

UNVEILING THE COMPLEXITY BETWEEN RELIGION'S ROLE IN UNDERSTANDING AND EMBRACING TRANSGENDER IDENTITY IN SOCIETY

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Abstract. Being a transvestite is often associated with homosexuality. The difference lies in the fact that being a waria is not just about being attracted to the female gender, but rather a person's gender identification (Juditha, 2014). The presence of the transgender phenomenon is currently a complex controversy that can be seen from various points of view, one of which is a religious perspective. This research aims to research and understand the significance of religion as social capital and a means of control in overcoming social phenomena in society. This research method uses a phenomenological approach which is able to provide an overview of the meaning of an individual's experience of a concept (Adian, 2016). Socialization through verbal communication is defined as socialization efforts carried out through oral and written communication. The management of the Al-Fatah Waria Islamic Boarding School seeks to spread knowledge about the need to treat waria fairly and humanely. The Waria Al-Fatah Islamic boarding school also reflects the spirit of inclusion for the surrounding community, as well as for Indonesia and the world in general, showing that diversity is not something that should be eradicated, but rather becomes wealth. This is in line with the view of Peter L. Berger who describes religion as the result of reflection, reflection or projection carried out by humans.

Keywords: Al-fatah islamic boarding school, reality, social, transgender

INTRODUCTION

The term "gender" is derived from English where "gender" is an aspect of social relations that is certainly associated with sexual differentiation or differences in humans (Alan, 2016). Hilary in her book entitled Sex and Gender defines gender as cultural expectations of men and women. Examples are women known to be gentle, beautiful, emotional and motherly. While for the definition of a man is considered strong, rational and mighty. The traits of the trait can then be interchanged, for example if for men are meek men and mighty women. Such changes can occur from a specific time and place. In fact, according to Nani (2018) explained that currently there are various types of gender that can be called nonbinary which of course are not identified as male or female, including; Agender, which is someone who does not declare or does not determine, Bigender, which is someone who feels that they have two gender identities, either simultaneously or not, Transgender is a condition where someone changes their gender identity that is different from their biological sex, Genderfluid is someone who always changes their gender in a certain time. Butler states that gender identity formed by society is through roles, gestures, words and desires that include performance influenced by the environment of each individual which is then realized in himself himself as a woman or a man (Alimmi, 2004).

The first waria community was established in 1969 under the name Himpuna Wadam Djakarta (WIHAD) facilitated by Ali Sadikin, Governor of Greater Jakarta (Fikri, 2013). Based on statistical data released by the Waria Association of the Republic of Indonesia states that the number of waria population registered and having Identity Cards (KTP) in Indonesia in 2007 was 3,887,000 people and will continue to grow every year (Suci, 2020). From a sociological point of view, transvestites are one of the non-binary gender identities. Be specific in describing its meaning. The term genderqueer in addition to accommodating nonbinary gender terms also accommodates the terms agender (has no gender at all), bigender (has two genders at once), genderfluid (has a changing

gender). The term non-binary gender itself refers to gender identities outside binary groups such as women and men (Aulia, 2019).

Societies that do not identify as male or female will be grouped into nonbinary or genderqueer societies. Some cultures in Indonesia or in the world have specific gender roles that are different from "men" and "women" which are then collectively and continuously referred to as the third gender such as the bissu group in the Bugis community in Sulawesi and the hijra people in South Asia (Marzuki, 2020). Being a transvestite is often identified with being a homosexual. The difference is that being a transvestite is not about someone being attracted to the female sex, but it is the gender that will then identify oneself (Juditha, 2014). The phenomenon of the presence of waria today is certainly a complex polemic and controversy when viewed from various points of view, one of which is in the context of a religious point of view. Religion created by a group of people then exists as a form of social control to be a solution or bridge various kinds of social realities that occur in society (Ardiansyah, 2013).

