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Gender-Based Violence and Global Capitalism: Everyday experiences of female laborers in the fast fashion garment industry

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ABSTRACT

The garment industry is an industrial sector that recruits more female laborers. However, female laborers in the garment industry often experience various forms of injustice and acts of violence, such as low wages, gender discrimination, or high workloads. Various forms of injustice and violence must be studied continuously, considering this industry is still rapidly growing globally. The emergence of the fast fashion trend encourages the expansion of the garment industry, which can potentially eternalize injustice and violence against female laborers. Female garment laborers bear a substantial role in the production sector, starting from preparing materials, cutting materials, sewing, ironing, and playing various roles as helpers in various production processes. This paper examines the daily injustice and violence experienced by several female garment laborers from one of the garment factories in Jakarta. Adopting the theoretical approach of feminist everyday political economy, this paper analyzes those experiences that reflect miscellaneous structural and cultural gender violence heavily influenced by global capitalism.

KEYWORDS: *garment industry, fast fashion, female laborers, feminist everyday political economy*

INTRODUCTION

The garment industry has been globally considered an ideal industrial development model. From state-centered to trade or chain-based industrial development, the garment industry is continually considered the ideal entry point for many developing countries towards industrialization in the capitalist

realm. A global chain of the garment industry is often termed "*modern slavery*", which perpetuates the linear vision of the industry as future economic growth. It is because, in reality, the industry constantly ignores various substantial conundrums happening within the garment industry itself. This research looks deeper into how the

garment industry only deems abuse of rights in labor and the environment as something "*beyond the normal pace*" of capitalist progress, which is not considered dangerous as long as it is still profitable (Ayers, 2013). Understanding these issues leads to exploring more profoundly what is truly happening in the vast industry. What is the interpretation of "normal speed" in the garment industry?

The parameter of normal speed is the daily working hours of garment workers. Therefore, this research focuses on one trend in the garment industry: the fast fashion trend. The fast fashion trend is closely connected with time because the fast fashion industry has a clothing catalog that changes in the short term. The production system is operated at a low cost or value because of low-quality raw materials usage. The duration of the production process is instantaneous because the target time for changing models is also fast. The tendency for fast fashion clothing emerges from the impulse of capitalism, which creates a pattern in society to buy clothing products continuously, without thinking twice, ultimately affecting the fast and low-quality production process (Ting & Stagner, 2021). The main principle of capitalism in obtaining the maximum profit at the lowest possible cost is reflected in the presence of the fast fashion industry. The principle ultimately leads to numerous acts of exploitation

experienced by the workers behind the fast fashion clothing production process, especially female laborers.

The case of garment workers is a feminist issue because women dominate this industry. The Labor Behind the Label campaign notes that at least 80 percent of garment workers worldwide are women aged 18 to 35. Many of these women have children and families to support and are the primary breadwinners. Indonesia itself also has several industrial areas in West Java, such as Rancaekek and Cimahi, which are also places where textile factories operate, of which the majority of the workers are female (Nertina, 2021).

The International Labor Organization (ILO) also describes how women continue to dominate workers in textile products and footwear (TPA) industries. In 2016, approximately 4.2 million people were employed in the landfill industry in Indonesia, accounting for 26.6 per cent of all manufacturing jobs. Women comprise the majority (i.e., around 58 per cent) of the industry's employees (Horne & de Andrade, 2017).

Many media and NGO reports have shown female workers being subjected to verbal abuse, sexual harassment, public humiliation for failing to meet targets, overwork, low wages, and forced overtime work (Munnade, 2016). For example, in Bengaluru, India, which has 1,200 registered RMG export factories

employing more than 500,000 female workers, 60% of women reported to GLOBALIZATION 1423 that they faced harassment by male superiors (Munnade, 2016)

One of the most prominent exploitation cases is the mass fire at the Rana Plaza Dhaka garment factory in Bangladesh in 2014. At least 1,134 workers died, and 2,500 others were injured in the incident caused by company and government leaders' negligence in maintaining the garment factory building. There were more women victims than men in the incident (Syarif, 2021). The garment factory is a factory that produces various fast fashion clothes for various global brands around the world.

The Zero Waste Indonesia community reveals that fast fashion clothing is a production practice focusing on production speed to catch up with the latest clothing trends. The process is to carry out mass production in large quantities to keep production costs as low as possible and ultimately get the highest profit (Zahra, 2019). The keyword 'production speed' here is crucial because it shows how the garment industry sacrifices low social costs for workers. These social costs are related to the wages and welfare of workers who make and produce these mass clothing products.

The depiction of violence in the daily lives of women workers in the garment industry can be seen in one

of the interview subjects' expressions. A female laborer, Rahma, revealed that the target for clothing products to be produced daily is at least 800 pieces, so in half an hour, they have to complete around 80 clothes. Supervisors will reprimand and scold workers who cannot achieve the targets. Even though trade union organizations have made several efforts to reduce insults and scolding, many superiors continue to use verbal violence, predominantly scolding, due to their responsibility in pursuing targets.

We often get scolded, and some shout loudly. Even now, there are still things like that; in terms of organizational union, we have often warned management, but still, because the target is high, the supervisors think that it is their responsibility to pursue the target, so they will do anything in any way, including yelling at the workers every day. (Rahma, 23 October 2022)

Various other forms of violence are presented more deeply in the empirical findings section, all of which originate from the daily experiences of female laborers and reveal how the violence experienced is very close to women's gender construction.

The portrayal of female worker exploitation in everyday life reflects how gender issues are very close to this problem. The garment industry, a capitalist actor of neoliberal

globalization, continually rearranges work processes, introduces new technologies and trends, accelerates production, and reduces low-value labor in "developed" capitalist economies. After that, production labor is relocated to lower-wage rate locations, mainly in the global south, in their attempts to return on capital (Ayers, 2013). It is undeniable that women ultimately experience the most glaring unfairness because most of the low-wage jobs are done by women.

In political economy, gender is used empirically in the differences in professional responsibilities between men and women, manifested through the various impacts of neoliberal globalization. Neoliberal globalization has resulted in discrepancies in who does what type of work, under what conditions, and with what compensation or status. Gender in the political economy also operates as an attribute that conceptualizes hierarchical disparities between identities, qualities, or attributes and characteristics of masculine and feminine. In this case, men are inclined to masculine traits and women to feminine. The construction of gender in the political economy also plays a role in the system that 'regulates' the way people think and act. Masculine jobs are considered more "real" and serious in terms of symbolic status and material compensation (Shepherd, 2015). Therefore, women are identified with "unreal" or even

"unpaid" jobs. Alternatively, even though they work, gender construction ultimately regulates unfair treatment by owners of capitalists towards women workers.

Feminist everyday political economy was born from works of literature examining the racial and gendered centrality of everyday resistance to capitalism. The literature includes concerns with grassroots feminist political action aimed at opposing particular capitalist and colonialist practices in everyday gender politics. This research relates the description of everyday gender politics to empirical case studies that occur in the realm of garment production, of which Waylen (2006) describes that empirically the statement "*the personal is political*" must be expanded by "*personal is international*". In other words, it must acknowledge that women's lives and experiences are at the core of capitalism's global political implementation. Feminist everyday political economy is also an approach that practices resistance to gender construction produced by and intersects with capitalism (which is racial and gendered) (Elias & Roberts, 2016)

The time dimension in the garment industry is associated with the industry's mobility. In the garment industry, only a few production processes can be automated by machines, so the work requires more human resources. Therefore, the industry is also targeting low wages to maximize

profits. The mobilization of the garment industry ultimately affects labor costs by constantly imposing low fixed wages, long working hours, and fluctuating work contract regulations which ultimately do not provide long-term security guarantees for workers (Ansell, Tsoeu-Ntokoane, & Hajdu, 2015).

Space and time in factory work are characterized by the constant limitations and exploitative regularities experienced by women workers. Garment labor occurs in fixed, determined places with an ordered rhythm and little opportunity to break away from the routine. Female laborers were locked in the factory from 7 am to 5 pm, five days a week. There are many times when female laborers work overtime for another hour or more due to the company's constant demand and target. Thus, the space-time of factory work negatively affects women's well-being by depriving them of sufficient energy and rest time (Ansell, Tsoeu-Ntokoane, & Hajdu, 2015).

This paper presents various empirical findings of female laborers working at A garment factory in the industrial area of North Jakarta that were interviewed in person. The researchers gathered at least five female labor subjects and conducted in-depth interviews regarding their activities and daily life in the production sector. The finding is personal because the researchers tried to include women's voices as the primary analytical tool to

uncover various issues regarding gender-based violence and injustice in the garment industry. In response to the empirical findings through the interviews, the researchers adopted the concept of everyday feminist political economy to analyze the illustration of violence in women's everyday lives caused by global capitalism.

METHODS

The paper adopted qualitative research with a feminist method. The data were collected through an in-depth interview with face-to-face questioning and answering sessions between the interviewer and the informant or interviewee.

The main subjects were five female garment laborers working in a company or garment factory in Indonesia. The female garment laborers focused on the production sector. The above backgrounds of the female workers allowed the researchers to study how working in garment industries affected their lives from a feminist perspective of economic politics. The female garment laborers consist of individuals with different backgrounds, such as employment status, the production line at the factory, marital status, whether they have children or not, status in labor unions, and life in society.

The researchers used pseudonyms of the female garment laborers mentioned in this article. The researchers also received

consent forms from each interview subject to publish their statements in this research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This section provides empirical data from the voices and experiences of female laborers in the A factory in Jakarta in dealing with various problems in their daily productive activities at their workplace. This story ultimately leads to the fact, as stated in the background section, that female laborers are recruited the most in the production sector of the garment industry. The garment industry has easier access to female production laborers to employ in the production sector, especially those from lower classes who need the job the most. The researchers interviewed five female laborers working as permanent workers in the production sector to strengthen the fast fashion issue in the garment industry. Their roles were mostly sewing, but there was ironing. During the interview, the female laborers illustrated their everyday life as production workers and how the high targets determined their life conditions, choices, and even needs.

In the initial findings regarding the activities of women workers in the production sector, the paper first illustrates the operational status of female laborers working at A factory. The five research subjects revealed that their status as permanent or

contract workers at the factory did not affect their workload. There are two statuses of workers' employment, a work agreement that binds contract employees and casual workers (PKWT) and a work agreement that binds permanent employees with no expiry date (PKWTT). All research subjects were permanent employees and had worked for an average of 10 years. However, there are many perspectives on the status of workers and what affects factory workers through this status.

The operational status and duration of time these workers have worked at the factory do not affect the wages they achieve, the burden, targets, treatment of superiors towards workers, or the length of time they work in one day at the factory. Even so, work status does affect the job security of factory workers. As stated by Endah, one of the female laborer subjects, there had been many illegal "extortions" by some factory superiors to promise contract laborers to get their work status as permanent laborers.

It is the same; that is why there are rampant illegal fees nowadays because of work status. So, the workers want to extend their contracts because they have been promised by the supervisors this and that, but even if they are not promised, when the supervisor needs the money, they will go like, "Do you want to work or not?"

maybe they will ask a reward for it. That is why we are still investigating. Actually, yesterday someone found out, that there was evidence, and then the leadership was fired. How many people are there in Molak who got warning letters, I think there are 6 of them, but in A factory, there is only 1. (Endah, 25 October 2022)

Rahma also discussed the issue of workers' job security, how contract employees were only valid for up to three months, some even for one month.

There is no difference in the workload, but what is of concern at the moment from the PKWT contract is the actual certainty of work, especially since the current contract is only three months; some are for a month. (Rahma, 23 October 2022)

This working status also triggers garment workers to compete even more fiercely to achieve permanent job status. Rahma said that even PKWT workers competed to get high targets in one day. That competition was triggered by superiors' promises, which ultimately became a bluff to keep workers working with high targets. In the end, many workers still did not have their contracts extended despite implementing the strategy.

Hmm, so it's like the boss is saying, "If you do not work well like this, we will not be able to

extend your work," so this triggers us, PKWT laborers, to compete to get high targets. (Rahma, 23 October 2022)

The production target for the garment industry is increasing every year. Rahma, a female laborer who had worked in the garment industry at the same factory for twenty years, reinforced this argument. Rahma had held the position of ironing. During working hours, Rahma was constantly standing. For ironing, the daily achievement target depends on the model or shape of the clothes. For regular t-shirt models, the target is 60 to 70 shirts per half hour. If the type of underwear is like a tank top, the company will target as many as 100 pieces per half hour. For long dresses, the target will be 30 to 40 pieces per half hour.

Another subject, Endah, also explained how the production system used targets per line of workers, often called "lines". For example, there were thirty tailors in one line for sewing workers. Each tailor worked in a relay from the back row to the front to produce a shirt. Each line must meet a target of eighty shirts per half hour. In the sewing process, the workers were always scolded all the time. When interviewing her, the researchers even asked Endah whether she was scolded that day. She also answered, "Of course." Endah also recounted an incident the day before she was interviewed; Endah's line of workers was called by her superiors and subjected to a scolding.

There was a story after yesterday's lunch; we were called to the front, and our supervisor said, "You know what? The stitches should have been finished by now if that is the target. How come it has still not been finished at this time?" A machine behind me was broken, so the work was delayed by 3 hours; in 3 hours, we did not reach the target of 200 pieces. (Endah, 25 October 2022)

The target on that day was not achieved due to a machine engine failure on Endah's line. It was not a reason her superiors could accept because they still demanded the workers meet the specified target even though there was a technical error, a broken machine.

Samah, another subject working as a tailor at A factory, also shared the problem of broken machines in her factory and illustrated how laborers worked daily. The machines used by laborers for sewing were getting old, as were the laborers. Unsophisticated and manual machines were often damaged, but supervisors did not consider it. High targets kept the laborers working amid aging machines. Samah even thought that she and the other laborers were no different from the sewing machines used to sew the clothes.

In the process of achieving production targets, it is common for companies to use various methods.

One of which is by turning on music while working. While the workers are working, the supervisors turn on the music and, at the same time, scold the workers. One of the subjects, Mai, revealed that the supervisors often turned on loud music for the workers to focus on sewing or other production processes, so they forgot the time.

Samah's supervisors played music in the factory when the laborers worked. Therefore, they focused on the stitching and music that they could not tell the time.

Yes, so we're here. For me, it's still okay; no matter how loud the music is, I don't mind. I can tell the time anyway. If you have an incontinence, it doesn't really feel like working.

Yes, it is. The point is how they exploit it so that the workers can really produce many pieces, don't think about anything else but results. If I'm not mistaken, that's the thought, so that the workers produce more, right, the production is good, so the profit is big. It's better if the profit is shared with us, but no. We don't have any money, only a basic salary, only 4.6, no money for food, no transportation. (Mai, in-depth interview, 29 October 2022)

Labor hours are also a significant issue in the garment industry. If there are laborers who cannot reach the target per half hour, many of them end up working for extra

hours. For example, at 5 pm, they should be able to go home, but they work until after 5 to complete the target. Many laborers arrived before seven in the morning, as Endah said. Rahma also said that many laborers did not make the most of their one-hour break. The laborers should be able to eat, drink, or rest, but they only used the break to pray and return to meet the targets. The laborers thought they would be more relaxed the next day if they could complete more targets on a particular day. It was not the case. Every day, the same number of new targets must be achieved.

My friends at the factory are still like that. For example, if I haven't got the first half-hour target, it will take the second half-hour; in the end, the target will be late. Most of my friends have to work at 7 am. They even come at half past seven in the morning, so the 1 pm break is only used for eating and praying for a while. They will hurry to return to work to make up for the lack of targets. They often come home late; sometimes they can contribute to the company for an extra hour and a half, half an hour in the morning and a half hour break; sometimes they go home when the lights are off, so they think tomorrow they can relax a bit, but they never will. (Rahma, 23 October 2022)

It happens a lot among laborers, especially because most workers are

PKWT employees, and only a few are permanent employees. They optimize the time to meet the target so they are not fired. The supervisors threaten them a lot to make them work with fear and under pressure.

Companies often refer to unreached targets as "target debt". When laborers do not meet the target, they must keep fulfilling it even if they have to use their break time or work extra hours.

If you don't reach the target, the supervisor gets angry, "You people, don't just go home, meet your target first, pay the target, don't just go home, it's irresponsible!" (Maskunah, 23 October 2022)

The target debt will be "paid" in the last hours of returning home. The usual hours for laborers to work are eight hours. Within eight hours, they targeted at least 800 pieces of clothing. If they cannot meet targets, they will be verbally abused. Therefore, it is common for them to go home fifteen to twenty minutes later than the schedule.

One of the research subjects also revealed that the possible reason for the high target was the company's unwillingness to increase spending on production costs. It is illustrated by her statement that the target is getting higher because she thinks that the wages or salaries of workers are increasing every year, even though it is not significant. However, this increase encourages companies

to set high achievement targets for workers.

Yes, increase in salary, the target increases. That's why I said the salary increase is not much, but the target for the increase is significant. That's how it is. So, we're workers, right? The boss said, "Oh, let us increase their salary so we can hit more targets," that's it. Production is the overtime rule, but we are pressured. (Mrs. Samah, in-depth interview, 29 October 2022)

She said that overtime had been rare for the last ten years. To avoid paying overtime, the company maximizes daily targets.

The time issue also affects working women's resting activities, such as using the break time at noon, urinating, changing pads during menstruation, and even taking a short break if tired. The subjects of this research illustrated that workers seldom had enough time to do those activities. They rarely had time to drink. The "target debt" discussed earlier contributes to production workers' busyness. As a result, they also have very little time to take care of their basic needs as humans, such as drinking or urinating.

