

Strategy of Livelihood among Persons Having Social Stigma in Sexual Orientation

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Abstract

The dilemma of bisexual identity not only brings existential problems for their identity but also their livelihood. This article focused on the pandemic time and showed the challenges and strategies of Christian bisexual groups to maintain their livelihoods before and after the pandemic. This article aimed to expose the strategy of livelihood among the persons having social stigma in sexual orientation in a heteronormative hegemonic system such as Indonesia. Applying a qualitative method with a case study of two Christian bisexuals, this study showed two main findings: first, gender and bisexual orientation have an impact on rejection, oppression, and job transfer in the period before and after the pandemic due to unequal power relations in heteronormative structures. These power relations also lead to the neglect of non-heteronormative contributions to the informal sector in a heteronormative economic structure. Secondly, bisexual individuals developed a particular resilience strategy during a pandemic, one of which is by utilizing informal networks with non-heteronormative groups. Another finding is the influence of religion which simultaneously provides support and oppression to the livelihoods of non-heteronormative groups.

Dilemma identitas biseksual tidak hanya berdampak pada masalah eksistensi, akan tetapi juga terkait dengan kehidupannya. Artikel ini memfokuskan waktunya pada masa pandemi dan mengungkap tantangan dan strategi kelompok biseksual Kristen untuk mempertahankan penghidupan mereka sebelum dan sesudah pandemi. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap strategi kehidupan orang-orang yang memiliki stigma social karena orientasi seksual mereka dalam system masyarakat yang memiliki hegemoni heteronormative seperti Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif dengan studi kasus atas dua orang biseksual Kristen, studi ini menunjukkan dua temuan utama: pertama, gender dan orientasi biseksual berdampak pada penolakan, penindasan, dan transfer pekerjaan pada periode sebelum dan sesudah pandemi akibat relasi kuasa yang timpang dalam struktur heteronormatif. Relasi kekuasaan ini juga menyebabkan pengabaian kontribusi non-heteronormatif kepada sektor informal dalam struktur ekonomi heteronormatif. Kedua, individu biseksual mengembangkan strategi resiliensi tertentu selama pandemi, salah satunya dengan memanfaatkan jaringan informal dengan kelompok non-heteronormatif. Temuan lain adalah adanya pengaruh agama yang secara bersamaan memberikan dukungan dan penindasan terhadap penghidupan kelompok non-heteronormatif.

Keywords: bisexual; Christian; COVID-19; gender and sexuality studies; livelihood

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Introduction

Stigmatization, discrimination, and social exclusion due to homo/biphobia commonly develops in society. Ripley (2011) stated that bisexual men experience such stigmatization, discrimination, and social exclusion. Bisexual groups accept this oppression from homosexual and heterosexual groups because their identities are in the "between." Even in the exploration stage of sexual identity, bisexuals are often confused and forced to believe that they are heterosexual or homosexual (Levy and Harr 2018). Sociologically in certain groups, the presence and identity of bisexuals have not been recognized existentially like lesbians or gays (Shepherd 2017).

The dilemma of bisexual identity not only brings existential problems for their identity but also their livelihood. Various studies have shown that sexual and gender minorities experience oppression in terms of livelihood. Some research show that LGBTQ people experience discrimination, bullying, and harassment in the workplace, leading to sexuality-based marginalization (Compton 2020; Einarsdóttir, Hoel, and Lewis 2015; Speice 2020). Specifically, the study highlighted a bisexual woman who reported experiencing discrimination, exclusion, and bullying in her workplace after sharing her past story with a woman (Einarsdóttir et al. 2015). When the bisexual woman reported the various discriminatory treatments to the human resources department, the report was not taken seriously as a case related to sexuality. It was seen as nothing more than a personal sentiment.

Recent research by Badgett, Carpenter, and Sansone (2021) of LGBTQ people in the United States shows that people with bisexual orientation have lower education, labor force

(bisexual women), and income levels than men and/or women who are gays, lesbians, and straights. Personally, bisexual groups may experience more significant stigma, less social acceptance, and less group support than gay and lesbian groups (Badgett et al. 2021). Cech and Rothwell (2020), in a study of 300,000 United States employees, found injustice against LGBTQ people in the workplace and increased workplace turnover intentions of LGBT people who experienced discrimination. Sexual minority women and individuals with dark skin color experience more layered negative experiences than heterosexuals and white.

