
SELF-REPRESENTATION AND SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM IN THE GAY COMMUNITY IN JAKARTA

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia as a country that has a high level of heterogeneity in society, high heterogeneity encourages the emergence of the LGBT phenomenon. Gay belonging to the LGBT group is considered a deviant group by the Indonesian people. This makes the number of verbal and non-verbal rejections that affect the limited interaction of the gay community with the wider community. Based on the above context, the purpose of this study is to find out how the symbolic interactionism of gay community communication on its self-representation. This study uses the phenomenological method on 4 research subjects where 2 of them are gay and the other 2 are communication experts and psychologists. The theory used in this study is the symbolic interactionism theory of George Herbert Mead and Blummer and the representation theory of Stuart Hall. The result of this research is that the symbolic interactionism used by the gay community in the wider community can be used as a tool to represent themselves, non-verbally used by gays is conveyed through slang language, body gestures, accessories, colors and clothing models. sometimes heterosexuals use gay identical symbols unintentionally so that the identical gay symbols become biased.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is one of the countries with the most population which occupies the 4th (fourth) number position in the world after the United States. The dense population makes Indonesia a heterogeneous society, both in terms of religion, culture and various sexual orientations in it. Besides a dense heterogeneous population, Indonesia is known as a country that adheres to a very

thick eastern culture. Norms in culture and religion have such a big role and are very much considered in the interaction of the social environment in society. The heterogeneity in the environment encourages many phenomena that occur in the social environment, one of which is the phenomenon of a person's different sexual orientation and is known as the LGBT group. LGBT itself is an abbreviation of Lesbian,

Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (Sandy, 2020).

Talking about LGBT, LGBT is a group of people who have a different sexual orientation from people in general. LGBT is part of a group of people who have a same-sex sexual orientation. Whereas basically the view of some people in general is that every human being normally only has one kind of sexual orientation, namely the sexual orientation of those who like the opposite sex, known as the heterosexual community. The breakdown of a heterosexual relationship itself is a state of liking or attraction that occurs in different sexes, men and women and vice versa, women and men. Heterosexuals are the only recognized community in Indonesia. Recognition of the heterosexual community by the Indonesian people is supported by Law no. 1 of 1974 which states that marriage is an inner and outer bond that occurs between opposite sexes of different gender, both between a man and a woman and vice versa. However, it is undeniable that nowadays cases of LGBT are increasingly becoming a byword in the community. Various platforms ranging from electronic, print and online media are busy discussing cases about the LGBT community (Praptiningsih, 2018).

The LGBT community, which consists of several groups that are members of it, has one group whose lives are most often highlighted on social media, print media and the community, namely the gay group. (Mukhid, 2019) Gay itself is a group with same-sex sexual orientation that occurs between men and men. It is known that the factors that a person can become gay include the cultural context, the way parents educate children and the habits of children from childhood so that they have a big influence on the formation of sexual orientation when growing up. The description of the sexual orientation of the gay community is in contrast to Indonesian society, which has a strong eastern cultural background. Where

the Indonesian people have not been able to accept and acknowledge gay groups in general (Praptiningsih, 2018).

Differences in views on sexual orientation create rejection in the gay community. The rejection occurred because of the gay factor which is considered by the Indonesian people as part of the deviant group (deviant). There is data provided by the Ministry of Health which predicts that the number of homosexuals (Gay) reaches 3% of the total population of Indonesia and is likely to continue to increase every year. (Ayub, 2017). The gay phenomenon cannot be denied anymore because basically same-sex groups (homosexuals) have long existed in society. It's just that the current modern situation makes the existence of homosexuals or same-sex enthusiasts no longer taboo and slowly some members who are members of the gay community begin to dare to show their identity openly. The various perceptions of the Indonesian people towards the gay community encourage the occurrence of counter cases against LGBT people in Indonesia.