Last March 2022, the researchers had the opportunity to participate in the A factory's trade union meeting organized by the Labor Union Organization named FSBPI. There was a series of theatrical art performances by the female laborers

during the event called "*Panggung Marsinah*" or Marsinah's Stage. The female laborers from A factory staged a drama depicting how they worked in the production sector daily. The performance suggested that workers were not allowed to use the toilet freely. There were rules for it. They needed to bring a coupon to go to the toilet. The researchers confirmed it with the research subjects during interviews. They validated it. Maskunah said there were only two toilet coupons in one line of around 30 to 50 laborers. It means that only two people can go to the toilet at a time.

There are only two cards per day. If two people go to the toilet, they bring the two cards right. So, when someone wants to go to the toilet, the person needs to wait until those going to the toilet return to use the card. Sometimes if someone is in a rush to go pee, the person will run to the toilet. If we insist on going to the toilet without carrying the card, the security guard will scold us, "Where is your card?" "I am desperate, ma'am. The card is used; I can't find it." Then the security will get angry, "You act like a supervisor who can go to the toilet without using a card, huh? You act as if you don't know the rules." (Maskunah, 23 October 2022)

Apart from using the toilet, they do not have time for short breaks, such as praying or just relaxing the

body. The high targets prevent workers from leaving their jobs. Confirming this, Samah said she sometimes did not use her break time because she had to work on her targets. It is because her work, sewing, is a relay. Workers in one line must stand by in their places to wait for a piece of garment from a worker behind them. One person's absence, even if only taking a short break, may cause a line not reaching the target and getting scolded.

Discussion

This section will discuss the political economy context of working women's daily experiences due to the expansion of the global fast fashion phenomenon from a feminist perspective. Within the feminist discussion, there is a strong association between the socioeconomic and political contexts of certain forms of work. For example, a discrepancy in working conditions and work relationships can be seen in seemingly similar types of work, such as working as a domestic worker (waged domestic work), working as a housewife (unpaid domestic work), working in the manufacture of clothing in home industries, and working in the manufacture of clothing in factories (both produce clothes, one is family labor and is done at home, the other is factory labor, done in a factory and is paid). In other words, various types of work bear socioeconomic

and political contexts (Saptari & Holzner, 2008).

Based on the statement above, women's studies experts define *work* as everything done by an individual that is suitable for subsistence, to be exchanged or traded, to maintain the continuity of descendants and the survival of the family or community. Thus, work does not only include paid work outside the home (Saptari & Holzner, 2008). Nevertheless, how can these various types of work be classified to see specific patterns, especially concerning oppression and subordination to certain groups?

Shepherd (2015) explains that the impact of neoliberal globalization eventually reveals distinctions about who does what type of work, under what conditions, and with what compensation and status. Gender in the political economy discourse also acts as a principle that conceptualizes the hierarchical differences between masculine and feminine identities, qualities, or characteristics. How does gender finally act as a system that '*regulates*' the way people think and act by prioritizing what is associated with masculinity and femininity?

Informal activities are outside 'formal' work arrangements (usually contractual and regulated). Types also vary, ranging from care and domestic work in households, street vendors, low-wage laborers, to black market transactions on a global scale. Women, migrants, and low-income people are the subjects of most

informal workers, doing the most unappreciated and dangerous informal work. That statement is primarily due to the stereotype of 'feminine' jobs attached to them (Shepherd, 2015). Later, the empirical data shows that A garment factory, the research location, recruited female contract laborers the most. Many experienced vulnerabilities, especially in job security, because they did not have the power to fight against the established system. In the end, the workers were willing to take their time and energy to meet high targets every day.

The feminist everyday political economy looks at the daily life practices and routines to raise important questions about gender power relations stemming from foreign investment, development, globalization, country transformation, the nature of work, and the financial crisis that has occurred. The political economy of violence against women reveals how gender-based economic power relations, for example, unequal access to productive resources, including land and secure jobs, are experienced in terms of everyday violations of women's bodily integrity (Elias & Roberts, 2016). Women's bodies, often considered no different from machines, as revealed by Samah, illustrate how violations against the integrity of women's bodies exist in a gender-based economy. The pay for their work is not high due to stereotypes

that women's work is not considered "important". Even worse, they experience verbal violence every day. One of the identification and analysis of the structural relationship between the global political economy and everyday life is to use the concept of social reproduction. The activities usually centered on the household, which is the center of production and reproduction of life but is not considered in conventional economic analysis (Elias & Roberts, 2016).

While everyday work involved in the social reproduction of labor power is socially feminized and degraded under capitalism—where 'work' is done outside the home and in return for wages—the work of social reproduction remains central to the production of value in capitalist society (Picchio, 1992; Hardy, 2016). Mai, the research subject, said that the export value of the fast fashion clothes they made daily was way higher than the daily cost of worker wages. The workers could produce more than a thousand clothes per day.

That 's it, because the target is now more than a thousand, 1,200 per day, one piece of clothing costs up to 450 thousand Rupiah for the Express brand export, right? That is one dollar... one shirt, if I'm not mistaken, 18 dollars, how much is that, or 30 dollars, if I'm not mistaken, one shirt times a thousand, try it, times 1,200, how many times a

thousand is it, 450 times a thousand Rupiah, it's 400 million Rupiah in one day.

So how much is our salary? 4.6 million rupiahs, the cost of earning one shirt is more than the salary of one line, which is really too much and inhumane for workers. (Mai, 28 October 2022)

The illustration above shows that global capitalism still needs social reproduction work, even though, at the same time, it violates social reproduction work.

In the feminist theory of political economy, a derivative concept focuses on an approach related to the process of social reproduction bound in it. In this case, social reproduction includes all activities involved in the production of life, including biological reproduction, the work of caring for and maintaining the household and intimate relationships, the reproduction of labor, and the reproduction of the community itself. It leads to social reproduction work by understanding everyday life in the realm of political economy through space, time, and violence (STV) intersections (Elias & Rai, 2019).

This approach challenges how ideas about everyday life emerge in political economy and highlights the broader risks of leaving social reproduction unrecognized. Silvia Federici (2012) reveals that this era of capitalist expansion reflects the

rationalization of social reproduction, which aims to destroy the remnants of communal ownership and community relations. The context of STV provides insight into how social reproduction is not only carried out every day but how it is vital for understanding everyday life under global capitalism – which includes various work involvements such as repetitive, tedious work routines and work that can be satisfying for workers (Elias & Rai, 2019).

Based on debates about social reproduction and everyday life, there are three analytical lenses – space, time, and violence – through which a feminist approach to everyday life will develop. Social reproduction, like market-based production, is placed in a social space with relational boundaries in a continuum of time and rhythm. The STV framework itself is embedded in regimes of oppression based on class, race, and sex. Therefore, it is manifested and experienced differently in different social contexts (Elias & Rai, 2019).

In this discussion, the dimension of time is a robust analytical knife in various descriptions of the daily lives of working women in the empirical findings section. Time politics is also important to discuss in their production function as workers at work (Elias & Rai, 2019). The findings from the voices of women workers above illustrate the problem of the limited time that women workers have in the production

process. The fast fashion industry encourages the acceleration of time and changes the form of "normal" time to the time they determine in the industry. The story told by Maskunah, Rahma, Endah, Samah, and Mai above illustrates the problem of time as they have to reach the target of 50-80 clothes in half an hour, working hours that exceed the allotted time, break time that is not used optimally, and the limited time to meet their basic needs as humans, such as drinking, urinating, or just sitting to rest. Time becomes a "new normal" formed by global capitalism against working women to earn massive daily profits.

CONCLUSION

The development of the global clothing industry has resulted in the rising fast fashion clothing trend. The price of cheap clothing that follows the fashion trend always bears problems. The empirical findings of this research revealed a fast fashion clothing factory imposing exploitative, unfair, and gender-discriminatory treatment towards its workforce system. This argument is evidenced by the fact that women are the majority of

laborers who work in the fast fashion clothing production process. The nature and low status attached to women are often the roots of oppression by owners of capital to regulate work methods, wages, and the treatment of women workers in the garment industry.

The description of exploitation analyzed using previous feminist approaches to everyday political economy has dismantled the many dimensions of violence that have occurred to women workers in the garment industry. The exploitation faced by women workers in the production sector impacts their social reproductive function as they continue to experience negligence in many things at work, including injustice in behavior and low wages. The violation happens because the role of women in social reproduction is often seen as unpaid work. The empirical source from female garment workers' testimonies in A factory illustrates how global capitalism rearranges the "normal" time rhythm to get as much profit as possible by being exploitative and discriminatory towards working women.

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Devalued Body of The Grobogan Tayub Dancer

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe Lasmi, a Tayub dancer legend from Grobogan, experiencing *liyan* in various aspects of her life. The researcher used the in-depth interview method in addition to supporting documents such as previous research, YouTube channels, and news. The research adopted the theory of 'liyan/subaltern/the others' from Gayatri Spivak and Simone De Beauvoir. The research subject was Lasmi, an example of an Indonesian postcolonial body (a body that does not come from the center of power) experiencing otherness and marginalization in society, treated as an object, especially male gaze, or number two, and compared to others. She experienced it, being *liyan*, in public and domestic areas. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she was also included in a marginal group. Because of PSBB (Large-Scale Social Restrictions), she could no longer dance and perform as she used to. She has also suffered from an age devaluation, which has resulted in her rarely performing and losing out to the young waranggana.

KEYWORDS: *Grobogan, Liyan, Postcolonial Feminism, Subaltern, Tayub.*

INTRODUCTION

Tayub is a dance involving *waranggana* (singers who are also dancers) and *niyaga* (gamelan musicians). It is a form of social dance and entertainment for the people around the North Kendeng Mountains (Grobogan, Pati, Blora, Rembang, and Sragen) in Central Java. Tayub is closely associated with a symbol of gratitude for *gawe* or important events, for example, weddings, circumcisions, cleaning the village, and harvesting. Being able to invite Tayub waranggana is a symbol of prestige (upper socio-economic class) in the local society.

In Grobogan, the heyday of Tayub cannot be separated from the role of a Tayub Waranggana legend named Sulasmi, known as *ledek* (*waranggana*) Lasmi. At least there is a master's thesis entitled "Waranggana Tayub: Lasmi's Adaptation Strategy as Waranggana in Maintaining Its Existence" written by Santi Widiastuti (2019), which illustrates that the glorious era of Tayub cannot be separated from Sulasmi's contribution. It stated that Lasmi was popular in the 1980s to 1990s with a busy performance schedule. Since she was in her teens, Lasmi has been involved in Tayub.

Lasmi's specialty, not owned by any *waranggana*, is spontaneous creativity when singing. Lasmi often came out with spontaneous song lyrics. Those spontaneous lyrics are original, literary, supple, and beautiful. Most of them are metaphors, humorous satire, or sad expressions. Not only spontaneous creativity but what makes her different from the others is that Lasmi recorded her songs with several labels, including Fajar and Pusaka Cassette. Lasmi's recordings were the first Tayub renditions recorded in cassette format in 1980. Then, other *waranggana* followed. This made her the first *waranggana* from Grobogan to record Tayub in a cassette format.

The people of Grobogan and its surroundings could enjoy Gending Tayub at any time through cassettes. Of the several pieces, the most famous one was Randha Ngguguk, a song depicting the sadness of a widow in facing her life. In 1995, a humanist and private radio broadcaster for Suara Mrapen Abadi FM in Grobogan, Endah Fitriana, known as Tantri, initiated a special program to play traditional music. The radio program was known as Janggrung Mrapen. In the program hosted by Tantri, Lasmi's songs were also played to the wider community. Based on Tantri's confession, many people asked for Lasmi's song to be played. On the radio, Randha Ngguguk was also a prima donna. The Janggrung Mrapen program was

famous for seven years, from 1995 to 2002.

Lasmi remained in people's hearts, although the Janggrung Mrapen program stopped broadcasting. As there are many younger Tayub *waranggana*, Lasmi performs less than she used to. According to Lasmi, Tayub experiences a shift. It is very different from the past. Clothing, makeup or grooming, and music are no longer the same. Dangdut and Campursari music can now be used as an accompaniment to Tayub, although the standard is Gending Tayub. The clothes of the *waranggana* have also changed. Those who wear *kemben* (Javanese traditional strapless top), a symbol of Javanese women's elegance, now have to comply with the demands of their viewers, most of whom obey certain religious norms or argue in the name of decency norms.

After divorcing her last husband, Lasmi lives only with her mother, Dami. In her 60s, Lasmi still has to make a living. Her only child, Eko, is now responsible for her household needs. Occasionally, junior *waranggana* or their students visit Lasmi bringing some money to meet her daily needs. Some *waranggana* informed that Lasmi busks to make a living while remembering her former heydays when she performed Tayub.

The study addresses the problems and consequences of the decolonization of Tayub dance and

beauty discourse related to the political and cultural independence of a formerly subjugated person, Lasmi, the dancer. The study's contribution will be the construction of new knowledge and social change from the perspective of women's struggles against multiple forms of oppression.

METHODS

In analyzing written information, the researcher used in-depth interviews and empathy built on awareness of gender-based discourse and feminism. According to Reinharz (1992), interviews allow researchers to gain access to people's opinions, thoughts, and memories in their language. It is important, especially for studies on women, because it can be a turning point after women's voices have been ignored or represented by men's voices for centuries.

The interview used was semi-structured. This type of interview is the main research method on feminism (understanding the equal rights of all genders). Through this method, the interviewer is expected to involve the resource people in explaining their lives. The researcher used open-ended questions to maximize findings and descriptions of information. Before the interview, the researcher observed Lasmi's daily life and looked for secondary sources in the form of writing and videos (YouTube), as well as interviews with

cultural observers who were also living witnesses of Lasmi's struggles in Tayub. It was expected to add to the researcher's insight in developing interview questions. After that, the author made a research proposal and a draft of interview questions to discuss with the main editor and co-editor.

After the interview draft was approved, the researcher interviewed Lasmi at her house while adhering to health protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic. The researcher lives in Purwodadi, and the research subject, Lasmi, resides in Kalisari, Keradenan, Grobogan. First, the researcher asked permission to conduct interviews in Lasmi's free time. The interviews were conducted in a relaxed manner while letting the interviewees do their activities at home, such as taking care of their mothers, playing with cats, and welcoming guests, if any. The researcher also followed Lasmi when she had to perform on stage. The researcher also used documents kept by Lasmi to get more information. This research considered Lasmi's rambling answers because it could lead to significant value and key information.

This research employed content analysis to analyze the interview transcript. It is a qualitative analysis method designed to group raw data into categories or themes based on valid inference and interpretation. This process uses inductive reasoning, by which themes and

categories emerge from the data through the researcher's careful examination and constant comparison.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Concept of the Reduced Body

In the history of modern philosophy, knowledge of the body is conceptualized as a biological object as distinguished from a rational faculty, which then becomes a tool and is manipulated and controlled by rational reason. Body behavior is believed to be independent and dependent because of the existence of the brain (Gallop, 1988). Simultaneously, a stereotype appears that reasoning behavior and bodily behavior are inherent in men and women. Women are considered emotional, while men are rational. However, this is quite problematic when viewed in the feminist framework because it means that the body is attributed as obedient, controlled, colonized, and subordinated. The relationship between subjectivity, body, identity, and even race becomes a discourse that enriches the body of feminist thought (Somerville, 1994).

With the publication of *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir (1949), the theorizing of women's bodies and self becomes a concern, in which the body is not only a starting point for materiality but a means to position it in and by the world (Laqueur, 1990). This body is not only material but also the living

body conveying the sensory experience and purpose of the subject in negotiating the world. The body also responds and mediates the world. The existence of the body in de Beauvoir's terminology experiences different treatment by the world than men, which do not have many privileges.

De Beauvoir (1949) rejects the reduction of the concept of the body as mere material and narrates how the body is treated differently from the dominant perspective of society. In this case, women's bodies in different spaces experience discrimination according to the context. For Beauvoir, the way women and girls experience the body is a consequence of a perspective that internalizes the male gaze articulated through beautiful compliments and bad reproaches. The female body becomes an object for gazes rooted in biological anatomy, education, and the environment that shape it. How women experience their bodies as objects seen by others is an initial note for this research. In this way, women initially recognize their bodies as what they see. They often compare their bodies and faces with beautiful fairies in fairy tales, which is often impossible in the real world without realizing it.

Sexual objectification occurs when a woman's body or body parts are singled out and separated from the woman as a person and viewed primarily as a physical object of male sexual desire (Bartky, 1990).

This social objectification often intersects with women's other sociocultural identities, such as sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, and social class, to form unique sets of media portrayals and experiences for women subgroups (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Many women also experience immersed forms of sexual objectification occurring when they are part of situations, environments, and subcultures where the sexual objectification of women is encouraged and promoted. For example, certain situations accentuating awareness of observers' perspectives on women's bodies, such as ballet dancing, beauty pageants, modeling, and cheerleading, are likely to enhance sexual objectification (Slater & Tiggemann, 2002). Furthermore, self-objectification is related to broader psychosocial constructs, including poorer self-esteem, lower life satisfaction, less relationship satisfaction, lower levels of global well-being, risk-taking, self-harm, and negative attitudes toward breastfeeding (Breines, Crocker, & Garcia, 2008; Harper & Tiggemann, 2008; Mercurio & Landry, 2008; Moradi & Huang, 2008).

Females' self-reported experiences of sexual victimization are related to more self-objectification, body shame (Lindberg, Grabe, & Hyde, 2007), and adverse psychological outcomes, including depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (for reviews, see Fitzgerald, Drasgow,

Hulin, Gefand, & Magley, 1997; Koss, Bailey, Yuan, Herrera, & Lichter, 2003). The intersections of gender with other sociocultural identities may place some women subgroups at increased risk. For example, several studies have found that sexual minority women report more experiences of sexual assault in adulthood than their heterosexual peers and that the majority of perpetrators are male (Balsam, Rothblum, & Beauchaine, 2005; Moracco, Runyan, Bowling, & Earp, 2007; Tjaden, Thoeness, & Allison, 1999).