On the other hand, a workplace that is tolerant and inclusive of non-heterosexuality will positively impact jobs and livelihoods. Embrick, Walther, and Wickens (2007) reported that white men tend to form solidarity with their white counterparts to support each other. The findings of Bonaventura and Biondo (2016) on US workplaces owned by homosexual groups reveal a positive correlation between inclusive workplace and work productivity. These findings indicate that the disclosure of non-heterosexual identity in the workplace led by non-heterosexual fellows is positively correlated with the continuity of employment relationships, job satisfaction, and division of labor in these workplaces.

In Indonesia, workplace and livelihood quality disaggregated data based on sexual orientation are not available. Livelihood experience's disclosure of the LGBTQ group –in this context bisexual– is gathered personal and confidential. Two informants, a bisexual Christian who works at a Christian foundation, begins to be shunned by his colleagues when he is found to have a non-heteronormative sexual orientation. Don has worked at a Christian foundation for over three

years. At first, Don was known as a proficient foreign language and art worker. Don's colleagues initially welcomed him as a talent. He was accepted and respected by his work environment until he shared his sexual experiences differently from his colleagues. Slowly, Don's colleagues who internalize homo/biphobia limit their relationship with him and talk each other as a joke. As a result, Don's work performance had been decreased because the work environment is less supporting than before. Slowly, Don's access to social services under the Christian foundation was also restricted. Finally, Don removed from his job division and now does not have a permanent duty.

Don's livelihood experience is a glimpse of the life story in my conversations and observations when working with him in the same environment. Don's livelihood experience was made worse by the presence of the COVID-19 pandemic in the world. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the vulnerability of various marginalized groups, including LGBTQ groups in various parts of the world (Gahan and Almack 2020). Gahan and Almack (2020) found that during the pandemic, LGBTQ groups were often the targets of accusations of spreading COVID-19 clusters; even from religious circles, they were accused of being the cause of God's punishment. As a result, sexual minority groups experience disempowerment and marginalization in various aspects of life, including work and livelihood. This is in line with the findings of the United Nations through the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2020) that LGBTQ people are more likely to be unemployed and live in poverty than the general population during a pandemic.

Many of the LGBTQ community work in the informal sector and do not have access to paid sick leave, unemployment compensation, and

protection. The Conversation reported that the LGBTQ group is a group whose livelihoods have been severely affected during the pandemic in Indonesia (Rodriguez and Suvianita 2020). Before the pandemic, LGBTQ groups in Indonesia had experienced layered discrimination by various groups of society. The presence of the pandemic worsens the conditions of those who experience discrimination which ultimately leads to job losses. Some of those who lost their jobs returned to their families in the fear of rejection of their gender and sexuality.

In this context, the intersectionality of gender, sexuality, and another personal identity such as skin color, religion, and class, greatly affect the livelihoods of gender or sexual minorities in layers. When gender and sexual minorities are in a low bargaining position in a homo/biphobic work environment, their social life and livelihoods are threatened. It is proposed that there is a problem between a person's gender and sexual identity and the dynamics of their livelihood in relation with their other identities.

Referring to the previous researches as described above, no one has specifically discussed bisexual livelihood in the context of Indonesia. Therefore, it is necessary to explore how the livelihoods of bisexual during the pandemic in the Indonesian context to fill the literature gap with novelty that contributes positively to the inclusion of various genders and sexualities. Thus, research is needed that reveals the voices and experiences of sexual minorities in the pre-and post-pandemic periods. In this regard, bisexuals as an "intermediate" group under pressure from heterosexual and homosexual groups deserve special attention. This study specifically wants to explore bisexual perspective and experiences concerning livelihoods. There are two informants involved in this study.