The number of cases of rejection of LGBT groups that have occurred by the Indonesian people is no longer verbal but the rejection has reached non-verbal (violence). This is evidenced by the Arus Pelangi community who received data from survey results that as many as 89.3% of the LGBT community in Indonesia experienced acts of violence. In addition, cases of denial and discrimination of rights also occurred in the LGBT group in the city of Yogyakarta. Reported by an online news portal, it was stated that the seminar on LGBT held by the BEM of the Psychology Faculty of Sanata Dharma Yogyakarta was threatened and disbanded and did not get permission from the police. From the data and cases of refusal, it can be clearly proven that the existence of homosexuals is not fully accepted by the Indonesian people (Ariady, 2018).

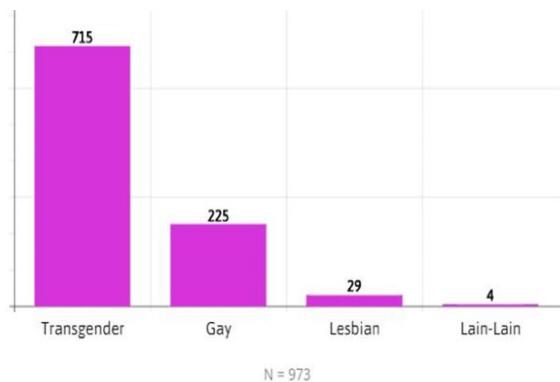


Figure 1. Data on victims of discrimination and violence based on sexual orientation.

Source: (Ariady, 2018)

The rejection case in picture one is in the form of violence from the results of a survey conducted in 2018 by SMRC. The results of the research survey data state that as many as 86.7% of Indonesians consider LGBT to be a threat (Perawironegoro, 2015). Besides that, there are also survey data results as much as 10.8% which states that LGBT is not considered a threat in Indonesia, while only 1.6% of research results do not argue (Sandy, 2020). The number of rejections that occur from the community to the gay community makes interaction between the gay community not easy. Whereas the interactions carried out by the gay community are basically the same as the communication activities carried out by the heterosexual community in general, which have a need to interact with other human beings. Consciously with this basically gay people also have the same rights to complete their needs as social beings by interacting with their fellow groups, therefore the interactions carried out by the gay community are still considered valid.

Talking about how to interact, basically the gay community in its communication interaction process is unique by using symbolic interactionism where this symbol is made and has social

meaning for the gay community and cannot be understood by all circles of society in general. Often gay people have awkwardness in communicating, especially when communicating in public places (Ronda, 2020) The number of rejections and other acts of discrimination is a strong factor for the gay community to use symbolic interactionism in the communication process. The symbolic interaction contained in the non-verbal communication process of the gay community serves as a support for verbal communication carried out by gay people. The symbols in the communication process used by the gay community aim to hide themselves from the wider community in order to minimize isolation and rejection from the environment.

Through symbolic interactionism, it can generate and strengthen signals or what is often called "gay dar". Gay dar is a spontaneous sensitivity or feeling that can arise naturally and is considered a sixth sense by the gay community which is only found in gay people themselves. Symbolic interactionism can be a self-representation of each gay person individually when the symbols and symbols that are reflected are interpreted by gay people who have the same knowledge and background. Symbols or symbols used by the gay community are usually reflected through body gestures, accessories, colors, clothing models and others. For example, between gays must have understood when there are other gays who make eye glances, smiles and ambiguous behaviors that are made and created with the aim of attracting other gays.(Ronda, 2020)

Gays in their lives have various types of roles that are used by them as their identity in the community in an effort to find a partner. Roles in the gay community can be identified through the symbols or symbols used by gay people in the process of symbolic interactionism. Roles in the gay

community consist of Top, Bottom, and Versatile (Ronda, 2020)

Top are roles that are played by someone like a man in heterosexuals, in Bottom roles are positions played by men with a more graceful or graceful characteristic that usually has a soft character like a woman, while in Versatile roles usually this person can be both roles that have been mentioned. Versatile has multiple roles and can switch roles according to the agreement and convenience of the partner or himself (Ronda, 2020) Through symbolic interactionism that have broad meanings and meanings, they can represent various types of roles rather than gay people individually so that they can clearly show their part of themselves to other gay people.