Objectification theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) postulates that it will be related to various psychological consequences, and these psychological consequences will mediate the relationship between self-objectification and disordered eating, depression, and sexual dysfunction. Supporting this tenet, Moradi and Huang's (2008) research review reveals that self-objectification is related to lower internal bodily awareness, more disconnection from bodily functions, decreased flow states, difficulties in task performance, increased body shame, more appearance anxiety, and both eating disorder and depressive symptoms among racial/ethnically diverse groups of women.

This theory from Europe, initiated by Beauvoir, is not without dynamics and challenges from feminists in other parts of the world.

In this study, it is necessary to discuss the postcolonial approach initiated by women from the third world, such as Gayatri Spivak (1988, 271-313). In terms of socio-economic and political structures, the left-out bodies are very different from those experienced by women in the third world, including Indonesia. Race and class struggles are important to note to help approach the subject of this research study. The postcolonial feminism approach appreciates how economic class and race contribute to the process of serving and subordinating women's bodies. The question then is, which female body? The answer will be different if it comes from women who pursue traditional arts, such as Tayub waranggana. The body of Tayub waranggana is the postcolonial body of Indonesia. A body that does not originate from a center of power or the metropolitan center of modern art at its time. What was the position of this woman's body in the vortex of artistic power at that time? Spivak describes the other body as the subaltern, referring to people from the lowest economic and social class strata (in the context of Indian culture represented by the Dalits or the untouchables). In Indonesian culture, a Tayub waranggana like Lasmi is the subaltern, the other figure and body experiencing marginalization in society. In the context of Western colonialism over countries such as India or Indonesia, they were indigenous men and women with no agency defined by

their social status. Spivak further explains that the other does not have access to power because of imperialist and oppressive cultural discourse hegemony.

The discourse on women's bodies cannot be separated from the "experiencing the body" process in the Indonesian postcolonial context. This study approaches research subjects with critical and reflective awareness of Beauvoir and Spivak's theorizing in later ethnographic findings, which may give rise to new and fresh discourse possibilities. This study will not stop at this theorizing. However, it will move dynamically while experiencing the subject's body in the power relations of the stages and recordings. This study is open to various possibilities that will enrich the birth of the discourse.

2. *Lasmi's Body in the Process of Becoming an 'Artist'*

Sulasmi, known as Lasmi, is a woman born to Kartorejo Kardi and Dami. Lasmi is the only living child; her siblings died shortly after birth. Now, Lasmi lives with her mother in Kalisari, Keradenan, Grobogan, Central Java. Her father died when Lasmi was at the peak of her career as a *waranggana*. Lasmi's house is approximately 45 minutes or 30 km from the Grobogan Regency administrative center in Purwodadi.

According to Lasmi, the 1980s to 1990s were her heydays. Her father's artistic blood flows in Lasmi's body.

Her late father was a *gamelan* player (*niyaga*) who played the *bonang* instrument. She has been developing her singing talent since she was in elementary school. During art and vocal lessons, Lasmi's beautiful voice was heard by the teacher and her friends. Since then, Lasmi has been trusted to participate in the *macapat* (traditional Javanese song) competition. She often brought home first-place or second-place certificates. Unfortunately, her education stopped at elementary school only. She did not continue to junior high school because of financial constraints. However, Lasmi was determined to develop her talents in singing, especially Javanese songs.

"Yes, after leaving grade 6, I didn't go to junior high school. I was the child of someone who is not rich. When I was fifteen, I joined *karawitan*. I was still a virgin, just getting my period. Then I was appointed as a *sinden*. My friends played the drums and gong, but I was the *sinden*, you know."

Lasmi is one of the girls forced to drop out of school. Women's low literacy and education are closely related to the lack of funds. At that time, it was common for girls to marry after graduating from elementary school. However, Lasmi had strong reasons to reject her tradition. Lasmi realized that she had an artistic soul. Lasmi had a big

dream and had to make her dream of becoming a good *sinden* come true.

Lasmi emerged into art through her professionalism as a *sinden*. Her *karawitan* (Javanese traditional music) group often entertains the people of Grobogan, Pati, Blora, and the surrounding areas. She did it not just for the money but also for her passion. Art is her blood. Her *karawitan* group was also increasingly in demand and liked by the public. Upon mutual agreement, all the income was given to the village treasury.

"Because I often participated in *karawitan*, I even became a good *sinden*. What else, then? I didn't have a husband and had lots of invitations to *nyinden*. Wow, I even never took a day off. The payment for a full day performance was five thousand rupiahs, but I could buy everything with the money! It's red paper money of hundreds, full in my bag. Every *dalang* knew that Lasmi was good. I mean, she had a good voice, and the people loved her too. Sometimes the *dalang's* (who came from far away) schedule didn't match my schedule, so I said sorry to them back then."

There is an interesting story about why Lasmi switched professions from *sinden* to Tayub Waranggana. One day, when she was approaching twenty, there was an invitation to sing or *nyinden* in Toroh. However, when she arrived, she was confused because it turned out that she was asked to *nayub* or be Tayub waranggana. She was forced to become Tayub waranggana. Because it was easier than *nyinden*, she finally did it easily.

“But the clothes are different. For *sinden*, the top is long, and for Tayub, you wear a *kemben* (Javanese traditional strapless top). When I got home, my husband suspected me, he asked, ‘...babe, why did you have all your fifty thousands, what have you done?’ I replied that I was *nyinden*, but he didn't trust me, then I was scolded. I felt guilty and kept apologizing to my husband. Then what am I supposed to do?”

After the fight, Lasmi was not prohibited from *nayub* by her husband. In fact, she was allowed by her husband. It was because the money from *nayub* is up to eight times greater than *nyinden*. She always gave her husband the money she earned from her hard work.

“Dancing gave me much money. I never took a day off for a month. I got a lot

of money, but my husband used it for gambling, so my husband allowed it. After all, I kept receiving money, but I never even used the money.”

Because Lasmi started as a *sinden*, she was known to be smarter than any waranggana in performing the Tayub recitation. As she said, waranggana who is *also sinden* is usually more proficient and better at singing *gending* (Javanese song). It is because the material studied by *sinden* is complicated. A new *sinden* sings according to the notes/tones of the song.

“So, if a *sinden* makes a mistake when singing, she is embarrassed. No matter how smart she is, she has to bring and sing the notation in the notebook. If she is not, she will be called a *kemayu* (flirty) *sinden* and insulted by her friends. But now, the beautiful *ledak* are just memorizing songs.”

3. 'Others' Body in the Household

During Lasmi's youth, she began to involve in romance. As her popularity as a *sinden* rose, people widely recognized her, especially among men. She kept getting cat-calling from men in her village and during *nyinden*. She was still naive and did not know romance, so she did not respond to them even though the cat-calling was really annoying. A few years later, around

when she was seven or eighteen, she got a love letter. It was from a boy who fell in love with Lasmi. In the letter, the boy asked Lasmi to get married. However, because she did not like the person who wrote to her, the proposal was ignored by her.

"But then, I fell in love with the person who delivered the letter. His name was Mas Kardi. The person had sweet bucktooth and handsome. However, my father and mother didn't like him because he looked like an ordinary villager. If you get a student son-in-law what will you do later, can you cultivate rice fields? However, I had a baby in my stomach [pointing to her stomach]. Then Eko, her baby boy, was born."

Initially, Lasmi made every effort to do an abortion, from taking medicine for late menstruation to concoctions mixed with pepper. However, her boyfriend asked her to keep the baby. After marriage, Lasmi was carried away by her husband and lived with her in-laws. Her performance schedule was temporarily halted because she was pregnant. Since living at her in-laws' house, her husband's attitude has changed. Frequently, she experienced harsh treatment and domestic violence. According to Lasmi, the triggers were small things. Her husband was jealous. Lasmi experienced the most severe

physical violence after giving birth. A week after giving birth, her husband kicked her body, causing heavy bleeding.

"Because he asked to discuss about my ex-boyfriend, he was jealous. I was kicked while taking a shower, there was a lot of blood coming out. Then my father-in-law brought a sickle for my husband. My father-in-law said, 'How dare you do that to your wife? What do you want? Lasmi has just given birth, why was she kicked? Don't do that ever again!' he said."

Because she had to work as a waranggana again, Lasmi admitted that she rarely breastfed her baby. Lasmi breastfed her baby only until he was three days old. That is because society "wanted" Lasmi to become a waranggana again on the 19th day after giving birth, although she was still undergoing puerperium. In the past, once the down payment to book the *ledek* was given, rejection or cancelation for any reason was impossible. She had to wear a *stagen* or wrap-around corset and brought an ASI (breast milk) pump when performing the Tayub. In between the performance breaks, she pumped her breast milk. She packed the milk and brought it home. She buried the breast milk in her yard.

"I buried it, so that my child didn't get *suleten*

(impetigo). People said that. You can't give it to your child, your child will suffer from *suleten* (impetigo), and you will have convulsions. I gave Eko SGM (a local formula milk brand for baby), which used to cost one thousand rupiahs. In fact, it became the subject of gossip, like, '...Lasmi why isn't your child breastfed?' But in reality, now Eko is smart. Oh Eko, Eko. When I came home after being a *ledak*, I carried my baby boy and kissed him. But after that, I had to go again, for dancing.”

Because she often experienced bad treatment, Lasmi divorced her husband. After all, she returned to her mother's house. After the divorce, Lasmi's mother, Dami, raised their child. Lasmi married three times. Most of the divorces were caused by her husband committing domestic violence, gambling, and having affairs. In her opinion, the ideal family is a peaceful home, tolerant, and not hurting each other. She made every effort to maintain the household. During the marriage, up to three times, Lasmi is the one who acts as the breadwinner. Lasmi understands that the risks of being a breadwinner wife are rarely coming home. She even let her husband have affairs with other women as long as Lasmi did not know. She realized that she

could not satisfy her husband in bed. She was also willing to give up all her money to her husband. She entrusted all household matters to her husband. However, Lasmi could no longer tolerate her husband's violence and lies. It was enough for Lasmi to live in a marriage with a man. After her last divorce, she admitted that many men wanted to ask for her hand, but she refused. “That is enough,” she said. Her son also did not allow her to remarry. He is afraid the same mistake will happen.

4. *The Body of Others in the Recording Studio*

In 1980, Bah Djien, an artist with a Javanese name Sastro Wijoyo looked for Lasmi. Bah Djien, who knew about Lasmi's popularity, invited Lasmi to record Tayub's renditions at the Pusaka Recording Studio in Semarang. After discussing the schedule, Lasmi took the recording offer. A few days before entering the recording studio, Lasmi studied several songs so that the recording results were good. She recorded Tayub songs with big record labels, including Pusaka (Semarang), Dahlia (Surakarta), and Ki Manteb Soedharsono's recording studio (Karangpandan, Karanganyar). For the first recording, she issued three cassettes. *Randha Ngguguk* is her first and flagship song.

“*Randha Ngguguk* is based on Pati's experience. I used

to perform in Pati. In my heart and mind, yes, I put it on the record. Then, the rhymes were good; many people loved it."

Lasmi admitted to facing difficulties during the recording process. She often had problems adjusting to the microphone and audio in the recording studio. Her ignorance of the technical aspects of recording also made it difficult for her to match the beats with the accompanying gamelan music.

"Sometimes, I felt out of breath and my voice was hoarse because you couldn't hear yourself from a monitor. If someone had a performance, she/he can hear his/her voice. That's why I had to sing loudly. I brought a person to replace me if I lost my voice."

Lasmi's popularity is not owned by other waranggana. Endah Fitriana said that other *ledek* do not have Lasmi's uniqueness. Lasmi is intelligent and creative in making *parikan* (Javanese rhymes) spontaneously. Lasmi agreed with it.

"Back then, during an event, she was asked, '... What is the joke rhymes, Las?' Because those who invited the Tayub were bald, I was inspired by his condition for making the lyrics like, '...It's pouring rain in the south, bald jokes inappropriate...' Wow,

everyone laughed. '... Las, you do not have any fear, don't you?' He is bald, bald, I make jokes. But yes, that's just a joke. If the *ledek* was me, everyone laughed happily. '... Las's rhymes are good,' they said."

Lasmi gave several examples of *parikan* that she made spontaneously in the past, like:

omah joglo madhep ngidul

(*joglo* house facing south)

nduwe bojo loro arang-arang kumpul

(having two partners but rarely meeting them)

Some of the *parikan* she composed also triggered controversy in certain groups. Sometimes the lyrics were considered impolite or offended certain beliefs/religions. Lasmi gave up because she had been reprimanded. "Just that one time," she said. She did not want to cause controversy anymore. Some examples of controversial *parikan* are the one in Randha Ngguguk:

Telane ditugel-tugel

(The sweet potato is cut into pieces)

Melu maratuwa nang ati marai kogel

(living with in-laws hurts the heart)

and in the "Kaji-Kaji" (Hajj, Hajj) lyrics below:

Ji kaji, pak kaji kethune putih

(Hajj, Hajj, Mr. Hajj wears a white cap)

Pak kaji kethune putih, pak kaji ra tau mulih

(Mr. Hajj wears a white cap, Mr. Hajj never comes home)

Even though it has good artistic value and humor, some people consider the lyrics impolite. They considered Lasmi not respecting the title of hajj and Islam. She had to change the lyrics of her songs several times for the listeners to accept. The warning she received made her give up. However, she became unable to express her creativity freely.

5. *Guarding the Body*

During her heyday, Lasmi was so in demand that she rarely came home. She could be home for a while, then went performing again. To keep her stamina and voice good, Lasmi used to drink *brotowali* herbs. Before the performance, she made a concoction of a drink consisting of milk and free-range duck egg yolk. She drank one large glass of it before the Tayub performance. Sometimes she replaced milk with soda so that it was not fishy. The soft-boiled egg yolks were mixed with soda. She believed that the concoction would increase her stamina when performing. Lasmi avoided some food and beverages, such as cold/iced drinks, spicy food, sour food, fried foods, and cucumber.

“I was picked up by a motorcycle. The performance lasted all day and night. At 09.00 AM, you had to arrive at the location. Then, at noon you had to be ready. In the afternoon, the performance would last until maghrib (dusk/twilight). The performance started again at 10.00 AM in the following day. It could be until dawn or up to 07.00 AM. If it's dawn, the youths performed. But now, during the day it's from noon to 04.00 PM and from 10.00 PM to midnight. It was difficult back then.”

Lasmi informed the difference between Tayub in her heydays and today's Tayub. The Tayub organizers usually picked her up with an *onthel* bicycle. She was hitchhiked to the inviter's house. There were not many motorbikes and land cars at that time. The makeup was also very different. She just wore low prices face powder, lipstick, a simple bun, *jarik* (traditional Javanese cloth with batik motives) with *kemben*, and *sampur* (a long patterned cloth used by dancers). Because of her thoroughness, she used all the simple makeup as best as possible. In her mind, the most important thing was to successfully entertain others with her voice and creativity in

making *parikan* and *wangsalan* (Javanese Rhymes). Now, the makeup worn by *ledek* is more diverse, starting from foundation, powder, lipstick, blush, false eyelashes, and so on. In terms of clothing, the *ledek* now do not wear a *kemben*, but a top or kebaya covering the body. Lasmi experienced changes in *ledek* clothes from *kemben* to *kebaya*. Even though she should wear a tank top, Lasmi agrees more with kebaya because *kemben* makes her breasts more visible. She felt uncomfortable with the male gaze that seemed to strip her naked. "Very disturbing," she said. In terms of music, Tayub is now mixed with Dangdut. Today's Tayub can be mixed with any song, even a Campursari.

"Well, now you can buy underwear with foam on the butt, it can make your body looks good. The butt looks smooth. It can shape the body even better. It costs fifty thousand rupiahs. The Purwodadi girls wear it now. How was it in the past? Well, in the past I only used a towel, hahaha!"

6. Devaluation of the Body

Female artists, including *waranggana*, will experience devaluation (a decrease in a person's value due to increasing age). Older *waranggana* are less desirable. They are also bullied. People mock their

body shape or body shame them as if to be attractive, one has to meet Euro-centric beauty standards, with light skin and a pointed nose. People also bully Lasmi, mocking her body and making her less confident. She several times did silicone injections on the face. At the age of more than 50, she feels she has quite a lot of experience in Tayub. Tayub now and before is very different. She also shares the secret of Tayub. According to her, old *waranggana* are less attractive.

"Those who get older will resign. It's like the older they are, the lower payment they receive. The price is also different, you have to share profit with co-dancer (the younger one). The problem is usually those who invite say something like, 'I will invite you, but you have to bring the younger ones, OK? This money will be shared with the younger ones, that's it, OK?' It is the condition for old *waranggana*, unless you are senior *waranggana* with good taste who have always been idolized and liked. It's usually the wealthy who can invite up to 10 senior *waranggana*. But it's a rare condition."

According to Lasmi's observations, a *ledek* is not as militant as she used to be. With a pretty face, the ability to memorize a few songs,

and young, they must have many invitations. You can even be asked to go on a date to stay at a hotel with those who dance with the *waranggana* on stage.

“Back then, I didn't have time to do that before. Besides, I also don't want to. I'm too busy, I once was not home for three months! Did I look like to have any free time? Also, I will be scolded by my husband.”

Lasmi has a typical Javanese natural beauty. However, it did not keep her from bullying. The audience body shamed her several times. Most of the body shaming she experienced was about her flat nose. Undaunted, she ignored the bullying as she had high self-confidence. Only in the 2000s did she first become acquainted with silicone injections. She admitted to injecting silicone into her nose and mouth because she was bullied about the shape of her nose.

“Well, I just wanted to make it a little pointed. Because I was called a pug, you know. The person who injected silicone was not a man, not a woman (transgender). What is her name? She's a *waria* (transwoman). I met her during recess. She said, '... Las, you are a famous artist. How come you have a flat nose? Please come to

my place in the afternoon; I will make it more pointed ...' I am afraid I cannot afford it. However, in the end, I was told I had to pay fifty thousand rupiahs.”