One example of the phenomenon of exclusion of waria was recorded on the December 21, 2020 edition of the BBC.com online news page. This page tells the story of how three waria2 sisters were ostracized in their family. It is said that the three waria out of eight siblings experienced challenges and opposition from their families over their life choices as a waria. Even to the point that inappropriate words came out of his parents' mouths such as sissy, gemulai and others. This phenomenon is a small illustration of the phenomenon of exclusion in society towards waria groups. This exclusionary treatment has even been included in the marginalization behavior of waria groups. Many community stigmas arise regarding waria as a disease that must be eradicated and destroyed (Arfanda, 2015). Religious relations accommodate this social phenomenon. One form of intersection between religion and the transgender phenomenon is the establishment of waria Islamic boarding schools (Alan, 2016). Religion is present in human life as a guideline that is further obligatory to be believed by every believer. The presence of religion is a benchmark for good and bad human behavior, while there is no religion that legalizes efforts to change one's identity from male to female or vice versa, like the phenomenon of waria (Ardiansyah, 2013). One form of religious acceptance of social deviation is the establishment of the Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School in the Special Region of Yogyakarta.

Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School is an Islamic religious educational institution that houses waria to study and worship like Islamic boarding schools in general that teach religious sciences such as fiqh, creed, reading the Quran and so on (Suci, 2020). Based on the problems raised above, it is important to conduct research related to religious approaches in the implementation of religious learning at Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School with the research title "Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School: A Humanist Approach Between Religion and Social Phenomena". Research will explore a lot related to religious approaches which are then able to provide an overview as a provision for solving other social phenomena in society. The purpose of this study is to examine and know the importance of religion as social capital and social control in overcoming social phenomena that occur in society.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a qualitative research that then uses a phenomenological approach where this approach can provide an overview of the meaning of the experiences of several individuals about a concept (Adian, 2016). This study examines a phenomenon or social reality of the existence of Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School by looking at how this social reality exists in a heterogeneous and multicultural society (Moleong, 2010). The research was conducted at Pesantren Waria Al-Fatah Kota gede Yogyakarta located at Celenan RT 09 / RW 02 Jagalan, Bangutapan, Bantul, Yogyakarta. The subjects of this study were waria groups at Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School, Islamic boarding school administrators, ustadz or teachers, community leaders of Jagalan Village, and the community around Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School. The object of this study is Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School located in Banguntapan Village, Bantul, Yogyakarta. Data collection techniques from this study are participatory observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and literature studies. The data analysis in phenomenology consists of several stages, namely, reading transcription, horizationalization, cluster of meaning, textural and structural descriptions.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

1.1 Socialization Process of Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School

In this phase of its development, the Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School is not guaranteed to avoid non-wearing actions, such as discrimination, innuendo, refusal to shake hands, not wanting to be side by side in one shaf during prayer, ledakan from small children and other treatment. One of them was presented in a researcher interview with Bunda Shinta who explained that the Islamic Boarding School had been stopped until it was about to be disbanded by the Islamic Jihad Forum in 2016. Where this group not only gave verbal and physical opposition to the existence of the Islamic boarding school, but also indicated hegemony on the community to take sides with the Islamic Jihad Forum and participate in disbanding the Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School.

"If the community accepts Waria then the doom of Allah SWT will be coming." Shinta Ratri interview on July 21, 2022

Based on the many problems of rejection and opposition to the presence of the Waria Islamic Boarding School, then the management of the Islamic boarding school tried to restore little by little and gradually public trust in the presence of the Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School. Socialization is an effort made by the management of Islamic boarding schools to overcome problems that occur. The existence of this socialization process was also believed by the surrounding community, namely Mbak Patmi in her interview. Where Mbak Patmi said that there was quite tough socialization with the surrounding community, until there was an Islamic boarding school teacher who was able to persuade the community. Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers at Bunda Shinta as the current head of Pondok Waria Al-Fatah, it is indicated that there are at least two forms of communication carried out in the socialization process, namely verbal and non-verbal communication. Socialization with verbal communication can be interpreted as a socialization effort carried out by means of oral communication and written communication. Based on interviews conducted by researchers on Bunda Shinta explained that socialization with the form of verbal communication is done by explaining interpersonally with the party who is arguing by talking. With socialization in the form of verbal communication, it serves a lot to negotiate the good goals of the Islamic boarding school, ranging from the contribution of the Islamic boarding school to the community, to negotiating the rights of waria as servants of God who are obliged to worship.

