy is a series of legal remedies carried out by Arus Pelangi against any discriminatory government policies, for example the rejection of the Anti-Pornography and Pornography Bill (RUU-APP) (Gaol, 2016).

NU AND MUHAMMADIYAH'S RESPONSES TOWARD THE ANTI-LGBT MOVEMENTS IN INDONESIA

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah are the two largest Islamic mass organizations in Indonesia. Since its establishment, these two mass organizations have played a major role in coloring Indonesia's development in various aspects. Judging from the similarity in the background of its founder, NU and Muhammadiyah usually have similarities in religious fatwas although often in some technicalities they are different. As Islamic organizations that were born and continue to uphold the value of nationalism, both of them take part in a distinctive pattern. NU is known for the development of classical Islamic boarding schools, while Muhammadiyah takes part in modern school education. In the growing social issues NU and Muhammadiyah give their own attention, including regarding LGBT issues. Both share the view that understandings and movements that allow or recognize the existence of LGBT are considered a form of perversion that denies human nature. The two organizations also agreed that LGBT is not related to human rights, which are entitled to legal protection. But even if these actions are deviant, LGBT people who are human beings should not accept acts of discrimination and

harassment of any kind. Referring to the results of the NU and Muhammadiyah studies, LGBT is categorized as a mental illness that needs to be cured and prevented from re-existence through various treatments such as rehabilitation, comprehensive studies, and legal remedies involving the role of the government and society in various circles (Putra, 2022). These efforts, of course, are also sought by the two organizations with their respective movement.

NU'S EFFORTS TO CONTAIN LGBT

Nadhlatul Ulama (NU), which means "the revival of ulama", is a socio-religious organization founded by kyai Hasyim Asy'ari on January 31, 1926 AD. According to data released by Indonesian Political Indicators in 2019, NU's membership as an Islamic mass organization in Indonesia ranked first, amounting to 52.8 percent. This large number of followers cannot be separated from the characteristics of cultural movements that maintain local traditions and align them with Islamic values with the content of Aswaja's basic principles of tawazun (balanced), tawassuth (moderate), i'tidal (fair) and tasamuh (tolerant).

These four principles, according to Kiai Manan, are indicators of the success of the NU movement in responding to the challenges of the times (Nawawi, 2019). As a large organization, NU established many institutions that served as implementers of its policies. In total, there are 18 institutions under the auspices of NU, where each of these institutions has its own role to handle certain community groups and those that require special handling (Taslina, 2020). NU also has autonomous bodies classified by age and professionalism around 13 bodies (Fauzi, 2022). In line with its views on LGBT, through these institutions and organizations NU actualizes its role in the solution of handling LGBT groups in society. Based on the searches carried out, the form of NU's efforts towards the LGBT phenomenon can be classified into two forms.

This is an effort to counteract the spread of LGBT understanding and efforts to assist the NU community towards groups that are already affected by LGBT. First, deterrence of the spread of LGBT understanding is carried out through actions such as campaigning, advocacy, and education. The educational campaign has been carried out by NU bodies at the youth level, IPNU (NU Student Association) and IPPNU (NU Women's Student Association), by holding a seminar entitled "The Role of Students in Responding to LGBT in the Era of Globalization" which was then followed by an explanation of rejecting LGBT and socializing the adverse effects of LGBT on other students (Firmansyah, 2016). The Da'iyah Association and the Muslimat Taklim Council (Hidmat) of NU Jabodetabek also took part in conducting studies on

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LGBT countermeasures in the FGD forum as an advocacy and education step for parents, especially mothers who are 'ula educators to restrain their children so as not to be trapped in LGBT problems (Mihrob, 2018).

To prevent the legalization of LGBT practices in Indonesia, in 2016 the NU party, the PKB, also encouraged the birth of an anti-same-sex marriage law. This is based on the principle of *hifdz al nafs*, namely guarding offspring. Second, it is Nu's community assistance efforts towards LGBT groups. It should be underlined that this mentoring activity is part of NU's humanitarian program which sees that the rights of a human being must be fulfilled even if he commits misconduct in religion. This mentoring program is carried out by the Nahdlatul Ulama Health Institute (LKNU) which includes LGBT issues in the HIV / AIDS prevention program. Seeing the vulnerabilities in the transmission of HIV/AIDS, LGBT is one of the types of groups that are at high risk of contracting venereal diseases. The HIV prevention program managed by NU has its own peculiarities.

The population reached is called the key population, including transvestites, women peddlers of sex (WPS), men who are customers of sex or also called high-risk men (LBT), men of sex with men (LSL), and users of injectable drugs (Penasun). The approach taken in key population groups to prevent transmission is carried out with practical measures such as providing communication, information and education / IEC information, providing tools to prevent risky sex behavior, namely condoms, giving sterile syringes to compilers, referrals for social rehabilitation services for compilers and referrals to HIV testing services (Puteranto, 2015).