7. Lasmi during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Lasmi has performed less and less, especially in the past several years. PSBB (Large-Scale Social Restrictions) to suppress the spread of COVID-19 made Lasmi sit silently at home. Several shows had to be canceled. Her son, Eko, supports her and her ill mother's daily needs. Sometimes, Lasmi gets bored of having to sit all day long. Sometimes, she makes herself busy by busking. For her, it is not only about money. However, singing Tayub songs makes her heart sad. She busks while gathering the spirit of the past glory when she was a Tayub star. Lasmi wants to live the rest of her life simply. For her, her golden era is over. "I have had enough fun," she said. However, if there is an invitation to perform again, she will gladly accept it. Now, she just wants God to give her good health and strength to live the rest of her life, although her life is not as glorious as it used to be.

"In the past, I had fun and was applauded by many people. I am satisfied. Now, when you are old, you have to be grateful. You don't have much to think about.

If you made a mistake in the past, thank God for giving life to realize you were wrong, and apologize to God."

This study found that postcolonial feminism has drawn attention to the uncomfortable reality that colonialism is not over. The impacts colonialism and imperialism have had on the global order and global capitalism on the life of Tayub dancers continued to be exploited in Indonesia remains. This is often called neo-colonialism, defined as the use of economic, political, cultural, or other pressures to control or influence other countries, especially former dependencies. Postcolonial feminism has looked beyond the whitewashing of feminism to understand the nuance of power, geopolitics, and money at play in the oppression and exploitation of Tayub dancers, and thus for feminists to become accountable for their own actions and activism. In reality, feminism is not feminism unless it is postcolonial.

CONCLUSION

Meeting Lasmi, and seeing how she articulates every experience of her life, how she reminisces, is a pride that never expires. Hearing stories directly from the Tayub legend is an experience that will be imprinted in the researcher's memory. Through the Tayub performances, she appears and

speaks. Through art, she wants to show herself to the world attached to patriarchal domination. On stage, there is a noble task that is so big that she has to carry, entertaining the public through art while upholding professionalism. She has never canceled a promise even though her female body asks, "Do I fully have the right over myself?" At home, she also has to carry out errands. Everything must be finished. That is a woman to her.

It is hard to imagine how it feels to be Lasmi. The process of becoming a *waranggana* is not easy. She spent years studying, struggling from one stage to another, and ignoring the fatigue in her body, even in a puerperal condition. She hides all fatigue through a beautiful melodious voice. Being the prima donna on stage does not put Lasmi in a noble position in her household. Unfortunately, Lasmi's body was not spared from violence and bullying. The price she had to pay was high. The most important thing for her is to remain a professional artist.

Her name has become a legend in the North Kendeng Mountains and its surroundings. She stays in her successors' stories. Her body is indeed old and sometimes sick, but her face suggests that age is not more than numbers. "Tayub is still and will always live in me," said Lasmi. The researcher hopes that her name will always be remembered. Hopefully, the story of Lasmi from Kendeng Mountains will open readers' eyes to remember that

women always have a place. Women must be strong.

Human sociality can be understood as an organism. Almost all aspects of life can be understood in a phenomenological sense as part of a life system. A proper

perspective for considering life and interpreting social reality is extremely important in determining the direction and orientation of humankind.

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Al-Qur'an Portrays Women's Bodies: Critical interpretation of verses on existence, freedom, and morality

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ABSTRACT

The oppression of women often stems from the way a person or tradition interprets the body. From ancient times to the present, the history of women's bodies has always been about the history of oppression, specifically about the fate of women's bodies in the face of patriarchal culture. When women's bodies often become symbols of various forms of oppression, liberating women must start from their liberation efforts that are embodied in patriarchal biased interpretations, both in formal and cultural interpretations. At this point, there is a need for an interpretation that departs from other possibilities in understanding verses related to women. The focus of the study is to criticize interpretations of the verses of existence, freedom, and morality of women interpreted through Merleau Ponty's phenomenology of perception. This stems from the author's basic assumption that when the Qur'an is understood as 'rahmatan lil alamin' (a mercy to all worlds), it is impossible for the Qur'an to produce discriminatory interpretations.

KEYWORDS: *existence, female body, freedom, morality, patriarchal interpretation*

INTRODUCTION

No one can deny the fact that humans live in the world (*Dasein*) with others (*Mitsein*), a situation of worldliness that confirms the character as well as projects the meaning of their existentialism. In this situation of worldliness, the body becomes the first marker of the subject's presence in the world, a worldliness that requires no consciousness outside the body. Undoubtedly, the body becomes the initial moment of one's contact with the world, along with a little

meaning that dissolves and embodies in it.

Not as simple as bones wrapped in flesh, the body becomes a vehicle for one's worldliness, which requires the formation of a knowledge of self-existence. As described by Adian (2010, p. 98), knowledge is only possible to the extent that the body is involved in the process of a person's appreciation of the world, especially if it concerns the female body with its various interpretive complexities. Unfortunately, in some contexts, women often lose the

connection between themselves and the world, which also reduces and even negates the meaning of existence, freedom, and the foundation of morality. This often stems from the fact that women's bodies are thrown into the world with vaginas. Something that seems simple becomes complicated and problematic in women's daily lives.

Being born with a vaginal body in a society that still affirms patriarchal culture has reduced the female body to the most absurd and unfortunate situation, so the meaning of the body is never complete. As a biological fact, women's bodies often experience sadistic, even tragic, shifts in meaning in the process of existing in the world. As a result, women's psychology often experiences social deprivation. Women's bodies tend to be perceived in a patriarchal way and are interpreted as nothing more than commodities, whether economic, political, cultural, or religious commodities. In this situation, the meaning of women's bodies tends to be exploited in such a way using market logic, a kind of logic that positions all forms of expression of freedom over the body based on the logic of transactions, pleasure, and desire.

In the frame of market logic, the body immediately becomes meaningless. A woman's expression of freedom, reflected in how she treats her body, is immediately shackled by meanings that negate the meaning of freedom of expression itself. Women's sexuality is thrown into the territory of power market contestation through politicization and commodification of the body. In the political realm, to borrow Prabasmoro's (2016, p. 292)

idea, the relationship between the body, sexuality, and power forms a spectrum of knowledge with a patriarchal bias. It is common for power-knowledge relations to repress the meaning of women's bodies in the biases of masculinity power.

Not much different from the politicization of the body, with all its aesthetic character, passion, sensuality, and eroticism, the female body is often caught in the shackles of capitalism. The body is often peddled as a profit-maker, like the main pulse of economic commodities (Piliang, 2020, p. 308). This phenomenon is manifested, for example, in the *Miss World* event, which is specifically a big opportunity for beauty companies. Without realizing it, this phenomenon often influences women's mindset regarding the fulfillment of beauty standardization according to market tastes. As a result, women flock to buy a variety of beauty products without considering their needs, suitability, and wisdom. Instead of empowering women by giving them space to express themselves, women's bodies are swallowed by the valley of capitalism.

Like a datum that passively suffers misfortune, the oppression of women's bodies also spreads in religious discourses. Women's bodies are often interpreted as religious commodities hidden behind patriarchal dogmas and interpretations. The implication is that women are positioned as sub-existence, often legitimized by the interpretation of Qur'anic verses, about the process of Eve's creation from Adam's rib, as illustrated in the

interpretation of QS. 4:1 which states:

“O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one (Adam), and created his mate (Eve) from him; and from them He multiplied men and women. Fear Allah in whose name you ask one another and (maintain) kinship. Verily, Allah is always watching over you.”

Referring to the verse, some classical scholars interpreted the creation of Eve as a sub-existence of Adam. Quoting Kodir (2019, p. 237), Ath-Thabary (p. 513) interprets the words “*min nafsini wahidah*” as “one self,” namely Adam. Meanwhile, the word *zawjaha* is interpreted as his partner, Eve. Ath-Thabary based this interpretation on *isra'iliyyat* narrations through the companions Ibn' Abbas and Ibn Mas'ud. Borrowing Hanafi's (2016, p. 150) understanding, At-Thabary's interpretation is in line with the redaction contained in the Old Testament, which reads:

“It is said that when Adam was deep in sleep, God took one of the ribs from his body. After that, from that rib, God created a woman who was able to reassure Adam's life, namely Eve.”

At this point, many interpretations say that Eve is nothing but a part of Adam's body (rib), which then gives birth to the meaning of the male body as the initial source of the essence of his human existence. This kind of interpretation of sub-existence is then used as the basic foundation in interpreting the relationship as well as the distinction between men and

women in religious discourse. The implication is that a situation of subordination is formed in all aspects of women's lives, both private and public (Kodir, 2019, p. 236).

Because of this subordination, women's bodies are caught in the web of standardization of piety adopted by men. Women's piety in the public sphere is often not defined in their work and leadership but is manifested as far as men's morals are maintained. Instead of nurturing women's piety and bringing modesty to their bodies, patriarchal interpretations often expose and obscure women's subjectivity. For example, the prohibition of a woman leaving the house without a mahram is often based on the interpretation of QS. 33:33 which reads:

“And remain in your houses, and do not be adorned and (behave) like the people of the former ignorance; and perform the prayer, pay the alms, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Verily, Allah intends to remove sin from you, O ahl al-bayt, and to cleanse you as cleanly as possible.”

The phrase “let you remain in your homes” is increasingly emphasized as a prohibition of women's presence in public spaces. This is often strictly linked to the stigmatization of the female body, that is, the body as a source of *fitnah*. Such interpretations are often linked and reinforced by the Prophet's hadiths. For example, the hadith narrated by Imam Sahl bin Sa'd which means:

"I have left no greater fitnah for men than women." (HR. Al-Bukhari)

Not infrequently, such hadith texts are also used to validate domestication and stigmatization of women's bodies.

Based on the abovementioned patriarchal situation, this paper attempts to respond to the perpetuation of patriarchal interpretations. Various readings and reinterpretations of sacred texts are attempted to reconcile the misfortunes of women's bodies. However, this is not sufficiently established to dissect the root of the problems experienced by women's bodies and their projection in the public sphere. This is because a more critical look is needed in the ontological area, namely the female body. To elaborate on the above issues, phenomenological arguments may be adapted as the best argument to dismantle the existence of patriarchal interpretations.

Argument of Phenomenology

Borrowing Moran's interpretation (2000, p. 2) as cited by Purnama (2018, p. 71), phenomenology is one of the many famous philosophical traditions that have developed since the beginning of the 20th century. Initiated and launched by Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), phenomenology coexists with many other major currents of philosophical thought. The term phenomenology comes from the Greek words *phainomenon* (*phainomai*, to appear) and *logos* (*reason*). Attempting to dismiss all

assumptions that often harm concrete human experience, phenomenology emphasizes the oblivion of everything from the existence of presuppositions (Adian, 2010, p. 5). As Husserl originally intended; namely, building a philosophy that is free from fallacies and hidden presuppositions—which is reflected in the dictum he emphasized as "returning to the things themselves" (Tjaya, 2020, p. 4).

As one of the philosophical disciplines that does not struggle with the search for the essence behind appearances, phenomenology concentrates entirely on the appearance itself. The tradition of phenomenology is increasingly widespread and always gives its phenomenological breath in several disciplines, such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, and architecture. In addition, phenomenology has also given birth to variants in its development. One of them is the phenomenology of perception initiated by Merleau-Ponty (Adian, 2010, p. 20).

The basic assumption of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology is to critically examine the understanding of perception. For Merleau-Ponty, perception is not simply a physical struggle between a person and their world. However, more than that, perceiving means being aware of the sensed quality. In Merleau-Ponty's understanding, awareness always encompasses the bodily process of the subject as a whole (Adian, 2010, p. 81).

The adaptation of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception in this research will

always play a fairly central role. This is because having a body is no longer considered just having a bodily organ. Through the body, women's existence will always be the starting point in understanding their world. At this point, Merleau Ponty's phenomenology of perception tries to discern how women find their existence, freedom, and morality. Moreover, the freedom in question is based on the principles of ethical responsibility, in accordance with the moral values in the Qur'an.

METHODS

This research is qualitative research, a type of approach or search that focuses on deepening and understanding a phenomenon's meaning (Raco, J., 2010, p. 7). This research also uses a hermeneutical thinking style to find new meanings interpreted from previously developed discourses. This is based on the notion of hermeneutics itself. Referring to Palmer (1969, p. 44) as described by Purnama (2018, p. 127), hermeneutics is generally categorized into six definitions: (1) hermeneutics as a Biblical theory of exegesis, (2) hermeneutics as philological methodology, (3) hermeneutics as a science of linguistic understanding, (4) hermeneutics as a methodological foundation of the social-human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*), (5) hermeneutics as the phenomenology of Dasein and existential understanding, and (6) hermeneutics as a system of interpretation.

Based on this qualitative and hermeneutical character, this research is categorized as library-based research that is read critically

(critical research), namely research conducted by collecting data and critically examining references related to the object under study. In addition, this research uses Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception as its methodological reference. Phenomenology is used because this research constantly studies an experience. Phenomenology is a philosophical method that wrestles with assumptions to clarify essence (Adian, 2010, p. 5).

The elaboration in this study contains Qur'anic interpretations that wrestle with the verses of the female body, both related to existence, freedom, and moral consequences following Qur'anic principles. By using the details and basic principles of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, the issues surrounding the female body are elaborated and interpreted to find a unique interpretation of the female body.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Understanding Phenomenology

Experience is widely discussed in various philosophical traditions. The tradition of empiricism asserts that there is no knowledge outside of experience, while rationalism tends to put experience as secondary objects that are thought about to become knowledge. The question is what makes an experience phenomenologically valuable and even a source of critical phenomenology.

Conceptualized and popularized by Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), phenomenology is one of the many influential philosophical traditions

that have developed since the beginning of the 20th century. Its existence coexists with other major currents of philosophical thought, such as Neo-Kantianism, Idealism, Logicism, Pragmatism, Empiricism, and Positivism. In fact, phenomenology has a close relationship with these various philosophical traditions, both in a positive (affirmative) and negative (critical) framework (Purnama, 2018, p. 71). However, in contrast to the tendency of these various philosophical traditions to place experience as a reflective object, phenomenology returns experience to its pre-reflective character so that an experience has phenomenological value, both descriptive and critical.

The term phenomenology itself comes from the Greek, namely *phainomenon* (*phainomai*; appearing) and *logos* (reason). Phenomenology, which was initiated by Husserl, is then known as the science of appearances (phenomena); that is, the science of what appears in the subject's experience. At this point, phenomenology seeks to dismiss various assumptions that contaminate concrete human experience, while emphasizing efforts to embrace "the thing itself"—which escapes all presuppositions (Adian, 2010, p. 5).

In general, phenomenology seeks to return philosophy to the *Lebenswelt* (everyday life), namely returning to the richness of concrete human experience praxis, close and full of deep meaning. The richness of this meaning emerges from its involvement with the phenomenal world. This is because human involvement in daily praxis has always preceded any form of

reflective-theoretical observation (Purnama, 2018, p. 72).

Through the iconic dictum proclaimed by Husserl (2001, p. xviii), "We must return to the thing itself" (*Wir wollen auf die 'Sachen selbst' zurückgehen*), phenomenology is generally about returning to the thing itself, without first being buried in various suppositions of subjectivity that cover it (Suseno, Franz, et al., 2011, p. 196).

Before being popularized and conceptualized by Husserl, the term *phenomenology* first appeared in the space of philosophical discourse in the 19th century through the writings of several philosophers such as Johann Heinrich Lambert, Immanuel Kant, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, and Hegel. However, Husserl's greatest inspiration did not refer to these philosophers but to Franz Brentano's descriptive psychology related to the concept of intentionality (the directionality of consciousness on something/object) (Moran, 2000, p. 6).

Husserl emphasized that no matter how complex one's logical propositions and philosophical assumptions are, the world lived as experience is always broader and deeper than both. This also characterizes phenomenology as a transcendental thinking model. As a model of transcendental thinking, phenomenology requires a phenomenologist to abandon various assumptions embedded and crystallized in a particular tradition and then enter the heart of the phenomenon itself. To allow the phenomenon to be revealed clearly before being buried by various assumptions that cover it (Al-Fayyadl, 2009, p. 24). This requires

one to constantly postpone various theoretical formulations of reality (*epoché*).

The phenomenological tradition underwent a radical change from Husserl's descriptive phenomenology to Heidegger's existential phenomenology. Through an examination of the iconic dictum proclaimed by Husserl, to "return to reality itself", which was originally found in the object, to "return to the subject or consciousness", Heidegger's phenomenological tradition gives a new direction to phenomenological discernment. According to Heidegger, the "return to the subject" has the tendency to forget concrete existence, so what happens is just a repetition of the mistakes of idealism.

The fragrance of idealism inherent in Husserl's phenomenology always affirms consciousness as the center of reality. Meanwhile, Heidegger's phenomenology pivots on a more fundamental issue, namely the issue of Being, which, according to him, has long been lost in the history of Western philosophical construction (Purnama, 2018, p. 74). At this point, Heidegger focuses his phenomenological gaze on going beyond the category of subject-object duality, namely by focusing on the "human world"—which he calls "being-in-the-world" (*in-der-welt-sein*) (Adian, 2010, p. 50).

Heidegger's radicalization of Husserl's phenomenology led him to an understanding that consciousness is not superior to Being, but on the contrary, Being is superior to consciousness because it always precedes any attempt to theorize about it. No doubt, consciousness is

only a mode of revealing Ada (*Alètheia*) in its situatedness and timelessness; that is, the revelation of meaning in the history of Ada. Thus, Heidegger's phenomenology is more closely related to the question of *how* rather than *what*. As in, 'how does something unfold before us as a reality that contains meaning in the world?' At this point, Heidegger's phenomenology is linked to the existentiality of *Dasein*; 'being-there', worldwide (Heidegger, n.d., p. 59).