To support the reference of similar research, the researcher tries to describe several previous similar studies which also raised the theme of symbolic analysis and self-representation. The first, the research entitled "Interpersonal Communication Patterns of Homosexuals Against Their Communities in the City of Serang" this research was written by Ilham Akbar, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, Banten which was published in 2011. In this study there are 2 (two) objectives. What we want to achieve is, to find out how the symbols and characteristics used by homosexuals in self-disclosure and communication patterns used by homosexuals in self-disclosure (Akbar et al., 2011)

The method of collecting data in this third study was by means of interviews, observation, and the use of documentation materials. Meanwhile, in terms of the object of research, in this study the objects were 4 people with different backgrounds and social status. The conclusion of the research is that there is no real use of symbols of homosexual life in the city of Serang. However, the characteristics that stand out

are body movements, eye glances, and actions that invite attention as a feature of their existence. Meanwhile, in terms of the language used is argot language. Where the use of language is almost similar to the language used by transvestites. While the homosexual communication pattern is carried out with the stages of approach like heterosexual friendship (Akbar et al., 2011)

The next research is a research entitled "Gay Religiosity (A Gay Dramaturgical Study in Gaya Nusantara Surabaya)" written by Marini Tri Cahyani The postgraduate study program is considered Islamic, State Islamic University Sunan Ampel Surabaya, which was published in 2020. In this study there are 2 (two) objectives, namely, to find out the reality of the religious life of a gay person in the Nusantara style of Surabaya and to understand the meaning of religious life which is understood by a gay person in the Nusantara style of Surabaya. (Sarasati, 2015).

The method of collecting data used in this second study is by means of observation and interviews, then the data can be processed by codifying the data, presenting the data and continuing by providing conclusions or verification. Meanwhile, in terms of objects, what was done in this study was to examine a gay person who was a member of the Gaya Nusantara community in Surabaya. This research uses qualitative research methods. The conclusion of this research is that the informant named Andi continues to carry out his obligations as a heterosexual man in order to protect the hearts of his parents. Andi will also continue to fulfill his obligations as a complete man, namely getting married and having children. The deviant sexual orientation does not distance him from the religion he has embraced since childhood, Andi still continues to carry out religious rituals by continuing to worship 5 (five) times.

In contrast to the two previous studies above, in this study the symbols or symbols that are reflected by the gay community become something unique because they were specifically formed by the gay community to maintain interaction between their fellow people in a social environment full of rejection. To discuss more deeply the meaning and meaning of the symbols used by the gay community in interacting, further research is needed in order to be able to clearly understand the meaning and meaning of the symbols or symbols used in the communication interactions of the gay community so that they can represent themselves in the social environment.

Drawn from an explanation of the uniqueness of the symbolic interactionism possessed by the gay community with the aim of using it to avoid isolation and rejection from the community, the researcher is interested in investigating more deeply with the support of data and existing problems to answer the research objective, namely to find out the symbolic interactionism of gay community communication towards representation of himself. And the purpose of this study is to find out how the symbolic interactionism of gay community communication on its self-representation.

METHOD

The paradigm used by the researcher in this study is the constructivist paradigm, namely the paradigm which is the antithesis of the notion that places an observation and objectivity in discovering reality or science. Constructivism paradigm has the view that a social science as a systematic analysis of socially meaningful. This constructivist paradigm was chosen by the researcher on the grounds that it was considered relevant to the phenomenological method used in this study. The constructivist paradigm is needed by researchers to construct a reality that is obtained in the field from each informant to

be associated with the theory used. In this study, the researcher decided to use a qualitative approach for the research being studied, given that the subject of the study is an individual who has his own meaning for each event. Myers in Palmer and Bolderston (2006) expressed the opinion that qualitative research has the opposite goal of quantitative research (Palmer & Bolderston, 2006)