The first subject is Don, a Chinese-Manadonese, a cisgender man who identifies as bisexual. Don is now working on a freelance basis. As of now, Don reports as single and does not yet have a partner. He lives in his family's house in Jakarta. The second subject is Rick, a cisgender man, a former private television photographer of Batak descent who now works as a freelancer. Rick is a bisexual who is married to a woman and has two children. Rick lives in a house in the Jakarta with his family. Closed personal relationship between author and both subjects make possible to catch their voices and experiences through scientific research. Therefore, this scientific research will be carried out from an alliance perspective through academic methods to produce scientific outcomes. Concerning this research aim, some relevant gradual questions can be asked: how is the intersectionality of gender, sexuality, religion, and ethnicity on the dynamics of bisexual life before the pandemic? What social struggles do they experience as a non-heteronormative group amid heteronormativity? What is their adaptive strategy to maintain their livelihood during the pandemic?

This research was designed in a qualitative design with a case study approach to two Christian bisexuals in Jakarta. Data collection will be carried out using an in-depth online interview method through the ZOOM application due to the pandemic situation that does not allow face-to-face meetings. The conversations were recorded and transcribed in verbatim form and then codified with NVivo 12.

The theoretical foundation used to analyze the data is the feminist economic theory of Mary Virginia Lee Badgett. Badgett (1995), criticizes the development of feminist economic theory both epistemologically and pragmatically, which

is dominantly focused only on gender. Her critique emphasizes that feminist economic theory is still very heteronormative and blind to non-heteronormative groups. As a brief review, the feminist economic theory proposes a critique of science and traditional economic systems based on masculine hegemony. The traditional economic system focuses on producing goods and services dominated by men in the public sphere without considering the reproductive role in the domestic sphere, which is dominated by women (Nelson 1995).

The feminist movement challenges the traditional economic system by proposing a feminist economic theory that pays attention to the role of women in social reproduction and care work in the domestic space. Through feminist economic theory, the focus of economics previously focused on the male-dominated production process is now drawn more broadly into domestic space. This domain is the process of social reproduction in domestic work carried out by women to support the production process, which men in the public sphere mainly do. *Who Cooked Adam Smith's Dinner?* (Marçal 2012) is one of the most recent feminist critiques on the role of women in the economy.

In her analysis, Badgett sees that the offer of feminist economic theory is still very limited to heteronormative families consisting of fathers, mothers, and children. Badgett criticizes feminist economic theory, which, although it has elevated the status of heterosexual women, is still blind to the reality of sex and gender diversity. For Badgett, the focus on gender is inadequate to accommodate a broader analysis of the economic system. Sexuality needs to be a unit of analysis that is taken into account in feminist economics and gender analysis. A family with non-heteronormative orientation individuals or a

family built by a non-heteronormative partner shows the importance of analysis and the influence of sexuality in the economy. Badgett (1995) more specifically emphasizes the need for a thorough analysis of sexual orientation in a feminist economic analysis model. Otherwise, the experiences and livelihoods of non-heterosexual groups such as gays, lesbians, and bisexuals will remain invisible.

Analysis of gender and sexual orientation can reveal the political and social problems of individuals in non-heterosexual groups. Sedgwick (1990) points out that the social status of a person's sexual partner based on race or class can be a more important factor than gender. The combination of non-heterosexual identities - both gender, sexual, racial, class, religious, and disability-identities found in non-heterosexual households forms a particular identity than heterosexual households. Therefore, applying the heterosexual household economic model to non-heterosexual households can perpetuate heterosexist biases and assumptions regarding the construction of an ideal family, thus creating oppression for non-heterosexual families. Not only does oppression, bias, and assumptions of heterosexism lead to the wrong conclusions that ultimately do not provide the right solution to the problems faced by non-heterosexual families. This kind of oppression and challenge arises from socio-political problems in viewing the sexuality of non-heteronormative groups that arise from various encounters with the identity of a person or a group. If the applied feminist economic model still refers to heterosexual households, non-heterosexual households will still experience disadvantages based on sexual orientation in the labor market.