Starting from Heidegger's phenomenology that pivots on the search for the meaning of Being, Sartre then provides phenomenological discernment in a broader frame as a complement to his teacher's phenomenology (Simbolon, 2020, p. 94). Adapting Moran's (2000, p. 358) interpretation, as cited by Adian (2010, p. 72), Sartre's phenomenology stems from Cartesian philosophy mediated through the idealistic views of his teachers, especially Leon Brunschvicg (1869-1944). Sartre's entanglement with Cartesian philosophy stems from his efforts to break down the ambiguity of idealistic formulations by embracing the clarity and discernment of a concept.

Instead of being attached to Cartesian philosophy, Sartre rejects the Cartesian subject-object dualism that is lame in linking existence and consciousness. This is triggered by the illusion of Descartes' thought, which is a kind of involvement of substance terms in understanding consciousness. For Sartre, consciousness is neither substance nor density but an uncharged void that distinguishes itself from objects (Adian, 2010, p. 73). Furthermore, Sartre said that self-consciousness is

the mode of human existence; only humans are able to realize themselves (consciousness cannot be reflected as an object). Although different, both consciousness and objects are impossible to separate from each other, as Sartre's adage states that "consciousness is always aware of itself, insofar as it is aware of objects outside itself" (Adian, 2010, p. 77).

If Husserl's phenomenology tries to describe the psychology of the subject, its existence is questioned by Heidegger. Linked to the object by Sartre, the three phenomenological traditions still presuppose the existence of a subject-object dichotomy. A more critical and radical view is needed to overcome the dichotomy problem, so the subject-object dualism that has long been the paradigm of Western philosophical thought needs to be overcome and even surpassed.

Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology

Among the phenomenologists who tried to overcome the subject-object dichotomy problem that has long been rooted in the philosophical tradition is Merleau-Ponty. Referring to Guenther's (2020) statement, the position of his thought in the phenomenological tradition marks the emergence of critical phenomenology. Describing phenomena is about describing and engaging in efforts to find possibilities for other meanings.

The important difference between classical (descriptive) and critical phenomenology lies in the extent to which intentionality is understood as the direction of consciousness (intentional action/*noesis*) towards the intended

object (intentional object/*noema*). If descriptive phenomenology interprets the *noesis-noema* relationship as a process of consciousness that constitutes the intentional object—but not vice versa, then in critical phenomenology, the two form a reciprocal relationship that alternately determines and constitutes each other. In this case, Husserl's phenomenology takes the first position, while Merleau-Ponty's is the second (Guenther, 2020, p. 12).

Phenomenology of Perception: The Embodied Body and Perception

The understanding of the body has always been contrasted with the soul or mind. Such an issue then results in a unique understanding of global perception. At this point, through his phenomenological discernment, Merleau-Ponty seeks "to recover the often misunderstood world of perception."

Simply put, the term perception stems from the Latin *perceptio/percipio* (the act of recognizing), which is then articulated at the intersection of two root words, *percipio* (perceive/catch) and *-ion* (see). Through this link, perception tends to be understood as the ability to capture something outside of oneself using sensory tools. This understanding is in line with what has been embedded in the tradition of empiricism and intellectualism. However, Merleau-Ponty's understanding of perception contrasts with the understanding that both traditions have introduced.

In the view of empiricism, perception is a sensing that comes from outside—which is then passively received by consciousness.

Then, intellectualism considers that perception is a pure consciousness that occurs in the mechanism of the subject's mind, so it always overcomes the empirical world. Meanwhile, for Merleau-Ponty, perception is more than just a person's perceptual activities in describing the world, not limited to listening to sounds, seeing, or touching objects. According to Merleau-Ponty, perception is an intention of the whole existence; that is, one's way of being in the pre-reflective world—*être-au-monde* or *in-der-Welt-sein* (being-in-the-world), which always shows that consciousness is global in concrete existence and is always an embodied consciousness (Adian, 2010, p. 110). Consequently, such traditional analysis often misses the complexity of the world from the subject's observation.

In constructing his phenomenology of perception, Merleau-Ponty sees humans, first of all, not as a bodiless mind but as being-in-the-world. Thus, human perception cannot be understood as a detached contemplation but rather a person's active engagement in the world that begins with the perception of his or her body, that the body is a human anchor in the world, and that without the body, humans cannot be understood (Tjaya, 2020, p. 37).

Through this new understanding of the nature of perception, Merleau-Ponty seeks to completely break down past assumptions that have taken root in the Western philosophical tradition, namely radically divorcing the connection between 'the physical' (body) and 'the mental' (mind) (Tjaya, 2020, p. 70). The gap between the two often reduces the body to a

complementary entity of the subject. For Merleau-Ponty, the body cannot be understood as just skin, bones, and blood, but as a body that is global. At this point, Merleau-Ponty proves that through his body, the subject is able to not only perceive but also understand the world and his existence (Dewi, 2015, p. 81).

As "the speaking trace of an existence," the meaning of one's existence is only possible to be understood to the extent of the body's involvement in perceiving the world; that is, "we are our bodies and consciousness is not only locked in the head" (Adian, 2010, p. 109). Adapting Tjaya's (2020, p. 137) description, a person's existence in the world is never abstract as it decays in Western philosophy but is always concrete in its embodiment. In Adian's analysis (2010, p. 100), Merleau-Ponty asserts that the existential condition is the intertwining of the body and the world as a whole.

In addition to affirming the close relationship between the body and the world, the above description implies that the body and the world cannot be understood as two different entities but as threads in a knit. The two are not intertwined in a series of situations-and-reactions/stimuli-and-responses, but as an intertwined fabric (Tjaya, 2020, p. 92). Merleau-Ponty's emphasis on the intertwining of the body and the world stems from Husserl's thoughts, who often discussed the issue of "intertwining" (*Verflechtung*) the self and the world (Adian, 2010, p. 101).

Borrowing Tjaya's (2020, p. 138) expression, the close intertwining of the body with the world always makes the body subject to changes in

time. In addition, the body is the *locus* (place) of human self-expression—and because self-existence is revealed through the body, the self is impossible to fix; that is, the body is always developing over time. The nature of time emerges from the presence of an embodied subject. Undoubtedly, as an embodied self, the subject's perception of the world is always based on a unique perspective, not only in time but also in space.

In Dewi's (2015, p. 86) understanding, space is a three-dimensional condition for the body in receiving and experiencing phenomena, thus enabling knowledge formation. Meanwhile, time is a fourth-dimensional concept that always shows the subjectivity of the body in the world. Thus, as a bodied subject, all thoughts, feelings, and freedom in the world are always revealed through the body. This connection between the body and the world ultimately creates a sensational, expressive, and ambiguous condition due to the necessity of human existence that is spatial and temporal.

*Phenomenology of Perception:
Sensation, Expression, and
the Ambiguity of the Globalized Body*

The interplay of the body and the world leads to the emergence of various unique situations in the subject, as well as being a practical consequence of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception; that the ubiquity of the body produces a unique sensation; that the ubiquity of the body displays a unique expression; that the ubiquity of the body presupposes a unique situation of ambiguity. Why is this so?

The contact of the body and the world, which intertwines and determines each other, always produces a unique sensation. The sensation is formed because the worldliness of the body is both the anchor and the origin of the body's contact with the world. Sensation presupposes a process of human perception of the world to obtain various kinds of information captured through the five senses, then becomes a set of signals that contain certain meanings (Azisi, 2020, p. 192). Through this interpretation, Merleau-Ponty arrived at an interpretation that consciousness is not only cognitive but also physical. Thus, the body's contact with the world is not limited to a matter of knowledge (*knowing*) but also about how the body receives sensations (*sensing*) of the world concretely. Without a doubt, sensation does not mislead but instead becomes a trigger for reflective action (Dewi, 2015, p. 80).

As a sensation, the body's contact with the world is just a moment of personal emotional feeling. Sensation is a pre-reflective condition that rumbles in one's mind. No doubt, sensation is only possible to be understood and interpreted to the extent that it has been embodied through various verbal and non-verbal expressions. Through an expression, sensation—initially emotional, personal, and pre-reflective—finds its network of interpretative meaning. The expression has elevated personal experience to a phenomenal level that demands ethical accountability in the public sphere.

*Women in the Spectrum
of Interpretation (Tafsir)*

In the belief of the Muslim community, the Qur'an, which was revealed through the mouth of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, is believed to be the greatest miracle in which the treatise of the previous prophets is contained. So central is the Qur'an in shaping awareness and fostering a fundamental understanding that the content of the Qur'an is the best guidance for humankind, especially the Muslim community. It is not only about fulfilling one's piety in this world but also about the self that extends to the world after death.

The discussion about women in the consciousness of Muslim society, especially around the issues of existence, freedom, and morality, cannot be separated from how the Qur'an is interpreted and understood, then translated into everyday life. Not infrequently, the Qur'an, which in principle teaches about how to glorify women, is actually used as legitimization for patriarchal actions through its biased interpretation; that women are often interpreted as sub-existence who lose their authority of freedom before men; that the role of women tends to be subordinated under the power of men; that the struggle for women's liberation from male power is often not based on—even beyond—the limits of morality, especially Qur'anic morality.

In the spectrum of tafsir literature, the issue of sub-existence, subordination, and the loss of moral responsibility is based on several Qur'anic verses. In the context of women's sub-existence, the Qur'anic verse that is often referred to then

used as legitimacy to reduce and even negate the meaning of their existence, is based on the verse about the process of Eve's creation from Adam's rib, as illustrated in QS. 4:1:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ
وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا
كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً^٥

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

“O mankind, fear your Lord who created you from a single being (Adam) and He created from him his mate (Eve). From them Allah multiplied many men and women. Fear Allah in whose name you ask one another and (maintain) kinship. Verily, Allah is always watching over you.”

The above verse illustrates that the process of human creation was originally from a single existence (*nafs wahidah*), which became the origin of human diversity in the world (the origin of creation).

In this regard, the majority of mufassirs, as described by Ar-Razi (1981, p. 167), identify this existence as Adam, who became the origin of all human existence on earth. According to Ibn Abbas, as quoted by Ar-Razi, Adam was named because his creation was formed from various types of soil elements, both red and black soil, both fertile and barren soil. This perspective is further strengthened by various narrations, as described by Ath-Thabary in his tafsir, including the interpretation narrated by Muhammad ibn al-Husain, from Ahmad ibn al-Mufadhhol, from Asbath, from as-Sudy, that “the meaning of your creation from a

single existence is from Adam (Ath-Thabari, Abu Ja'far, n.d., p. 339)."

Starting from this single existence interpreted as Adam, his partner (*zaujaha*) was created. The majority of mufassirs interpret *zaujaha* as Eve, who was created from a rib (*dhol'un*). Ath-Thabary explained that what is meant by *zaujaha* is Eve, who was created from the lower rib (*qushaira*) of Adam, as legitimized by the narration from Muhammad ibn Umar, from Abu' Ashim, from 'Isha, from Ibn Abi Najih, from Mujahid (Ath-Thabari, n.d., p. 341).

The problem is that the interpretation that positions Eve as a sub-existence of Adam, through interpretations such as the above, suggests an interpretation that the essence of human existence begins with the male body. This kind of sub-existent interpretation is often used as an initial legitimization in interpreting power relations and the distinction between men and women, which has implications for the interpretation of women with a patriarchal bias. In fact, the meaning that Eve was created from Adam's rib is not the only interpretation that has developed among the *mufassirs*.

As Ar-Razi (1981, p. 167) described, Abu Muslim al-Asfahani interpreted *wa khalaqa minha zaujaha* with the meaning of *min jinsiha* (of its kind). This kind of meaning gives an idea that each of Adam and Eve is an autonomous existence. While in its chronological context, not in its existential context, the verse provides an understanding that the creation of Adam came before Eve. Ibn' Ashur, on the other hand, expressed another opinion that the meaning of *wa khalaqa minha zaujaha*

is interpreted as *min baqiyyah ath-thinah* (from the rest of the land), the creation of Adam.

The interpretation that affirms Eve as a sub-existence of Adam often leads to various subordination in all aspects of women's lives, both in the private and public spheres. At this point, there is a need for an interpretation that departs from other possibilities in understanding the verse above. As long as this possibility is not revealed, the subordination of women will continue to be perpetuated. For example, the role of women is often limited to the domestic sphere, which then reduces, even negates, their freedom. The practice of subordination is legitimized in the consciousness of Muslim society through QS: 33:33:

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ
الْأُولَىٰ وَأَقِمْنَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتِينَ الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِعْنَ
اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ
الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

"Remain in your houses and do not adorn (and behave) like the people of the pre-Islamic era. Establish prayer, pay the zakat, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Verily, Allah wants only to remove sin from you, O ahl al-bayt, and to cleanse you as cleanly as possible."

The above verse illustrates the command for women to stay at home and not to show their adornments.

The term *qarna* in the verse above implies the command to remain silent (*aqama wa istaqarra*). According to Ibn' Ashur, this verse is interpreted as an order addressed to the Prophet's wives to always remain silent at home to maintain and

affirm their honor, which is worth worshipping. Ibn' Ashur further explained that the obligation to remain silent at home is only specific to the Prophet's wives, while women other than them are only worth perfection (Ibn' Ashur, 1984, p. 10).

The prohibition illustrated through the expression *laa tabarajna* means not to show jewelry or behavior that can harm women's honor. Ar-Razi explained that the term *la tabarruj* means the prohibition of bad behavior, such as acting flirtatious (*tataghannaj*) and lewd actions (*tatakassar*), or the meaning of the prohibition of displaying jewelry (*tadzahir az-zinah*) as was done by the women of ignorance (Ar-Razi, 1981, p. 210).

The above interpretation gives an idea that women's honor lies within the walls of their homes and their modesty. However, the command that is explicitly illustrated in the term *wa qarna fii buyutikunna* (stay in your houses) and the prohibition in the term *laa tabarajna tabarruj al-Jahiliyyah* (do not adorn/ behave like the people of the jahiliyyah) are not as narrow as the prohibition of women to move in public spaces.

Often, this verse is immediately narrowed down to the prohibition of leaving the house or limiting freedom of expression that curbs women's role in the public sphere so that the interpretation becomes a patriarchal bias. Whereas this verse arises from a unique situation, that there are various prerequisites, contexts, and certain conditions that encourage the implementation of the meaning of the command. First, this command is specific only to the

Prophet's wives, not women in general.

Second, the prohibition of leaving the house for the Prophet's wives is not absolute (*muthlaq*), considering that the Prophet's wives had left the house to accompany him to fight, preach, and do various other activities. This gives the term great-grandmother a metaphorical meaning so that it is not limited to the physical house but conditions that resemble the meaning of the house in the form of security guarantees, honor, and glory of women. Moreover, in a narration quoted by Ibn' Ashur, the Prophet said, "Allah allowed the Prophet's wives to leave the house because of their needs" (Ibn' Ashur, 1984, p. 11). This is further emphasized by the action taken by Siti Aisha when she went to Bashrah to lead the Battle of Jamal. In Ibn' Ashur's observation, Aisha's leaving home for the benefit of the Muslim community is an area of *ijtihad*, so it does not necessarily abrogate her obligation to stay at home as stated in the verse above, nor does it necessarily harm her honor as the Prophet's wife. (Ibn 'Ashur, 1984, p. 12).

For Muslim women, the honor and glory of women embodied in certain principles, as illustrated in the interpretation of the above verses, basically arises from a faith commitment that has its own moral consequences. Affirmed in QS. 74:38:

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ رَهِينَةٌ

"Everyone is responsible for what he or she has done."

This verse implies that the souls created are a *rahinah* (pledge, promise, confinement, limit). Thus, the freedom/efforts to liberate women in the public and private

spheres are always limited by their existential commitment to their faith. At this point, freedom that often violates the existential commitment of a Muslim woman cannot be said to be a freedom based on the Qur'an. So the problem is about dismantling the position of women who are considered sub-existence into an autonomous existence and giving total freedom—without harming their commitment as Muslims. At this point, this research seeks to find other possibilities in portraying the patriarchal biases legitimized by the verses above, namely by aiming at it from the perspective of the phenomenology of perception.

Women's Body in the View of Phenomenology of Perception

Discussing women's bodies phenomenologically is always about discussing the complexity of women's reality (bodies). It is as if many things are unreadable in the process of understanding women's bodies—due to the noise of various interpretations that suppress their existence. As a result, women have to face the bitter reality of being a sub-existence that often exposes various oppressions on their bodies. Such a reality often overturns the verses of the Qur'an that are interpreted patriarchally, especially related to the verses of existence and freedom.

In relation to the verse of the creation of women/Eve, many interpretations solidify that Eve is nothing more than a part/derivative of Adam's body (rib)—which then often subverts the meaning of men as the origin of human existence. This verse, if interpreted using phenomenology, will always revive

the sub-existent meaning of the female body. This is because each subject undoubtedly realizes its existence through each body. In a sense, both men and women always realize and find their existence through their respective bodies—with various experiences that are unique, concrete, and full of meaning. No doubt, women's bodies are bound to find sovereign freedom—which is not bound by the power outside themselves, as long as women's bodies have been freed from the meaning of male sub-existence.

As long as women's bodies are submerged in the meaning of bodies that are not autonomous, women will continue to be entangled in various value standardizations adopted by men. Not infrequently, women are always considered pious figures as long as their bodies are able to shed male morality. Instead of finding themselves as pious figures, patriarchal interpretations often bury women's presence in the public sphere. For example, the command to stay at home and the prohibition of *tabaruj* for women are often based on the interpretation of QS. 33:33. In fact, if interpreted phenomenologically, the verse actually presupposes a new meaning of the female body—which still intersects with the existing meaning. This is because the connection between women's bodies and the world encourages the emergence of various situations unique to women; that is, they always bring about sensations, expressions, and ambiguities of the body. Moreover, the three situations always require each other—the sensation of the female body is only possible to be understood and interpreted to the

extent that it is translated into various expressions, and the expression of the female body made possible by a sensation always presupposes a unique condition of ambiguity or termed the paradox of expression. No doubt, the paradox presupposes that a typical expression refers to an objective meaning that has been sedimented since the beginning. However, on the other hand, it presupposes creativity that demands a novelty value.