Where in qualitative research comes from something that can distinguish humans under scrutiny from other living things, namely the difference lies in the human ability to communicate. In qualitative research methods are designed in such a way as to help researchers to understand humans and the socio-cultural context in the lives that are lived by humans (Palmer & Bolderston, 2006) This research uses a type of descriptive research known as taxonomic research, which is an exploration and clarification of a phenomenon or social reality that occurs and describes a number of variables related to the problem of the data unit being studied (Mulyadi, 2013). In simple terms, descriptive research has the aim of clearly describing a phenomenon inductively. In this study examining social phenomena, therefore the use of descriptive methods is the right choice to be used because there is no researcher intervention in environmental conditions during the research being studied (Mulyana, 2018)

The method used is phenomenology as a methodology of research conducted by researchers. Hajaroh wrote that phenomenology is a science that examines the essences of consciousness and the ideal essence in terms of objects that are used as correlations with consciousness. (Hajaroh, 2010). Phenomenology is a philosophical approach used with the aim of investigating human experience.

The data collection technique used by the researcher was three sources of data that became the reference and were used as the

primary data sources of this research, namely, interviews, observations, and literature studies. In addition to this, the researcher also uses additional secondary data in the form of articles and data in the form of statistics that have been found to support the primary data obtained (Mulyana, 2018)

In the research conducted by the researcher, the researcher used the source triangulation method with the confirmability formula. In the research made by the researcher, the researcher used the source triangulation method by adding expert informants who were communication and psychology experts to get confirmation from the experts using different data collection techniques through interviews and observations. The data that the researcher gets from the source will be continued by testing and linking the data with the theory used so that in the process of validating the data obtained by the researcher and described in the research results is valid. The data analysis technique uses a reduction, display and conclusion process in the form of data evaluation. This study uses the phenomenological method on 4 research subjects where 2 of them are gay and the other 2 are communication experts and psychologists. The theory used in this study is the symbolic interactionism theory of George Herbert Mead and Blummer and the representation theory of Stuart Hall.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers on 4 (four) informants who have been described in the previous sub-chapter, the next step the researcher will be to discuss the results of the research obtained from the informants using the theory of symbolic interactionism of Gorge Herbert Mead and Blummer and the theory of Stuart Hall representation. The researcher will use the two theories as a reference in analyzing the findings of the

researcher and at the same time the researcher will also relate it to the object in this study, namely the symbolic interactionism of gay community communication on self-representation.

Researchers have described the symbolic interactionism theory put forward by George Hebert Mead which has 3 elements, namely mind, self, and society. As well as the symbolic interactionism theory proposed by Blummer which has 3 elements, namely meaning, language, and thought. Finally, the theory that has also been described in chapter 2 (two) is the representation theory put forward by Stuart Hall. The representation theory put forward by Stuart Hall has 2 (two) important elements in it, namely the concept of thought and language. Each of the elements contained in the symbolic interactionism theory and representation theory cannot be separated in the process of communication interaction which is related to symbols or symbols that have broad meanings and through the meaning of symbols can represent themselves which is carried out through communication interactions. non-verbally.

First of all, the researcher will start with the phenomenon of groups having same-sex sexual orientation between men and men, known as the gay group. Gay groups are referred to as deviants by the Indonesian people because their sexual orientation is not in accordance with existing cultural and religious norms and is not compatible with the heterosexual community, which is the majority group in Indonesian society. Meanwhile, in terms of the factors that make them gay, they also vary, among the 2 (two) informants that I have, one of them mentions that it was due to past events trying to imitate things he saw from porn videos with his brothers and sisters.

From the various reasons for informants about the factors that make a

person part of the gay community, in reality, whether they like it or not, they are part of the community. The life of the gay community in Indonesia is not easy, the rejections that the gay community faces make the process of interaction between gay people hampered and raises concerns from within them. As a form of diversity from sexual orientation, in gay life there are gay types in it. These types of gays usually affect relationships towards more intimate or physical contact. Where the type in gay is commonly known as "roles" which consists of the terms "Top, Bottom, and Versatile".