Departing from these rationales, Badgett (1995) proposes an expansion of the analysis of feminist economic theory by reconceptualizing

the "family" or "household," which has been defined from a heteronormative perspective (Danby 2007). A feminist economic theory that includes non-heterosexual households must reexamine the culturally and legally constructed concept of the household. Badgett proposes a theoretical feminist economic concept that can accommodate the existence and dynamics of diverse, non-binary, and heteronormative family structures Badgett (1995). The family or household does not have to consist of two individuals of the opposite sex with biological children. Same-sex individuals who do not have biological children or who do not have children must also be considered as families or households that get a part of the analysis in feminist economic theory.

The theoretical concept that Badgett proposes is a feminist economic theory that is sensitive to social, political, economic, and cultural conditions from the local context to bring out the various invisibility of the economic contributions of non-heterosexual groups. Why? Since the economic system -such as the division of labor in the household- is very limited to the social, cultural, political, and economic structures of the households of heterosexual male and female couples. Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals married to the same sex or single are often invisible in both market and non-market production. Sexual orientation, which has been in a blind spot in the heteronormative market, especially in the Indonesian context, fosters discrimination, oppression, and even persecution of economic activities carried out by non-heterosexual groups, whether they are gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender.

According to Badgett, in various feminist economic analyses to analyze livelihoods, sexual orientation must have a special place to reveal the various biases, oppression, discrimination, and persecution in the name of sexuality (Danby

2007). Gender analysis alone is insufficient to explain the group of people who continue to be in poverty or social injustice in the workplace or the market. There are unequal and hegemonic power relations that have been internalized in the heteronormative economic structure. Therefore, households of individuals with non-heterosexual sexual orientations should be analyzed differently from households of non-heterosexual individuals. The unit of analysis that is important is the relationship between sexual orientation and the realities of social, cultural, political, and economic life faced by non-heterosexual individuals. Through an in-depth analysis of these relationships, the root causes of livelihood problems and the multidimensional solutions that can be offered, in this context, especially to bisexual groups, can be found.

Based on the research problems, there are three findings on intersectionality between gender, sexual orientation, and religion, the challenges of bisexual livelihood, and the resiliency strategy of bisexual. These three findings are analysed by feminist analysis framework of Badgett (1995) which exposed unequal power relations that lead to bisexual livelihood problems.

Influence of Gender, Sexual Orientation, and Religion in Bisexual Livelihood

The intersectionality of gender identity, sexual orientation, and religion brings social distinctions for bisexual groups. These social differences can occur in two aspects of work, namely acceptance and work atmosphere. As a marginal group, bisexuals are very vulnerable to face rejection in jobs based on sexual orientation. Therefore, bisexual groups as much as possible hide their sexual orientation from office colleagues and superiors. The two subjects, Don

and Rick, made similar statements. Don says: "I prefer to keep my mouth shut, do I hurt you or anything bad to you? But again, I did not open myself".

Rick succinctly pointed out, "*I'd prefer to be quiet.*" To hide their sexual orientation and avoid rejection in the workplace, bisexual individuals act as heterosexual. Rick said there is no other way to deal with homo/biphobia in the workplace than to act straight or act like a heterosexual. Meanwhile, Don showed a more resigned attitude towards homo/biphobia by stating:

"Oh, this is how it feels, when you say it behind your back, it's like... but yeah dan just take it that process. Because if you wanna be a great person, you keep this on your shoulder."

The threat of rejection puts psychological pressure on bisexuals at work. Don expressed his concern:

"At the time, we don't know what if you were acceptable to other miss of the things because I know that I am an introvert in between the office."

These concerns often culminate in the disclosure of their sexual orientation to others. Both Don and Rick recounted that gradually their sexual orientation was discovered by their co-workers. Some know it intuitively, and others catch them having close same-sex relationships or ask them outright out of curiosity. The disclosure of their sexual orientation becomes the starting point for problems with co-workers, which in turn puts psychological pressure on work.

Psychological pressure in the form of homo/biphobia that appears is responded to by maintaining professionalism at work. Rick said:

"So, it's not good for us to just keep it quiet. Sometimes there are someone who are a gay or bisexual and Philip is a bisexual. But I'm

the one who's crazy about him, and can't express it. Because we are professionals, right?"