At this point, the meaning of the command to stay at home and the prohibition of *tabaruj* on women's bodies illustrated in QS. 33:33 allows for another interpretation, namely that women are allowed to go out of the house, as long as there is a need that brings benefits in it; women are allowed to adorn themselves, as long as they do not harm their honor. Thus, women's bodies can be said to have found freedom over their bodies.

Instead of being liberated from various patriarchal meanings, women are tricked by the freedom of their bodies. Inevitably, the freedom that often forgets the limits of her existential commitment as a Muslim often makes her body slip back into the pit of misfortune, especially entangled in economic-political power. Borrowing Piliang's (2015, pp. 263-264) understanding, in the context of political economy, women's bodies tend to be explored to the extreme—then dragged into what is called libidonomy (libidonomics). The body and all its libidinal potentials are always used as the central element and *raison d'être* (purpose) in reaping maximum profits (added values)—and capitalist breeding. No doubt, in the grip of capitalism, women's bodies are not

only explored for their use value—workers, prostitutes, servants—but also produced and reproduced for their exchange value—model girls, showgirls, hostesses. Further, they are now stripped of their sign value—erotic magazines, erotic art, erotic videos, erotic photography, and erotic films.

At this point, the freedom that often exceeds the limits—and often violates the existential commitment as a Muslim, cannot be said to be a morally responsible freedom.

CONCLUSION

Talking about women from a phenomenological perspective is always about discussing how complex it is to be a woman. Born amid a society steeped in patriarchal beliefs, women's bodies are often pushed to the brink of misfortune and faced with various forms of oppression.

Departing from the unrest over the various oppressions that are often attached to women's bodies, instead of being increasingly disturbed by the noise of various interpretations of patriarchal bias that tend to legitimize the oppression, the author believes that other possibilities can be revealed from the meanings that have been obscured.

This research is a unique combination: using a phenomenological approach from the philosophical tradition to uncover other possibilities of the meaning of a Qur'anic interpretation. Women's liberation efforts from various patriarchally biased interpretations can find

ethically responsible freedom according to the Qur'an's values.

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Female SUPELTAS' Masculinity in Malang

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to discover masculinity in female SUPELTAS and the factors that influence masculinity in female SUPELTAS (traffic control volunteers) in Malang. This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach. Sources of data were from interviews and documentation obtained by researchers. Data collection techniques used by researchers were observations, interviews, and documentation. The researchers adopted Miles Huberman's data analysis in the form of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The results of this study suggested (1) there were two forms of masculinity in female SUPELTAS in Malang, namely masculine personality in the form of being assertive, wise, independent, brave, and loud and masculine in appearance in the form of short hair, wearing a hat, and wearing pants; (2) factors that influence masculinity in female SUPELTAS in Malang were SUPELTAS stipulations and working on the streets.

KEYWORDS: *construction, Malang, masculinity, SUPELTAS*

INTRODUCTION

Malang, one of the big cities in East Java province, is part of the Malang district (Saffanah, 2018, p. 168). It is a bustling city, so traffic jams are common everywhere. The increase in vehicles due to the increased population in urban areas has created congestion in various urban corners (Sari, 2020, p. 4). The busy conditions of urban roads make them prone to congestion and accidents at intersections or distribution areas, especially those that do not have red light facilities. It is often a concern for road users.

The main road accommodates traffic that supports the development of people's lives to experience rapid progress, especially in urban areas. Cities are places where transportation traffic, land, sea, and air, experiences significant changes and developments. The number of transportations develops, especially in people mobility. This condition raises complex problems, especially in traffic jams and accidents (Mulyadi, 2016, p. 1).

Generally, congestions result in economic and immaterial losses, such as experiencing stress because

of frustration for not reaching the destination at the right time. While the causes of congestion are a lack of discipline/awareness of road users in using the road, such as disobeying traffic regulations/signs, transportation development that outnumbers road infrastructure development, and high-density areas or activity centers (Hukmia, 2011).

Congestion occurs due to an imbalance between transportation services' needs and availability. One of the causes of this problem is the presence of conflict points and slowdowns when a vehicle makes a U-turn at the median opening facility (Putra & Sarewo, 2008). Worse, vehicle drivers fight with fellow road users or those trying to find a shortcut to reach their destination faster without paying attention to the safety and comfort of other road users (Azhari, 2019, p. 4).

The safety and comfort of road users, especially in big cities, must be the concern of the government and community. Malang has quite severe traffic jams. Malang is Indonesia's 4th most congested city after Surabaya, Jakarta, and Denpasar. This traffic congestion also impacts society and the environment in time and cost. Congestion causes longer travel time or late, especially when going to work or school, and additional costs on gasoline. From an environmental point of view, congestion causes increasing air and noise pollution affecting the social environment as vehicle noise

disturbs people (Humas, 2023, p. 1). Traffic jam impacts cause concern in the community.

This concern has led government agencies and the community to reduce traffic jams and accidents in various places on the streets. Various Malang government agencies have initiated service innovations in the transportation sector to overcome this problem, such as installing red lights in various places and managing traffic. Meanwhile, civil society takes part as SUPELTAS to assist traffic management in reducing congestion.

SUPELTAS (Sukarelawan Pengatur Lalu Lintas) is a traffic control volunteer under the auspices of the traffic unit to help regulate traffic at every intersection due to the limited number of traffic police officers. There are legal and illegal SUPELTAS. In Malang, SUPELTAS, who exist in several places, have received training several times from the Malang government (Informasi, 2020, p. 1).

SUPELTAS officers at various intersections help reduce traffic accidents. However, SUPELTAS are considered to be increasingly hampering the smooth flow of traffic because they seem to force vehicles to turn around at median openings forcing vehicle queues in straight lanes to stop, causing even worse traffic jams. On the other hand, SUPELTAS are considered positive by vehicle drivers or road

users when using U-turns or median openings (Azhari, 2019, p. 5).

SUPELTAS members are usually male because becoming a SUPELTAS requires several male skills and abilities. In Malang, several SUPELTAS members are women. Several women who became SUPELTAS in Malang are motivated by several factors. There are some obstacles and risks SUPELTAS members have to face when carrying out their duties. However, it does not stop them from mastering the male skills.

The skills female SUPELTAS possess bring out masculinity or the nature of being a man. Masculinity has various forms attached to gender, race, class, and age, for example, black or white skin, lower and middle class, and teenagers or the elderly (Drianus, 2019, p. 38). The phenomenon of masculinity can be found in various places, times, and circumstances. In a woman, masculinity can also appear for various reasons, both naturally and out of necessity. One form of masculinity can be seen in female SUPELTAS. It is because of SUPELTAS' nature that it tends to be a male job.

One relevant study is Arum Budiastuti and Nur Wulan's (2014) on the construction of ideal masculinity among adolescents in the form of ideal Javanese aristocratic masculinity associated with responsibility, reliability, patience, and a protector role.

Bangkit Maulana Ziwar (2021) conducted research on the characteristics of masculinity in powerful advertisements based on the results of analysis at the reality level highlighting Pevita, a powerful woman, as a character with a masculine impression (Ziwar, 2021, p. 7336). Christie et al. (2020) researched forms of masculinity according to the concept of stereotypes closely related to patriarchal culture.

Based on the description above, the title of this research is "Construction of Masculinity of Female SUPELTAS in Malang".

Masculinity Construction

Masculinity comes from the French word masculine, meaning the character of social gender attached to the nature of men (S, 2017, p. 4). Masculinity is not an object as opposed to femininity but a larger structure such as social hierarchy. In other words, masculinity is what is not feminine. Masculinity is a gender concept about behavior socially constructed and generally associated with men (Connell, 2005, p. 45).

Masculinity can be contrasted with femininity as a stereotype of women. Masculine and feminine are two opposite poles of nature and form a straight line, each point describing the degree of maleness (masculinity) or femaleness (femininity) (Subrayan, 2016, p. 2). Masculinity has various forms

attached to gender, race, class, and age, such as black or white skin, lower class, middle class, and teenagers or the elderly (Drianus, 2019, p. 38).

According to Connell (2005), masculinity is a matter of men's position in society, which often occurs in social practices regarding image, representation, belief, culture, religion, lifestyle, and the meaning of everyday experience (Connell, 2005, p. 46). According to him, masculinity is not singular but diverse and closely tied to socio-economic status. There is no single model of masculinity because it is expressed differently in a cultural context and at a particular time, such as in the concept of colonialism where the colonizer is men, while the colonized are women, who are weak, sexual beings, and household workers (Connell, 2011, p. 46).

The rationale for masculinity is the belief that opposition from women in the patriarchal system causes changes in men's lives (Suprpto, 2018, p. 1). Basically, masculinity occurs because of social actions by several genders with characteristics identical to masculine stereotypes. If the characteristics are excessive, it is called a super masculine man. It is called a less masculine or feminine man if it is lacking. Masculinity also results in male domination of women by cornering women's positions with various forms of education and social behavior often affected by

violence and coercion (Fernández-Álvarez, 2014, p. 50).

Pilcher and Whelehan argue that masculinity is a rule in social practices and cultural representations associated with being a man (Messerchmidt & Rodhe, 2018, p. 116). Therefore, to be a man is basically a cultural representation. Based on this opinion, it can be said that the environment forms masculinity as a cultural product to differentiate men from women who are feminism (Abumere, 2013, p. 42).

Flood states that there are three masculinity phenomena: masculinity referring to beliefs, ideals, images, representations, and discourses, masculinity referring to traits distinguishing men and women, and masculinity referring to the strategies of men in power or to perpetuate male power. Meanwhile, Tuncay suggests that masculinity is a person's attempt to become a man covering four elements: physical appearance, leadership or respect, money or success, and women (Sondakh & Cyntia, 2014, pp. 3–4).

A man's masculinity will be doubted when he cannot present the image of a man who is strong, brave, intelligent, powerful, and heterosexual. Connell explains that in a patriarchal culture, hegemonic masculinity is superior to subordinate masculinity, displaying weak, slow, cowardly, and homosexual traits. Hegemonic masculinity refers to cultural

dynamics in which some groups claim and support a superior position in social life (Connell, 2005, p. 77).

Masculinity is seen in male behavior. This behavior is formed by a view (considered ideal) about how a man should act and behave. Masculinity needs to be understood in terms of advantages, power, and privileges given more to men than women in society. Meanwhile, patriarchy is a social organization regulating the allocation, distribution, and guarantee of male power over women. Gender power is also linked to other powers, including age, class, and ethnicity (Rasyidah et al., 2016, p. 34).

From the description above, it can be concluded that masculinity is a masculine trait in gender identity in society. Meanwhile, the construction of masculinity is the formation of masculinity and how men are imaged or described as ideal figures, those who are strong, powerful, and controlling. In this case, the construction of masculinity is a social reality with pressure to categorize the male role (Sitaresmi, 2022, p. 38).

Female SUPELTAS in Malang

SUPELTAS is a term for traffic control volunteers willing to set aside their time to manage the road. SUPELTAS in Malang are people who participate to help smooth the flow of vehicles on the highway by giving signals to motorists so that

traffic does not experience congestion or obstacles. SUPELTAS' work in assisting road traffic is carried out alternately by scheduling members in some places (Shofrillah, 2020, p. 67).

In several areas, SUPELTAS officers help traffic police manage traffic at every intersection or where there are no red lights due to the limited number of police officers. SUPELTAS members are not only men but also women. People become SUPELTAS members due to several factors, such as wanting to manage traffic, killing time, or making it a livelihood.

SUPELTAS can be legal or illegal. Even so, all SUPELTAS members have the same task to maintain order in arranging and giving signals to road users from the opposite direction to slow down their vehicles and let other vehicles turn around. SUPELTAS members are also tasked with giving directions or instructions to the vehicles about to turn. SUPELTAS members aim for traffic safety. Traffic safety is an effort to avoid traffic accidents. Various traffic engineering efforts aim to expedite the main traffic flow to ensure traffic safety and avoid traffic accidents (Azhari, 2019, p. 42).

There are many SUPELTAS officers, men and women, in Malang. The SUPELTAS members have received training several times, especially the 12-movement training held by the Dikyasa unit of Malang Police. It is done to minimize the

number of traffic accidents in Malang. Every year the number of members increases. In 2021, SUPELTAS members in Malang were 145 people placed in 41 points (Malang, 2021, p. 1).

In Malang, the researchers met five women SUPELTAS, 1 SUPELTAS woman at the Bunul intersection, two on Indah Street, one at the T-junction in front of the Sukun gas station or Dutch cemetery, and one next to Slamet Duck at Soekarno Hatta street.

Forms of Masculinity in Female SUPELTAS

1. Masculine Personality

Masculinity is also described as firm, hard, tough, and rational. A man is obliged to be the head of the household when he has a family and is responsible for earning a living (Wiasti, 2017, p. 6). Female SUPELTAS are figures bearing masculinity, as seen from their mental and physical traits such as firmness, courage, and strength.

2. Masculine Appearance

The social construction of men or masculinity in society is male figures with short hair and short or long pants. In some studies, masculine personality can be a short haircut like a man or making friends and socializing with other men. A female SUPELTAS can be described as a masculine woman, as seen from

her daily appearance, clothes, or uniforms, such as having a short haircut, wearing a hat, and wearing pants.

Factors Causing the Masculinity in Female SUPELTAS

1. Regulation for Female SUPELTAS

Official SUPELTAS have to follow regulations, such as attending monthly gatherings, various training held by the traffic police, and wearing uniforms. Official SUPELTAS must wear pants, shoes, and a hat and have short hair (Suryani, 2013). This rule describes masculinity, especially in female SUPELTAS.

2. Working on the Streets

Working on the streets is not an option but a compulsion they have to live with for certain reasons. Psychologically, those who work on the streets have a solid emotional and mental formation because of the conditions that strengthen their mentality. Being female SUPELTAS is good for some people because it gives them a better income or job (Suryani, 2013, p. 4).

METHODS

This research employed a descriptive qualitative method. The primary data sources were the results of interviews conducted with female SUPELTAS named Wiwik,

Sukarni, Endang, Farida, and Hasanah, a road user named Hidayat, and a parking attendant in the SUPELTAS environment. Meanwhile, the secondary data sources were website articles discussing masculinity, women, SUPELTAS, and Malang. The data were gathered using observation techniques at the workplace of the superintendents, interview techniques on the related subjects, especially SUPELTAS, and documentation. The data analysis adopted Miles Huberman's consisting of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Forms of Masculinity in Female SUPELTAS in Malang

Masculine Personality

Masculine traits often associated with the male gender give rise to the perception that the masculine has an independent (free), competitive, rational, courageous, assertive, and strong personality in actions and ways of thinking (Rahma et al., 2021, p. 111).

a. Firm and wise

Self-assertiveness or assertiveness is a feeling and thought expressed directly and is a process of upholding one's rights. Assertiveness means demanding personal rights and expressing thoughts, feelings, and beliefs honestly and appropriately. Being a housewife

and a SUPELTAS shapes the character and personality of SUPELTAS to be more assertive and wiser in attitude, as said by one of the SUPELTAS members below.

Working on the streets and meeting many different kinds of people's characters and attitudes make my character more assertive and courageous in responding to situations (Wiwik).

The excerpt above states that being a SUPELTAS makes SUPELTAS meet many people on the streets and requires a firm attitude, such as reprimanding some road users, especially reckless motorists, as shown in the following interview excerpt.

Silent if there is a collision and the user forces me to prioritize so there is no commotion (Sukarni).

The data above shows that Sukarni, a woman SUPELTAS, is likelier to choose silence when there is a commotion, a road user taking over other users' ways arranged by a SUPELTAS. This silent behavior is a wise attitude to avoid arguments with road users. If she gets emotional and scolds the road users overtaking the road, it will cause a commotion. Sukarni also admitted that she does not need

to scold and shout at road users because road users will scold the users taking over their way.

b. Independent

Independence is an attitude allowing a person to act freely but not in a negative sense. Freedom, in this case, means to do something on one's own and for one's needs without help from others. In everyday life, it is necessary to have an independent attitude to be positive people and develop creatively. Independent individuals can also have good self-confidence in carrying out ideas in their daily lives. An independent person must go through a process. The following excerpt suggests that working as female SUPELTAS officers makes women independent.

Since I became SUPELTAS, I have become more independent, especially financially, because I have to help my family's economy (Wiwik).

The above data explains that when Wiwik becomes a SUPELTAS, she becomes more independent. This independent nature is meant by masculinity in the female SUPELTAS figure. Women need help in every job, but SUPELTAS women do everything themselves because they have individual abilities to

manage themselves and not depend on other people. Independence is the ability to regulate behavior marked by freedom, initiative, self-confidence, self-control, self-assertiveness, and responsibility towards oneself and others.

c. Brave

Courage is defined as daring to take risks in making quick decisions in a timely manner in the chosen job. This attitude is not owned by someone from birth but can be developed in a conducive atmosphere where a person will feel comfortable and confident (Morgannova & Utama, 2013, p. 1). The courageous attitude shown by female SUPELTAS is included in the masculine traits that indirectly occur when on duty. It is supported and explained by the following interview excerpt.

Since becoming SUPELTAS, being on the streets has made me a strong/courageous person, especially since I work there. I am not afraid to work with other people. It can be seen when I dare to do anything. The important thing is that it is lawful to work on the street. It makes me mentally stronger and dares to

participate (Hasanah and Endang).

The excerpt above explains that being female SUPELTAS can make them personally braver and mentally and physically stronger, even though they initially work because they are forced to seek additional income. The adaptation process and working environment on the streets make them bolder.

d. Loud

A loud voice is a characteristic that many men show, including in leading an activity. This attitude is not limited to men, even though it is included in masculine traits. Women can also have a loud voice. Even the intensity of women's voices is rated higher than men's. It causes women's voices to sound louder than men's voices. The following excerpt shows that SUPELTAS women have loud voices.