Top is a gay person who acts as a "male" in a homosexual relationship, while bottom is a term used for gay people who tend to be more feminist and passive in a relationship where indirectly bottom is a gay person who acts as the "woman side" in a homosexual relationship. In contrast to Versatile, where this term is intended for gay people who can play multiple roles in a relationship. The purpose of dual roles is that the Versatile roles can change to top or bottom according to the agreement of the two parties involved in a relationship or called the "switch position". In fact, the terms gay roles (roles) as mentioned above are not generally known by the wider community, especially the heterosexual community.

In addition to the types in terms of roles in the gay community, there are various types of gays, namely open (open) and closed (discreet) gays. Gay open (open) is characterized by the openness of his identity and sexual orientation that he has in the circle of friends to his own family. Meanwhile, discreet gays are usually characterized by gay people who are not open in the social environment, both in terms of their identity and their sexual orientation. On average, the reasons gay people choose to be discreet also vary, ranging from family backgrounds with a

strong religion to an environment that is not open minded.

Entering the communication process, an open counter attitude towards the phenomenon of the gay community makes gay people create symbols or symbols as well as slang language that has broad meanings and meanings for fellow gays as an alternative way so that interaction between gays can still take place in the community. Through the use of symbols, gay people can communicate more intimately, whose meaning is only known to them (gays) and is used to attract the attention of other gay people to interact when they are in the wider community.

The symbolic interactionism used by the gay community in the process of interacting with other gay people consists of many forms in its delivery, where symbols can be conveyed through accessories, earrings, bracelets, necklaces. In addition to accessories, symbols can also be conveyed through attributes such as clothes, pants and socks. However, from the many forms of symbols that are conveyed, there is one variety of symbols that is easiest to identify, namely the delivery of symbols through body gestures. Body gestures become a symbolic delivery between gays that are the easiest for other gays to interpret, this is evidenced by the four gay informants and my experts from the results of interviews that compactly stated that usually a gay person can be seen from the way he walks, the way he looks, the way he talks, and the way he walks. to the way he laughs.

The following below is a table that contains details of the symbols commonly used by the gay community in the process of communication interactions with other gay people when in the wider community. The data of symbols along with their meanings and meanings were known by researchers from the results of interviews with gay informants, communication and psychology

experts and the results of observations made by researchers during the study.

Table 1. Gay Symbols and Meanings

Symbols	Meaning
Earring	If the earrings are used on the left, it means that there is a high probability that the person is a gays
Rainbow bracelet	If someone uses a rainbow-colored bracelet that is identical to the LGBT community, it can be interpreted that the person is part of the gay community with bottom roles.
pearl necklace	The necklaces that are currently happening are also used by gay people to represent themselves in social circles with the roles of Versatile and Bottom.
V-neck dress	Being the most common symbol for gays to identify a person is part of the gay community.
Rainbow dress color	The color of the rainbow shirt is identical to LGBT life, usually the color of this shirt is usually found in certain spots such as the collar and sleeves.
Rainbow color socks	Socks have recently become an attribute added by gays to represent themselves in social circles by using rainbow colored socks.
Double strip tattoo on arm	Tattoos are also often used as symbols by gay people to represent themselves as gay people in a social environment with Top roles.
sharp eyes stare	Gesture that is characteristic of gay people is a sharp gaze, but usually a sharp gaze is more often owned by gay people with Bottom roles.
Long-lasting gaze	Usually this body gesture is marked with the intention of being interested in interacting or being physically attracted to other gay people.
How to walk gracefully	Usually gay people with body gestures like this are identified as gay with Bottom roles.
graceful fingers	With a graceful little finger gesture, gay people are usually used as a symbol with roles bottom.
Tight size clothes	Tight clothing models are also a common symbol for gay people to identify someone who is part of the gay community.

In addition to the symbols mentioned above, there is a uniqueness in the communication interaction process of the gay community in the social environment, namely through slang. Slang is a separate

language for gay people, this language may be known by the heterosexual community but not necessarily its meaning can be known by the heterosexual community. Because this slang is a language that is often used by the gay community when interacting in a social environment with the aim of not being known by the people around them.