One of these programs is run by SSR Fatayat NU together with Warga Peduli AIDS (WPA) and Puskesmas in Turen, Malang Regency by conducting a series of Mobile VCT (Volunteer Counseling Test) or HIV testing to local transgender key groups. The process starts from counseling, blood sampling, education related to the prevention and transmission of HIV / AIDS, and then provides assistance for patients who are indicated positive after the examination (bacamalang.com 2021). In addition to assistance in the health of production equipment, the right to education also needs to be felt by minority groups such as LGBT. This contribution was actually made by the Nahdlatul Ulama Islamic University (UNISNU), Jepara, which collaborated with the Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School, Yogyakarta, to run the Religious Charity Partnership Program at the pesantren. The program is planned for three years, from 2014 to 2016 with the aim of facilitating learning spaces and practicing Islam for waria who have difficulty obtaining equal learning and worship rights in society.

THE REALITY OF THE MUHAMMADIYAH MOVEMENT RESPONDING TO LGBT ISSUES

Muhammadiyah is one of the largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia founded by KH. Ahmad Dahlan on November 18, 1912 in Yogyakarta. Etymologically, the name of this organization is taken from the word "Muhammad" which is given *ya' nisbat* and contains the meaning of being a follower of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. This reflection of the source of the Qur'an and hadith is then manifested by the mission of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* in every movement (Argenti, 2017). For more than a century of its age, Muhammadiyah has focused its movement on multi-faceted with the application of a modern system, meaning that it is not rigid but still rational and democratic.

Regarding LGBT issues that are contrary to the moral values of Indonesian society, Muhammadiyah continued to examine this issue in the forum of the Tarjih and Tajdid Assembly (MTT) to strengthen its *ijtihad* before it was disseminated to be adopted as a legal provision by the supreme court. As a community organization, of course, Muhammadiyah's response is not only at the level of studying and benefiting. Muhammadiyah also responded with prevention and assistance efforts like NU. Because indeed these two organizations are two Islamic mass organizations that maintain the value of moderatism in Indonesia. Prevention efforts include protests against the presence of the United States Special Envoy to advance the human rights of LGBTQI+ groups in Indonesia. In addition, Muhammadiyah also strongly condemned the raising of the rainbow flag at the British embassy in Indonesia to commemorate anti-homophobic day.

That the raising of the flag indicates that the British Embassy does not respect the noble values of the religion and culture of the Indonesian nation. In the context of mentoring, the Muhammadiyah Regional Leadership (PWM) of Central Java has a superior program for marginalized groups, namely assisting waria and LGBT groups. To this marginalized group PWM Central Java pays special attention to helping them return to their *fitrah*. In addition to guiding waria and LGBT groups to return to the right path, Muhammadiyah also helps strengthen the economy, understand culture, and provide support. This proselytizing activity has been carried out for many years and is fairly successful. Hundreds of people from the two groups have returned to the right path.

Unfortunately, Muhammadiyah does not yet have a systematic design, where this superior program is only implemented in Central Java and is not applied nationally. Looking at the comparison of the LGBT movement with Islamic mass organizations above, LGBT groups play more of a campaign and advocacy role, especially by maximizing the digitalization function.

Meanwhile, NU and Muhammadiyah, although they have implemented several programs to fight the active LGBT movement, have not been effective and still lag behind the programs implemented by the LGBT community.

This ineffectiveness is due to several things, including the absence of instructions for programs to address LGBT that are run systematically from the center to the branch, programs that are run limited to a few areas and tend to be unsustainable, and do not make LGBT treatment a superior program and instead in input in one of the HIV response agendas that signifies LGBT is not considered a strategic issue that needs to be maximized in special programs. Therefore, seeing the massive and structured LGBT movement in Indonesia. Islamic mass organizations need to take into account to carry out more structured and massive movements to educate the public regarding LGBT threats, provide assistance for victims, and work with various parties to deal with this problem. At this time, it may not be too late, but if left unchecked, it could be that in the coming years LGBT has become a new culture that is accepted and of course the bad effects that will be produced will also be even greater.

CONCLUSION

The LGBT phenomenon in Indonesia has become one of the controversial issues. Despite facing rejection from the majority of society, LGBT development in Indonesia continues to increase over time. In this case, NU and Muhammadiyah have an important role in the problem of LGBT in Indonesia. However, based on the analysis carried out, the activities of the LGBT community are much more massive than the two mass organizations. It is feared that this will open up wider opportunities for LGBT acceptance in society and legality. Therefore, NU and Muhammadiyah should be able to be more actively involved by running various programs that can overcome the spread of LGBT optimally and sustainably.

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