My voice is loud when speaking, especially when speaking on the street (Endang).

The excerpt above shows that being female SUPELTAS officers make their voices louder. It is caused by several factors, such as communicating on the streets, as a small or soft voice will not be heard. Loud voices are a form of masculinity since habits and

culture state that loud voices tend to be male.

Masculine Appearance

Masculinity can not only be seen from character and attitude but also appearance. Ziwar (2021) emphasizes that women can also look masculine, and appearance can support women's roles in work. For example, a woman who looks masculine can display or give off a masculine aura (Ziwar, 2021, p. 7336).

Masculine women have a masculine appearance like the female SUPELTAS, who often look masculine, do not dress feminine, do not wear makeup, and have short hair.

a. Short haired

Figure 1 shows the masculine appearance of a female SUPELTAS in the form of short hair. Long hair remains the public standard for women (Beauty, 2017, p. 1). A woman who has short hair will be considered to be masculine. The Malang Police regulate the female SUPELTAS's short hair, the overseer of female SUPELTAS in Malang.

Short hair, wears a hat and walks like a boy because there is a tomboyish style (Farida).

Figure 1. Short-haired female SUPELTAS



Hair rolled up to make it look short and like a man (Sukarni).

The excerpt above explains that Farida, a female SUPELTAS, has short hair and walks like a man, while female SUPELTAS Sukarni rolls her hair to make it look short. Farida and Sukarni's short hair illustrates masculinity. Short hair is considered a symbol or sign of a man (Widiastuti, 2008, p. 378).

b. Wearing a hat

A hat is a type of head cover used for various things. A hat is generally used as a head protector from the sun and a clothing accessory. An example of the use of a hat is in the picture below.

Figure 2 shows a female SUPELTAS wearing a hat while managing the traffic. The use of a hat in the picture above can be

referred to as a form of masculinity. It coincides with an opinion explaining that in the past, the male nobility was equipped with crown accessories, head coverings, earrings, necklaces, shoulder straps, caste straps, and wrist and ankle bracelets (Mojopedia, 2023, p. 1). Masculine tends to be a male trait, so anything related to men can be called masculinity.

c. Wearing pants

Trousers are outer garments that cover the waist to the ankles, sometimes only up to the knees, cover the legs separately, and are primarily men's clothing.

Figure 2. *Female SUPELTAS wearing a hat*



Figure 3. *A female SUPELTAS wearing pants*



Figure 3 depicts female SUPELTAS wearing pants while on duty on the streets. Several interviews conducted by researchers revealed that the 5 SUPELTAS interviewed wore pants while on duty. The social construction suggests that men wear jackets and pants while women wear dresses and skirts (Lautama, 2021, p. 2). The masculine appearance of the female SUPELTAS above is because of the dressing provisions as a SUPELTAS, as indicated by the excerpt below.

Polresta (Central City Police) stipulates that official SUPELTAS must have short hair, wear a SUPELTAS vest, and wear trousers and shoes (Farida).

The excerpt above suggests that official female SUPELTAS must dress according to the regulations, have short hair, and wear trousers when on duty. They are not allowed to wear heavy makeup and pants combined with a short shirt and jacket. In this way, female SUPELTAS show their inner masculinity.

Masculinity Factors in Malang Female SUPELTAS

Requirements to be a SUPELTAS

Official SUPELTAS must participate in monthly gatherings

and various training held by the traffic police and wear uniforms. Official SUPELTAS must wear pants, shoes, and a hat and have short hair (Sukarni). This rule describes masculinity, especially in female SUPELTAS. The requirements of official SUPELTAS contributing to female SUPELTAS masculinity are described in the following excerpt.

Polresta (Central City Police) regulates that official SUPELTAS must have short hair, wear a SUPELTAS vest, and wear trousers and shoes (Farida).

The Compulsion of Working on the Streets

Working on the streets is not a choice but a compulsion that they have to live with due to certain reasons. Psychologically, those who work on the streets have a solid emotional and mental formation because of the conditions that strengthen their mentality. Being female SUPELTAS is good for some people because they get a better income or job (Suryani, 2013, p. 4). The following excerpt suggests that being a female SUPELTAS is a compulsion, not a desire.

Replacing the position of my older sister, who became a SUPELTAS in 2017. I used to sell macaroni. Due to the pandemic, my income decreased, so to help

financially, I had to find an additional job (Wiwik).

The excerpt above states that Wiwik temporarily became a female SUPELTAS to replace her older sister. However, she officially became a female SUPELTAS for a better income as her macaroni business declined due to the pandemic. It illustrates that economic condition leads to SUPELTAS work. As working women, they often face dilemmas in doing their jobs and taking care of household chores. From an economic perspective, they are forced to work to help supplement their husbands' income to meet family needs. Meanwhile, at home, they have to take care of their children (Maswita, 2017, p. 53).

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CONCLUSION

This research pointed out that 1) there are two forms of masculinity in female SUPELTAS officers in Malang, namely masculine personality in the form of being assertive, wise, independent, courageous, and loud and masculine appearance in the form of short hair, wearing a hat, and wearing pants; 2) the factors that influence masculinity in female SUPELTAS in Malang are SUPELTAS stipulations and working on the streets. Masculinity is a phenomenon that occurs in society in the form of adopting male characteristics. Masculinity is influenced by culture and patriarchal viewpoints.

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Breaking The Silence: Civil society organizations promoting women's personal security against sexual violence in Jombang Islamic boarding schools

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ABSTRACT

The prevalence of sexual violence against women (SVAW) in Indonesian Islamic boarding schools highlights that these institutions have not yet become safe spaces. The physical and psychological harm of sexual violence experienced by women poses a significant threat to their human security, a fundamental right that the state should ideally ensure. However, promoting personal security requires the collective support of society as a whole. This study focuses on Jombang Regency's pesantren (Islamic boarding schools), renowned as a city of Islamic education or "Kota Santri," or the city of Islamic boarding school students. It explores the role of local civil society organizations (CSOs) in promoting personal security against sexual violence in these settings. Through qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews with CSOs' representatives and a comprehensive literature review from 2017 to 2022, the research reveals that CSOs in Jombang Regency engage in prevention, protection, and empowerment. However, the roles are not fully optimized, particularly in terms of protection, due to limited implementation and a focus on case management. The findings highlight the importance of implementing binding policies to govern pesantren management and encourage active participation in preventing and addressing sexual violence within religious educational institutions.

KEYWORDS: *CSOs, islamic boarding school, personal security, pesantren, sexual violence against women*

INTRODUCTION

Sexual violence against women (SVAW) is a pervasive global

phenomenon, affecting a large number of women worldwide. It represents a significant threat to personal security, as it is closely

associated with individuals' profound fears and concerns, particularly the fear of becoming victims of crime (Gierszewski, 2017). Women face the most severe form of personal threats, enduring insecurity and frequently encountering discrimination (UNDP, 1994).

Sexual violence encompasses various acts such as sexual assault, coercion, verbal harassment, and forced sexual exploitation (WHO, 2021). Research by WHO-MCS reveals that a significant percentage of women, ranging from 6% to 59%, have experienced sexual violence perpetrated by intimate or non-intimate partners (Rachel Jewkes et al., 2002).

Indonesia is one of the countries with high rates of sexual violence against women. This is evident from the data compiled by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (Kementerian PPPA) regarding cases of sexual violence against women and children. In 2017, there were 7,841 reported cases, followed by 7,933 cases in 2018, 7,752 cases in 2019, 8,126 cases in 2020, 10,328 cases in 2021, and 11,686 cases in 2022 (Kementerian PPA, 2022).

Sexual violence within educational settings, particularly in Islamic boarding schools (or *pesantren* in Indonesian), has received public attention. According to the National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan), *pesantren* accounted

for 16% of reported cases from 2015 to 2021, ranking second after higher education institutions at 35% (KOMNAS PEREMPUAN, 2022).

The chosen research location for this study is Jombang Regency, known as "Kota Santri" or the City for Islamic boarding school students due to its vast number of Islamic boarding schools. In recent years, there have been notable cases of sexual violence against female *santris*—students of Islamic boarding schools—in Jombang, particularly at the Shidiqiyah and Sirojul Ulum Islamic boarding schools, which have garnered significant public attention.

Previous research addressed the prevalence of sexual violence issues in Islamic boarding schools, focusing on the lack of curriculum design, and was conducted by Alfredo, Nugraha, and Putri (2022). It highlighted the need to implement an Islamic Sex Education Program that meets international standards and utilizes modern and engaging teaching methods and the challenges it might bring in *pesantren* settings. Another research employed a feminist perspective to examine the cause of sexual violence against female *santris* by their *kyai* or male religious teachers (Pitriansyah et al., 2022). These acts are prevalent due to patriarchal culture and power imbalance between *kyai* and *santris*, causing the latter to be subjugated and dominated.

This research offers new insight into the issue by looking at it from the perspective of human security. As part of the personal security threat, it is crucial to look at local actors in their efforts to promote women's rights against sexual violence in religious education settings. We focus on the roles played by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Jombang, namely *WCC Jombang*, *GUSDURian Jombang*, *KPI Jombang*, dan *Front Santri Lawan KS*, which directly participate in combating sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to delve deeply into and shed light on the underlying meaning of a specific phenomenon (Siyoto & Sodik, 2015). The analysis consists of three essential stages: data reduction based on topic relevance, presentation of the reduced data, and drawing conclusions verified by the conceptual framework (Sugiyono, 2013). During these stages, data interpretation techniques are utilized to fully grasp and give significance to the information obtained from both the author and the informants.

Focusing on the role of local CSOs in promoting personal security regarding sexual violence against women within the Islamic boarding school environment in Jombang Regency, this study uses

interviews to collect primary data. The interview started with the Women Crisis Center or WCC Jombang and was followed by snowball sampling, where the informant recommended other CSOs within their network. Thus, besides WCC Jombang, interviews were conducted with GUSDURian Jombang, KPI Jombang, and *Front Santri Lawan Kekerasan Seksual* (Formujeres). In addition to interviews, data collection also encompasses meticulous documentation involving records, books, transcripts, and other relevant materials (Sugiyono, 2013). Data collection was conducted in January 2023 for one month, with a defined time frame spanning from 2017 to 2022 to comprehensively examine the roles of CSOs in Jombang.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Human Security and Violence Against Women

In the 1990s, one of the major accomplishments of feminist scholars was to introduce and integrate the concept of gender into human rights discourse. With the now widely shared concept of "women's rights as human rights" (Bunch, 1990; Cook, 1994; Tripp et al., 2013), governments around the world have adopted the concept of "human security" as a framework for regulations. The human security approach has brought about a shift in the security discussion that

focuses on the threats to both the state and security issues that affect people, thus enriching the human rights discussion that also includes non-state actors such as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations, and other actors both in the developed and developing countries (Christie, 2007).

While there is no exact definition of human security, it generally refers to “freedom from fear” (Tadjbakhsh & Chenoy, 2007). United Nations for Development Projects (UNDP) defines four characteristics of human security: 1) *universal*: threats to human security are universal and relevant in all parts of the world; 2) *interdependent*: there are interdependence and interrelationship between each component of human security; 3) *prevention-oriented*: it focuses in prevention and addressing the root causes of the problem, and 4) *people-centered*: where people are the main focus of the security issue (UNDP, 1994).

Seven elements of human security are categorized as 1) economic security, covering economic issues such as poverty and unemployment; 2) food security, including access and availability of food; 3) health security, which includes issues that affect health, such as pandemics and lack of health services; 4) environmental security that talks about environmental degradation, climate change, and others; 5) personal security, threats

or coercions that cause fear on the individual; 6) community security, including discrimination or oppression toward certain groups; and lastly 7) political security that covers political pressure and abuse (UNDP, 1994).

The element of personal security is the most suitable to discuss sexual violence against women, which cannot be addressed with a state-centric approach to security. Sexual violence against women is part of gender-based violence directed at women that “...results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life” (WHO, n.d.).

Roles of Civil Society Organizations in Human Security

Civil society encompasses various activities initiated by individuals or groups that operate independently of state authorities, which are considered non-responsive to certain issues, by using peaceful and non-violent means (Chandhoke, 2010). Within this framework, a civil society organization represents a structured entity wherein its members, through democratic processes, work towards the common good. Such organizations serve as intermediaries between public authorities and citizens, facilitating communication and engagement

between the two parties (EUR-Lex, n.d.).

Local CSOs play an essential role in human security, especially in maintaining peace and creating a safe environment (Trihartono & Viartasiwi, 2015). Their knowledge of the local social and cultural conditions is instrumental in breaking the cycle of violence. According to Kaldor (2004), CSOs can take various forms, such as social movements driven by activists in the global civil society, neoliberal non-state organizations institutionalized and professionalized through routine collaboration with governments and international organizations, and postmodern ascriptive associations based on ethnic and religious identities (Black, 2014).

Civil society is a crucial factor in strengthening human security at the local level due to its deep understanding of the political and cultural dynamics on the ground. With the field knowledge, civil society organizations (CSOs) possess the potential to make a significant impact. One particular area where CSOs excel in promoting human security is highlighted in Till Kotter's (2007) seminal work, "Fostering Human Security through Active Engagement of Civil Society Actors."

Kotter (2007) emphasizes the essential role of active civil society involvement at national and international levels. By addressing human security gaps from a

grassroots or bottom-up approach, CSOs tackle the root causes of problems. Their engagement extends beyond merely identifying issues; they actively participate in finding solutions and empowering communities. However, it is disheartening that their tireless efforts often go unappreciated despite facing numerous challenges along the way (Pandor, 2019).

In summary, CSOs' invaluable contribution to enhancing human security lies in their profound understanding of local dynamics and their ability to initiate change from the grassroots level. By actively engaging with the community and addressing the root causes of issues, CSOs play a pivotal role in promoting personal security, particularly when combating sexual violence against women. These three roles include:

1. Protection

Kotter emphasizes the crucial role of civil society in implementing effective protection measures, which involve early warning, early response, and conflict management. To accomplish this, CSOs need a comprehensive understanding of the existing threats at hand. Furthermore, they must develop specific strategies aimed at addressing these problems. By actively collaborating with other local actors, CSOs can maximize their impact and contribute

significantly to promoting safety and security within the community.

2. Prevention

Prevention is a proactive endeavor that CSOs undertake at the grassroots level through two key approaches. Firstly, CSOs actively share crucial information with other capable actors involved in conflict resolution, ensuring effective handling of conflicts. Secondly, CSOs are crucial in guaranteeing the local community's well-being by providing accurate information about prevailing issues and advising individuals impacted by these challenges (Kötter, 2007). By adopting these proactive measures, CSOs contribute significantly to preventing and addressing problems, ultimately fostering a safer and more secure environment.

3. Empowerment

Empowerment is pivotal in ensuring sustainable individual security, complementing protection and prevention efforts. CSOs are instrumental in fostering this empowerment, providing methods, goals, and resources to empower program beneficiaries and generate positive impacts (Jinia et al., 2021).

CSOs contribute to strengthening human rights by advocating for openness and

creating spaces for their active involvement in promoting human security (Kötter, 2007). These organizations play a crucial role in providing and protecting the necessary platforms that enable CSOs to contribute to the realization of human security objectives actively. By emphasizing the empowerment of individuals, CSOs allow them to take charge of their safety and well-being, leading to a sustainable and inclusive approach to human security.

Thus, contextualizing violence against women as a threat to human security, specifically personal security, this paper looks at the roles of CSOs in sexual violence issues against women in Jombang Islamic boarding schools.

Pesantren in Jombang and Sexual Violence against Women

Besides being called the City of Santri, Jombang is also called the City of Faith. This city has several well-known Islamic boarding schools, such as Tebuireng, Darul Ulum, Tambak Beras, and Denanyar.

According to the interview conducted with KEMENAG Jombang (2023), it was reported that there are a total of 210 Islamic boarding schools in operation, with a recorded santri population of 42,000 individuals as of 2022. The substantial presence of Islamic

boarding schools and the corresponding santri enrollment undoubtedly amplifies the potential for sexual violence threats within these institutions, thereby engendering personal insecurity among the students.

During the period spanning 2017 to 2022, Jombang Regency witnessed two distressing incidents of sexual violence against women within Islamic boarding schools. These cases garnered substantial attention from both the public and national media, shedding light on the gravity of the issue. The first case involved M. Subechi Azal Tsani (MSAT), also known as Bechi, the son of Kiai Muchtar Mu'thi, the founder of the Shidiqiyyah Islamic Boarding School in Ploso District. Notably, Bechi held positions of authority as the Vice Chancellor of the Islamic Boarding School and Head of the Shidiqiyyah Youth (Rizky, 2022). Exploiting religious dogma and misrepresenting factual knowledge, Bechi subjected approximately five of his female santris to sexual violence. These incidents of sexual violence transpired between 2012 and 2017, marking a prolonged period of victimization and harm inflicted upon the affected individuals.

In addition, another distressing case of sexual violence against women unfolded at the Sirojul Ulum Islamic Boarding School in Ngoro District. This reprehensible act was perpetrated by Kiai Subechan, the founder of the aforementioned

boarding school, who subjected approximately six female students to sexual violence between 2019 and 2020 (Budianto, 2021). Similar to the previous case, Subechan exploited religious dogma and his religious knowledge to manipulate and deceive his victims. Notably, both cases share a commonality in terms of the perpetrators' utilization of religious knowledge and their influential positions within the Islamic boarding schools, which were flagrantly abused. Consequently, the female santris, who exhibited unwavering obedience, were rendered powerless to refuse and ended up not reporting such abuse until years later.