The following below is a table that contains details of the slang language commonly used by the gay community in the process of communication interaction with other gay people when in the wider community. The details of this slang language and meaning were known by the researchers from the results of interviews with gay informants, communication and psychology experts and the results of observations made by researchers during the study.

Table 2. Gay Slang

Slang	meaning	Slang	meaning
<i>Akika</i>	I	<i>Homona</i>	Homo
<i>Capcus</i>	Go, Hurry up	<i>Iijay</i>	disgusting
<i>Kemandose</i>	Where are you going	<i>Belenjana</i>	go shopping
<i>Mandose</i>	where	<i>Cyin</i>	a call for a girl friend, boy or friend
<i>Lapangan Bola</i>	hungry	<i>Mursida</i>	Inexpensive
<i>Garda</i>	men who like to hire paid women	<i>Sanose</i>	who
<i>Maskap</i>	Handsome	<i>Yaudin</i>	okay then
<i>Tekong</i>	Afraid	<i>Tintus adinda</i>	there isn't any
<i>Neik</i>	Calling gays	<i>Lekong</i>	guy
<i>Ember</i>	yes	<i>Pewong</i>	girl

Apart from symbols and slang, there is one thing that only exists and is naturally ingrained in gay people, namely "gay dar". Gay dar is a feeling that is owned by gay people, where this gay dar serves to help gays identify that someone close to them or their interlocutor is gay or not. Through being gay and belonging to them (the gay community) they can already identify

someone who is part of a gay group or not. Because the use of symbols and slang is not enough for them to determine whether a person is part of the gay community or not.

Drawn from the exposure of each component and principle of the two theories that I used in this research, namely the theory of symbolic interactionism and the theory of representation, in reality it is not enough to just look at the general accessories used and body gestures that are identical to the gay community in representing themselves in the wider community, on the contrary. The role of gay people from the experience of each gay person is important to identify a person who is part of the gay community or not. Several factors were found that became obstacles for gay people in representing themselves, in the process of representing themselves there were obstacles from the bias of identical symbols used by other individuals, nowadays the development of fashion styles in men is increasingly diverse, this makes there are several heterosexual people with different knowledge bases and backgrounds inadvertently use symbols that have their own social meaning for gay people. Ignorance of heterosexuals due to different background factors and experiences requires a more intense symbolic interactionism through the elements contained in the theory of symbolic interactionism (Mind, Self, Society, Meaning, Language, and Thought). Because the average heterosexual community can identify a person as homosexual only through body gestures that are more feminine.

In the process of representation, gay people will first analyze the situation of the people around them, when gay people understand that the situation of the people around them are not open to homosexual phenomena or someone with a strong religious background, they will pretend to cover up their orientation. sexual

possessions by acting like heterosexuals in order to be accepted by the social environment. So from the conclusions drawn, the fact is that on average gay people are only open and dare to represent their sexual orientation when they are in their community environment, besides that environmental situations that are filled with people with open minds also become environmental situations that make them happy. feel comfortable and dare to be open to represent themselves as part of the homosexual community.

CONCLUSION

Based on George Herbert's theory of symbolic interactionism, Mead indicator (Mind) In the process of interacting with his fellow-people, the gay community uses certain symbols that have special social meanings. (Self) the use of symbols in the interaction process is conveyed in the form of accessories, body gestures, slang language, colors and tattoos that can represent themselves in terms of the Top, Bottom and Versatile types of roles with the aim of (Society) indicating their existence as a gay community to other gay people in the wider community to the process of finding a partner. Meanwhile, based on Stuart Hall's representation theory, the components (concepts in mind) in the process of representing themselves gay people will first choose the symbols used based on the assessments and views they want to get from other gay people. (Language) to produce meaning so as to produce appropriate judgments and views conveyed through symbols in various forms because they have special meanings for the gay community and are not understood by the heterosexual community. In the process of representing themselves as part of the gay community in the wider community, it is not done arbitrarily, but gay people will only represent themselves when they are in their community environment and in an

environment filled with people with a modern mindset (open minded).

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