"We are gradually restoring people's belief that we are beneficial to the surrounding community, then we are also human beings who have the right to worship. That's what we're calling for..." Shinta Ratri interview on July 21, 2021.

The socialization process with this form of verbal communication was further able to reduce public anger, and made the community accept the existence of the Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School until now. The second socialization is carried out by means of non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication is meant by a form of communication whose delivery process does not use words or writing. Based on the results of interviews and observations conducted, Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School uses this form of socialization, including in the form of religious actions, interaction with the community and the implementation of positive programs. In the form of religious activities, the socialization process is carried out with the consistency of the management and students to carry out worship activities in the Islamic boarding school, so that it has an impact on the senses of this religious activity by the community and causes proclamation and acceptance in the community. This was validated by Mbak Patmi as the community around the Islamic boarding school in her interview. Mbak Patmi expressed the opinion that:

"Yes, it's normal to read until home, so it's cool, mas" Mbak Patmi interview on July 21, 2022

Socialization in the form of non-verbal communication is also shown by the existence of the Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School program which involves many surrounding communities in its implementation. Not only activities in the field of religion such as recitation, lectures, recitation of

the yellow book and others, but also non-religious programs, such as cooking classes, batik classes, hijab classes, health classes, discussions of current issues on social media and so on.

"There are artistic activities, there are dancing, kur, health assistance on Wednesdays, Saturday afternoon school cooking classes, hijab creations, crafts, making flowers from acrylic, even making scented candles. This activity is supported by network friends" Shinta Ratri interview on July 21, 2022.

In the same topic, Mbak Patmi also validated the existence of activities that involve the community in its implementation. In the interview conducted, she explained that she had participated in several activities held by Islamic boarding schools such as cooking classes, hijab creations, batik making and many others. Based on this participation, it had a significant impact on Mbak Patmi's life. She explained that she had applied the hijab creation class when she wanted to go out of the house.

"Usually, you use the hijab directly, but now you can use a square one to go out and out, so you can just create it," explained Mbak Patmi in an interview on July 21, 2021.

Based on many explanations related to the form of socialization of non-verbal communication carried out by the Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School, it can be indicated if it experiences many positive impacts in the community so that there is acceptance and openness to the presence of the Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School. The two forms of socialization carried out can be indicated if the socialization carried out has a secondary type of socialization. Secondary socialization is a socialization process that is a continuation of the primary socialization process carried out during childhood. Secondary socialization is an effort to introduce individuals beyond childhood to certain groups in society. This explanation can be used to interpret the socialization process of Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School carried out in communities that are not in the age range of children, to subsequently accept the existence of Islamic boarding schools as a social reality in the community.

1.2 Religious Offension and Social Phenomenon

Waria Al-Fatah Islamic boarding school is also a reflection for the surrounding community and society in Indonesia and even the world that differences are not something that needs to be eliminated, but the existence of differences actually makes Indonesia diverse. The existence of the Al-Fatah Islamic boarding school is considered important for students who live and study there. Many of these students feel comfortable to study at the Al-Fatah Islamic boarding school because the learning process is very interesting and fun. The administrators and teachers at the Al-Fatah Islamic boarding school also provide religious activities in the form of gender and Islamic religious studies, which can bring waria closer to the surrounding community. The existence of these activities in addition to being able to shape the good character of waria groups can also form a sense of tolerance in diversity in society.

There are so many, who at first I couldn't pray finally got to pray, who initially couldn't read iqra finally could read iqra. If I don't realize myself, yes, if from my own family they prefer me to change with positive activities." Mbak Nur Interview on July 21, 2021

Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School also serves as a means of spreading Islamic teachings in a good and non-coercive way and approach. The function of the Al-Fatah pesantren as a lebaga or religious institution which in addition to teaching religious knowledge, also teaches various kinds of values and social norms to waria groups to be devoted to Allah SWT. The process of learning and merging religious values is carried out through socialization and religious studies and general knowledge which is opened to waria students and the surrounding community carried out by pesantren administrators or ustadz at Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School.