Rick does his best to keep the boundaries between work and personal relationships to prove that he is not solely focused on sexuality alone as the stereotype that many people think of the bisexual group. By maintaining professionalism, Rick saw an opportunity to gain acceptance because of the professionalism he showed.

The relation of gender, sexuality, and religion with social differences in livelihood, especially in bisexual work, is related to the work atmosphere. It should be noted that both subjects did not feel that their sexual orientation would be a significant obstacle when accepted to work in a particular organization. Related to sexual orientation before entering a job, they similarly said they did not think so. Thus, the difference they experience due to sexual orientation is something that was not anticipated beforehand. The difference in the working atmosphere first occurs in work segregation. Rick, a bisexual Christian, while working for a well-known private media, experiences segregation based on religion and sexuality. Before his sexual orientation was discovered, he was assigned to produce a religious TV program with the team. However, when it was discovered that he was bisexual, his partner expressed his objections to the production lead and asked Rick to be no longer involved in the production of the religious show. Because according to him, Rick's sexual orientation is against the religious' value of the show is being produced for. Therefore, in their view, it is very inappropriate for a bisexual and another religious person to produce a religious event. Since then, Rick is no longer involved in the production of the religious show.

Unlike Rick, Don experiences differentiation in not being given ample opportunity to develop his productivity. Don is an accomplished visual artist and voice actor. Before he worked in his current office, he had experience living and working in the United States. Therefore, when he worked at the current foundation, he was first asked to translate the Indonesian sermon dialogue into English. While working on the translation, he underwent three office transfer. The reason for the transfer was the transfer of the Don division. In this new division, he is no longer in charge of translating sermons but for children's religious programs. When he worked in his current division, he had difficulty developing the program entrusted to him. He shared that now he has not been stopped developing the program, so his only job is now gone.

"But everything must go through them. Doesn't it say it's not allowed? I don't understand, but in the middle of a pandemic, the only program that we have is the one I have, so it's okay if we run the program, right?"

Don is now doing nothing but still gets a salary which is seen as compensation during the pandemic. Don did not dare to tell his problem to the leadership at his foundation because he was afraid of being seen as seeking self-actualization through the program. Even though the program is the only job, he does it as a form of appropriateness in receiving a salary. Finally, he experienced the ambiguity of his status as a permanent employee.

Challenges in Bisexual Livelihood

Challenges in bisexual living can be grouped into two main factors, namely sexual orientation, and the pandemic. On sexual orientation, the

subject said that the biggest challenge lies in the Christian religious values that are believed in most of their work environment. Don said that although Christians seem to accept differences in sexual orientation, their followers are still dominated by intolerant groups. This intolerance puts pressure on Don, who works for a Christian-based foundation. The pressure mainly revolves around his sexual orientation, which is different from the majority belief in Christianity regarding sexuality.

“We understand that even though Christianity is the most tolerant place for bisexuals, but... It is also intolerant.”

This intolerance manifests itself in three aspects, namely, verbal harassment, sexual harassment, and social exclusion. The three forms of intolerance coexist with homo/biphobia from heteronormative groups. For example, in verbal abuse, words such as “you faggot,” appear towards Rick. This homophobic sentence was accompanied by verbal harassment about same-sex sexual relations while Rick was editing a production video. His co-worker, a cameraman, whether serious or joking, asked him, “Rick, if I play with you, will I pay you Rp. 200.000 or not?” Hearing that, Rick was immediately angry and kicked his partner out. Unable to accept being expelled, the colleague expressed his frustration by saying, “You faggot!”