The occurrence of such cases undeniably engenders detrimental effects on the victims and the wider community. Furthermore, it highlights the disconcerting reality that educational institutions, including schools, are not immune to instances of sexual violence. Disturbingly, teachers and peers can assume the role of perpetrators, amplifying the significance of addressing this issue with urgency and comprehensive measures (WHO & PAHO, 2013).

Civil Society Organizations in Jombang Regency on Women's Personal Security

Based on the interviews conducted between January and February 2023, there were four CSOs concerned with the issue of sexual violence in Islamic boarding

schools in Jombang Regency. Those CSOs include the Women Crisis Center or WCC Jombang, KPI (Indonesian Women's Coalition), GUSDURian, and Formujeres (Front Santri Against Sexual Violence).

1. Women Crisis Center (WCC) Jombang

The Women Crisis Center (WCC) is an established non-governmental organization (NGO) in Indonesia since 1993. Its primary objective is to assist women victims of violence and advocate for gender equality by addressing cultural and societal structures that perpetuate gender inequality (Hartian, 2001). WCC operates locally and nationally and collaborates with experts from various fields to fulfill its vision and mission.

At the local level, WCC Jombang is situated at Jalan Pattimura Selatan No. 7 Block B in Jombang Regency. It offers psychological, legal, and community assistance to women victims of violence. WCC Jombang was established on May 23, 1999, by a group of women from Darul Ulum University who received gender-sensitive training from WCC Rifka Annisa in Yogyakarta (WCC Jombang, 2011).

WCC Jombang operates under the umbrella of the Harmoni Foundation, the organization that initiated its establishment. The

organizational structure of the Harmoni Foundation includes a Supervisory Board composed of members from WCC Rifka Annisa Yogyakarta, trustees of the foundation, and the foundation's management. Additionally, WCC Jombang has an organizational structure with an Executive Director who oversees divisions such as assistance, advocacy, internal affairs, and human resource development.

The objectives of WCC Jombang encompass several aspects. Firstly, it aims to provide counseling services to women and children who are victims of violence. Secondly, it seeks to design and implement strategic steps to influence policy changes at the national and regional levels. Thirdly, WCC Jombang strives to mobilize the community, empowering them to address violence against women within their own communities. Furthermore, WCC Jombang aims to strengthen its internal capacity and external cooperation networks, enhance the network of service providers for women and children victims of violence, and facilitate economic empowerment for women who have experienced violence.

2. KPI Jombang

The Indonesian Women's Congress (*Koalisi Perempuan*

Indonesia, KPI) was established on May 18, 1998, following the First Indonesian Women's Congress held in Yogyakarta on December 17, 1998. Initially born out of the opposition movement led by women, students, and pro-democracy groups against the authoritarian "Orde New" regime, KPI emerged as a non-governmental organization operating at national and local levels. The Jombang branch of KPI is one of seven KPI Branch Secretariats in East Java Province.

The establishment of the Jombang KPI Branch was spearheaded by Mrs. Fifi Ekawati Rohmah in 1998. Within its organizational structure, the Jombang KPI branch is headed by a branch secretary who oversees five Interest Group Councils: housewives, women farmers, informal groups, the elderly, and PPM (youth, students, and students) interest groups (Interview with Rohanah, January 6, 2023). Each interest group is led by a board coordinator. Moreover, in order to accommodate aspirations and achieve its goals, KPI has also established women's centers at the village level. In Jombang Regency, several active women's centers are located in Pesantren Village in Tembelang District, Tambak Rejo Village in Tambak Rejo District, Pojok Kulon Village in Kesamben District, and

Ngumpul Village in Jogoroto District.

The primary objective of the Jombang KPI is to advocate for fulfilling women's rights across various domains within the Jombang Regency, including education, politics, economics, socio-culture, sexual and reproductive health, and religion. By pursuing this objective, the Jombang KPI aims to raise awareness among the people of Jombang Regency regarding gender equality and justice, embracing diversity while keeping the local wisdom.

3. GUSDURian Jombang

The GUSDURian network, comprising institutions, communities, and individuals, is inspired by the thoughts, values, and struggles of Gus Dur, a former Indonesian president known for his progressive ideas. Founded in 2010 following Gus Dur's passing, the network is rooted in nine core values: humanity, liberation, monotheism, equality, simplicity, traditional wisdom, brotherhood, and chivalrous attitude (Gusdurian, 2022). While addressing religious matters, the GUSDURian movement also engages in discussions encompassing nationality, education, and the people's economy.

At the local level, the Jombang GUSDURian network,

established on March 23, 2011, operates to foster peace and tolerance among religions, races, and groups in Jombang Regency. Through various initiatives, including training, outreach, and collaborative activities, the Jombang GUSDURian network actively contributes to promoting religious harmony in the region.

4. Front Santri Against Sexual Violence (Formujeres)

Formujeres (*Front Santri Melawan Kekerasan Seksual*, or the Santri Front Against Sexual Violence) was established on March 8, 2018, in Jombang, East Java. Comprised mainly of santris who have experienced sexual violence within their educational institutions, Formujeres emerged as a response to a series of sexual violence cases that occurred in a specific Islamic boarding school located in Ploso District. Notably, the perpetrator in these cases held a position of authority within the pondok, which posed significant challenges to resolving these incidents (Formujeres, 2018).

Through their endeavors, the Santri Front Against Sexual Violence has brought to light the vulnerability of female santris to sexual violence within the pesantren environment, characterized by deeply entrenched feudalistic and

conservative cultural hegemony (Formujer, 2019). The primary objective of Formujeres is to foster the strength and organization of santris to combat and eradicate sexual violence and harassment, particularly within Islamic boarding schools. Furthermore, the front aspires to engender a transformative societal paradigm that eliminates all forms of sexual violence while dismantling the prevailing structures of female and marginalized group subjugation. To achieve these objectives, Formujeres aims to raise awareness about the perils of sexual violence, mobilize and empower young women and santris to actively confront and resist such acts, cultivate supportive networks and communities that provide safe spaces for women's self-expression, and challenge prevailing gender and sexuality stigma and discrimination. In doing so, Formujeres seeks to dismantle conservative, misogynistic, and heteronormative ideologies that persist within the Islamic boarding school context, ultimately striving to establish educational environments free from the threat of sexual violence (Formujeres, 2019).

Roles of Civil Society Organizations in Promoting Women's Personal Security

*against Sexual Violence in Jombang
Pesantren*

While the main CSOs include Women Crisis Centre or WCC Jombang, KPI, GUSDURian, and Formujeres, as a network, they also work with other actors, including student associations, youth groups, as well as individual actors. Applying the concept by Kotter (2007), the roles of CSOs in the SVAW issue in Jombang Islamic boarding schools include:

1. Protection

The formation of the *Aliansi Kota Santri Lawan Kekerasan Seksual* (City Alliance of Santris Against Sexual Violence) in 2019 demonstrates a collective response to unresolved cases of sexual violence at the Shidiqiyyah Islamic Boarding School. Comprising local CSOs such as WCC Jombang, KPI, GUSDURian, Fatayat, the student movement, and concerned individuals, the alliance aims to facilitate victim access to justice. Its multifaceted approach encompasses counseling for victims, advocating for government protection of witnesses and victims, petitioning high-level state institutions (such as the president and the National Police chief), and organizing demonstrations to demand a neutral and expeditious response.

Additionally, Formujeres, which includes female santris who have experienced sexual violence, plays a supportive role by assisting the victims. They share information and engage in discussions with leaders and experts on the issue. Formujeres actively disseminates information about the trial process through its website and social media platforms.

These efforts reflect protective measures in the form of problem-solving. CSOs engage in advocacy, provide safe spaces for victims, encourage law enforcement and case management, and communicate with relevant authorities, ultimately fostering conflict resolution. The formation of alliances and partnerships with local actors aligns with Kotter's assertion that such collaborations are crucial for early warning, early response, and conflict management (Kötter, 2007), tailoring their strategies to address local threats and conflicts.

However, it is important to note that the current focus appears to be on post-incident handling rather than on early protection or preventive measures to mitigate the possibility of future sexual violence against women in Islamic boarding schools. It highlights the need to enhance early warning efforts to ensure a

more proactive approach to prevention.

2. Prevention

Prevention strategies are implemented through proactive measures, focusing on addressing the root causes of sexual violence at the grassroots level. This involves two key approaches: firstly, disseminating information to relevant actors who possess the capacity to handle conflicts, and secondly, providing accurate information and guidance to local communities affected by these issues (Kötter, 2007).

The interview findings highlight the implementation of various preventive measures. One notable initiative is the Pesantren Care program, established in 2017 as a community-based service in collaboration with WCC Jombang, Islamic boarding schools, and local CSOs such as KPI and GUSDURian. This program aims to reduce violence against women in Islamic boarding schools.

Under the leadership of Mrs. Nyai Umdatul Khairat, the Pesantren Care Program, affiliated with Assaidiyah Islamic Boarding School and the Bahrul Ulum Foundation in Tambak Beras Jombang, has undertaken several efforts. These include involving all Islamic boarding

schools in the Pesantren Care Program, promoting a curriculum that emphasizes humanistic, egalitarian teachings from a women's perspective, engaging students and administrators in assisting victims of violence, and conducting discussions with Assaidiyah Islamic Boarding School to review regulations for preventing sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools (WCC Jombang, n.d.).

In addition, Jombang CSOs engage in outreach activities targeting students, caregivers, and staff members. They provide educational assistance on topics such as youth dynamics in relation to Islamic boarding schools, teachings of peace, gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), empowering individuals to speak out, and information on various types of violence. Communication with Islamic boarding schools occurs through formal channels, as well as through non-formal discussions conducted on social media platforms, including Instagram Live and others.

Another noteworthy effort is carried out by Formujeres, which focuses on establishing child and women-friendly Islamic boarding schools. They also plan to produce a documentary film addressing sexual violence in Islamic

boarding schools, publish a book titled “On behalf of the Good Islamic Boarding School: Sexual Violence and Upholding Justice,” and share articles on social media platforms discussing the dangers of sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools and providing prevention tips.

While these steps may not exclusively target sexual violence, they indirectly contribute to prevention efforts since sexual violence is a form of violence. These initiatives demonstrate the role of CSOs in addressing the underlying causes of the crisis at the grassroots level, recognizing Islamic boarding schools as crucial actors capable of handling conflicts and providing guarantees within their communities.

These preventive measures align with the role of CSOs in minimizing the impact of threats, generating sustainable solutions, and enhancing the resilience and capacities of individuals to prevent and respond to potential threats (United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, 2016). In this context, the focus is on the early prevention of threats related to sexual violence against women that may occur in Islamic boarding schools in the future.

3. Empowerment

In addition to protection and prevention, the next crucial step

is empowerment, which focuses on promoting sustainable individual security. This step involves empowering individuals to find solutions for their safety as well as for others. Empowerment encompasses methods, objectives, and means that aim to benefit the recipients of the programs (Jinia et al., 2021). Empowerment is realized by strengthening human rights and creating an environment that fosters civil society’s active involvement in pursuing human security (Kötter, 2007).

Jombang CSOs have implemented various empowerment measures, such as the Pesantren Care Program. Besides serving as a preventive measure, Pesantren Care also serves as an empowerment initiative. The program was established to empower the pesantren community and support women victims of violence within the pesantren environment, fostering their empowerment (WCC Jombang, n.d.). The formation of the Pesantren Care program aligns with the functions and roles of Islamic boarding schools, which are actively involved in community empowerment.

The empowerment efforts within the Pesantren Care program can be observed through training provided to teachers, caregivers, students, and courtiers. These training

sessions focus on equipping participants with knowledge, awareness, and skills to prevent and address sexual violence. The problem-solving process is facilitated with an approach sensitive to the experiences, social dynamics, and cultural aspects within the pesantren context. The existence of the Pesantren Care program encourages active participation, enhancing the community's capacity to take autonomous action and effectively manage future challenges or threats.

The second empowerment step is the establishment of the Inclusion Alliance. Although it does not specifically target sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools, the alliance includes a Pesantren Care's member as a participating entity. Formed in August 2022 upon the initiative of WCC Jombang (WCC Jombang, n.d.), the Inclusion Alliance serves as a network comprising civil society organizations and youth groups in Jombang Regency. Alongside the Pesantren Care and WCC Jombang, other members involved in the alliance include Jombang KPI, GUSDURian, Jombang Genre People, Children's Forum, Independent Disabled Voices, Disabled Volunteer Class, HMI, Fatayyat NU, Indonesian Green Studio, IPNU, PPNU, Peer Shack, IPM, PMI, PKBI, Health Ambassadors,

KDS JCC Plus, Youth Posyandu, LBK, PMII, media networks addressing various issues including child protection, and Church Youth, among others.

The inclusion alliance encompasses a wide range of issues, with a particular focus on sexual equality and reproductive rights. The establishment of these networks and alliances reflects a concerted effort to empower the community and address various topics, especially those related to women and children. Consequently, the presence of the Pesantren Care catalyzes discussions on sexual violence within Islamic boarding schools in Jombang Regency. These discussions and potential collaborations within the Inclusion Alliance can yield significant benefits for the security of Islamic boarding schools against the threat of sexual violence.

The local CSOs in Jombang Regency, who are members of these networks and alliances, have demonstrated their deep understanding of the field conditions, prevailing issues, community needs, and existing vulnerabilities. Their commitment to empowering individuals enables them to take control of their own lives.

Furthermore, the efforts undertaken by Formujeres illustrate a distinct approach to

empowerment. In contrast to other CSOs that focus on forming alliances to empower communities for future challenges, Formujeres prioritizes self-empowerment. Recognizing the need for empowerment among the victims of sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools, Formujeres provides mutual support and utilizes donor funds from Frida Young Feminist to address the economic disruptions caused by the challenges they have faced. These funds are intended to help the victims manage their finances and serve as capital for their entrepreneurial endeavors.

The actions taken by Formujeres underscore their commitment to self-empowerment, particularly for individuals who have experienced sexual violence. They aim to reclaim their power and rebuild their lives. As noted by the Human Security Report Now, achieving personal security entails not only protection efforts but also empowering individuals to take care of themselves (Faddy, 2005).

Therefore, it is evident that empowerment efforts are pursued by creating networks that foster discussions on pertinent issues. These efforts seek to cultivate the capacity of women and relevant stakeholders to realize their

potential and support others in overcoming the threat of sexual violence that may arise in future boarding school settings. Simultaneously, these initiatives aim to uphold their human rights, encompassing economic and social dimensions (Kötter, 2007).

These initiatives highlight the commitment of Jombang CSOs to empower individuals and communities, enabling them to actively contribute to their personal security. By emphasizing human rights, fostering inclusive participation, and providing tailored training, these efforts support the overall goal of creating a society where individuals are empowered to address and mitigate threats, including sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the prevalence of sexual violence against women within the Islamic boarding school setting, particularly in Islamic boarding schools in Jombang, poses a significant threat to personal security. This is further exemplified by reported cases of sexual violence against women in Islamic boarding schools that happened in recent years. Thus, the involvement of local Jombang CSOs becomes imperative in promoting personal security within these Islamic educational institutions. Four main actors are

identified in this study, including WCC Jombang, KPI Jombang, GUSDURian Jombang, and Formujeres.

The first role that CSOs undertake is preventive action. It involves establishing Pesantren Care, a program that engages in communication and discussions with CSOs and Jombang Islamic boarding schools to prevent and address sexual violence, and disseminating written works and social media posts as early warnings regarding potential threats of sexual violence. The second role involves providing legal and psychological assistance to female victims of sexual violence and establishing the Aliansi Kota Santri Lawan Kekerasan Seksual. Lastly, CSOs empower individuals through collaborations with other CSOs and neighboring Islamic boarding schools, encompassing participation in Islamic Boarding School Care and inclusive alliances.

However, among these roles, the protective role appears to be suboptimal, as it primarily focuses on post-incident interventions rather than proactively addressing potential cases in the future. Protection efforts have yet to advocate for policymakers to introduce and implement Standard Operating Procedures for addressing sexual violence crimes in Islamic boarding schools. Therefore, there is a pressing need for CSOs to intensify collaboration with other CSOs and Jombang Islamic boarding schools as a whole, aiming to promote the formulation of regulations specific to Islamic boarding schools in Jombang Regency. This endeavor will facilitate the optimal execution of protection measures against these pervasive issues.

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ABOUT

SALASIKA etymologically derived from Javanese language meaning 'brave woman'. SALASIKA JOURNAL (SJ) is founded in July 2019 as an international open access, scholarly, peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary journal publishing theoretically innovative and methodologically diverse research in the fields of gender studies, sexualities and feminism. Our conception of both theory and method is broad and encompassing, and we welcome contributions from scholars around the world.

SJ is inspired by the need to put into visibility the Indonesian and South East Asian women to ensure a dissemination of knowledge to a wider general audience.

SJ selects at least several outstanding articles by scholars in the early stages of a career in academic research for each issue, thereby providing support for new voices and emerging scholarship.

AUDIENCE

SJ aims to provide academic literature which is accessible across disciplines, but also to a wider 'non-academic' audience interested and engaged with social justice, ecofeminism, human rights, policy/advocacy, gender, sexualities, concepts of equality, social change, migration and social mobilisation, inter-religious and international relations and development.

There are other journals which address those topics, but SJ approaches the broad areas of gender, sexuality and feminism in an integrated fashion. It further addresses the issue of international collaboration and inclusion as existing gaps in the area of academic publishing by (a) crossing language boundaries and creating a space for publishing and (b) providing an opportunity for innovative emerging scholars to engage in the academic dialogue with established researchers.

STRUCTURE OF THE JOURNAL

All articles will be preceded by an abstract (150-200 words), keywords, main text introduction, materials and methods, results, discussion; acknowledgments; declaration of interest statement; references; appendices (as appropriate); table(s) with caption(s) (on individual pages); figures; figure captions (as a list); and a contributor biography (150 words). Word length is 4,000-10,000 words, including all previous elements.

TIMELINE AND SCHEDULE

Twice a year: February and July.

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