Based on the function of the Al-Fatah pesantren, the Waria Al-Fatah pesantren has a role as an educational institution, social community institution, and religious institution. In supporting in terms of education of religious values, the Waria Al-Fatah Islamic boarding school also provides various facilities such as a library containing many reading books and the Quran and also a prayer

room as a place for waria prayers. Since the establishment of the Al-Fatah pesantren as a place to study waria minorities, there is no longer discrimination between the community and waria groups. People in these neighborhoods now accept their existence as minorities who are anti-discrimination. Not only that, the existence of the Al-Fatah pesantren is also a forum for waria groups in carrying out their obligations as Muslims. However, at the beginning of its construction, the Al-Fatah pesantren was rejected by some communities. There are so many Islamic organizations that reject the establishment of the Al-Fatah Islamic boarding school as a means of worship for waria. They think that the existence of Al-Fatah pesantren will taint the name of Islam and it is an abuse of the Islamic religion. Not only that, some of the surrounding community also discriminated against waria groups who prayed at the local village mosque. This was done by the surrounding community because they felt uncomfortable about the existence of waria groups who prayed in congregation with local residents.

This is similar to the opinion of Peter L. Berger who states that, religion is the result of reflection, reflection, or projection made by humans. Berger states that humans and societies externalize or project religion because humans are often faced with anomic threats in the world that are the result of human activity and behavior. In overcoming various kinds of human anxiety about this anomic situation, society ultimately creates social instruments or devices such as socialization and social control, but it seems that these social devices cannot overcome or negate various threats to prevent the creation of anomic conditions, both individually and collectively (Harold, 2016).

Religion, which is a central reference in human behavior and action, will eventually manifest itself in the form of "actuating action" with various symbolic meanings surrounding it. Furthermore, Berger argues that religion is actually formed socially by humans so that the existence of religion will depend on social, historical and cultural factors. Berger understood religion as a form of human projection or reflection produced through an externalization projected by humans. So that society or humans try to define or interpret religion not only as a "human product" made from human, but also non-human materials, therefore, for Berger religion is not only protective, but also "sacred" (Mizan, 2014).

Social reality is defined as events that are indeed present in society. Social reality also includes social phenomena that develop in everyday life (Soerjono, 2010). This growing social phenomenon includes the religious sector. According to Peter L. Berger in the book *Sacred Sky* (1991), states that religion is the result of reflections, reflections, or projections made by humans within their environment. Peter L. Berger argues that humans externalize religion because humans are always faced with activities that go through a process of externalization, objectification, and internalization (Harold, 2016). The main role of religion in the formation of society and the maintenance of the "world" lies in the power of religion to justify or legitimize the norms that govern social life that occur in the surrounding environment (Dharma, 2018). Religion also often plays a role in overcoming human anxiety to anomic and chaotic situations, which then cause society to create a social device such as socialization and social control, but it seems that these tools are not enough to emphasize the threats created by chaotic and anomic conditions, both individually and collectively (Dharma, 2018).

Over time, the community began to accept the existence of waria groups in their area, even they also supported the establishment of the Al-Fatah Islamic boarding school as a means for waria groups to carry out their obligations as Muslims who obey God. The establishment of the Al-Fatah Islamic boarding school in Jagalan Hamlet, Banguntapan, Bantul is a social reality that religion is the right of every human being. Religion ultimately becomes a reflection of human life that in reality, there are several gender identities as a social display that develops in society, and the diversity of gender identities is not a barrier for them to perform religious worship and rituals as they believe. In this case, religion through Islamic boarding schools provides a broad and flexible platform, to treat humans humanely, including by accepting non-binary gender as part of it.

CONCLUSION

Waria Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School is an implementation of the solidarity of minorities in realizing a safe and comfortable place to worship. The activities carried out are the same as the hut in general which learns about reading the Quran, praying, studying the yellow book, Islamic

recitation and art. In addition, to improve waria's ability to find work, activities at the lodge also focus on making crafts, hijab creations and cooking. The establishment of the Islamic boarding school was not spared from conflicts that arose in the surrounding community, but over time through the socialization and sincerity of the waria, the community was willing to accept and contribute directly to the activities that took place in the cottage.

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