Experiences of sexual harassment at work also occur to bisexual groups. Rick recounts his experience of being sexually harassed while working for a national media company. Several colleagues who had suspected his sexual orientation, either as bisexual or homosexual, made fun of Rick by touching his buttocks and groping his body parts when he wanted to speak. In addition, his other colleagues also hugged him from behind suddenly. Rick reveals that his

colleagues deliberately wanted to play with him because they suspected his sexual orientation to be bisexual or homosexual. From his story, his colleagues seem to have normalized the act of sexual harassment on Rick’s body. Such sexual harassment is seen as usual and just for fun. Rick confronts him with a verbal confrontation. He emphatically expressed his distaste for the behavior with confrontational languages, such as:

“You only poke my buttock? Why don't you also poke the front side? He has been so angry, “What do you mean by poking my ass? I gave you something good, but you don't want it... Then, I remain silent.. I deleted his account, so I don't want to be associated with any work or else.”

Both subjects experienced social exclusion. Both subjects were ridiculed and verbally bullied by co-workers. Not only verbally, other forms of exclusion are reflected in keeping a distance from the two subjects. Don tells of himself, who is often not involved in office relationships. When his friends go together to go to the mall or dine in restaurant, he is often left alone without anyone inviting him to join. He was only invited to join the office gathering during an employee's birthday event in his office, where all the employees gathered to eat together.

Meanwhile, Rick experiences social exclusion when he and his male colleagues go out for a joint content production out of town. When they got to the hotel room, Rick and his three male colleagues were in the same room. His colleagues gently ask Rick not to sleep with them out of concern about his sexual orientation. Nevertheless, Rick refuses to sleep on the couch or anywhere else. Rick insisted that he will stay on the bed in his hotel room. Hearing this, his colleagues chose to sleep on the sofa and separated from Rick. These two events are examples of social exclusion that occurs in both

bisexual subjects in relationships with heteronormative co-workers.

These intolerances make bisexuals reluctant to let more people get to know themselves more deeply. In addition, ethnic and religious stereotypes also add to the oppression of bisexuals in the search for a living in work. Both Rick and Don have been asked why they are bisexual? Their co-workers feel that Rick, Batak, and Don, who is Chinese-Manado, should not be bisexual. On one occasion, Don felt sorry that he had told his identity to a teenager who wanted to know about him. The teenager told this to Don's co-workers, and Don finally complained to his boss. Don's boss calls him personally, then scolded him for not telling him about it. Don was very sorry and called the experience his biggest mistake in revealing his sexual orientation to the wrong person.

When asked why Don chose to work for a Christian institution when he knew that he had a sexual orientation that would be a problem for him, he answered that there were at least three reasons that made him choose to work at that institution. The first reason is God. Don was a devout Christian since childhood. Being raised in a Christian environment made him very comfortable in a religious institution. When he had the opportunity to work at the institution, he did not think long about accepting it. The second reason is the figure of the institutional leader he admires. He said that his admiration for the figure of a leader in the institution he occupies is now a solid reason to devote himself. He found a charismatic, exemplary, and fatherly figure who could be his reason to stay in the institution. Finally, of course, the reason for working is to get financial support. Don, who is 37 years old, is crucial to finding financial support to ensure his continued life independently. Departing from

these three reasons, Don established himself to face the challenges in the Christian institution he occupies. Likewise, with Rick, financial reasons are the main reason why he continues to work as he is now.

In facing these challenges, the two subjects have different attitudes. Don prefers a passive approach, namely *don't ask, don't tell* (DADT). DADT is an attitude in which a non-heteronormative person does not share his sexual orientation not because he is not honest with himself but because there are situations where it is not possible to tell. People around them who can recognize non-heteronormative group identity are expected not to question their sexual orientation. Unlike Don, Rick often uses a more frontal approach. If anyone questions his sexuality in a condescending or playful tone, Rick responds harshly through verbal confrontation. However, for those who ask politely and want to know more, Rick will openly tell the situation. Even though Rick and Don have different approaches in dealing with general questions about their sexual orientation, they still prefer not to talk about their sexual orientation as much as possible.

Another challenge in life that bisexuals now face besides their sexual orientation is the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed many things, including the socio-economic conditions of all levels of society. The pandemic increases the vulnerability of all groups of people, especially those who are marginalized. Rick and Don are going through the same hardships during a financial pandemic. Rick, who now works as a freelance photographer, is experiencing a decline in orders. If there is an order, the value of the service is far below before the pandemic. Nevertheless, to support his family, he still took the job even though it was cheap.

Meanwhile, Don is now unable to go anywhere because he has comorbidities. He belongs to the group vulnerable to COVID-19. Even before that, he had suffered from COVID-19 along with members of his household. Don remains a permanent employee of the foundation where he previously worked. However, Don was not given any work, so he received a free salary after the program was disbanded. Giving this free salary puts a moral burden on Don. During the pandemic, when many people can work within limitations, Don did not get the opportunity.

Bisexual Livelihood Resilience Strategies During the Pandemic

The vulnerability of bisexual subjects during the pandemic forced them and everyone in general to adapt. Bisexual subjects adapt uniquely to their respective life contexts. Don adapts to the salary he receives from the foundation where he works. Don said he was trying to make ends meet with the salary he was earning. During the pandemic, he sold a collection of cartoon figure toys at his home to raise money. Don earns a share to help pay for household needs at home, such as paying for internet fees, household assistants, and occasional snacks purchased from outside. If there is money left, then he usually turns the money to buy the favorite figure toy in installments. Don does not have a side job. He only relies on the monthly salary he receives from the foundation where he works. Parents and siblings who still live at home contribute to survival at home. Regarding health insurance, Don has insurance from the government's *BPJS Kesehatan*.

Rick now does not have a permanent job. He opened a home-based pastry business with his

partner. The cakes are sold in cafes, restaurants, or shops. Rick is also sometimes called upon to teach on an honorary basis at an arts college in Jakarta. In addition, he still accepts photography work from several of his fellow bisexuals.

Rick stated that he got various jobs that could support himself and his bisexual family. He revealed a network of bisexual individuals is very supportive. This whole business and network made Rick sustainable his financial life. The income he earns is used to total household needs, pay for his children's college, and pay for his tuition. As the sole breadwinner, Rick uses the various incomes he earns by keeping expenses down. Regarding health insurance, Rick also has BPJS Health Insurance from the government, which he usually uses to check his health which is constrained by diabetes.

Another life strategies during the pandemic is related to the values they hold. Even though they were marginal and in trouble, both subjects stated that they did not want to depend on other. They have a family value that the difficult life circumstances are not to be exposed and commercialized. Don revealed that his family has the value of not telling others of any difficulty to gain mercy. Meanwhile, Rick taught his little family not to talk about difficulties at the dinner table. For Rick, financial difficulties are his part of solving on his own.

Both subjects agreed that their Christian values enabled them to get through a difficult time of the pandemic. The values of gratitude and sincerity that are taught enable them to interpret complex realities positively. Harmful incidents due to sexual identity that befall them at work are also seen as a form of test that must be passed for self-improvement. The Christian perspective they profess gives a constructive and reconciliatory meaning to themselves.

Impact of Sexual Orientation

Based on the field findings above, two conceptual findings were obtained, which were further discussed through the perspective of Badgett's feminist economic theory. First, gender and sexual orientation impact decreasing the quality of life in the form of rejection, oppression, discrimination, and job stability. The encounter of gender, orientation, and religion directly affects the livelihoods of the subjects, especially on the dynamics of work. Since before the pandemic, bisexuals have experienced differences in the continuity of their work. It appears the influence of sexual orientation and religion in work assigned to them. If their sexual orientation and religion conflict with the values expected in the job, they are transferred to another division. This reassignment can be seen as a threat to the continuity of work for bisexuals.

Gender and sexual orientation as a bisexual man also affect productivity at workplace. Psychological stress arising from the concern of co-workers knowing their sexual identity creates an atmosphere of insecurity. When their sexual identity is exposed, various threats can arise that make it difficult for them to work. In Don, the productivity barrier was experienced until he was not allowed to develop the program he had been assigned. Don still earns a salary as an employee but does not have a job to hire for his development. In addition, individuals with bisexual identities are particularly vulnerable to harassment and violence in the workplace. The heteronormative stereotypes and homophobic behavior are the roots of the vulnerability of the bisexuals in Indonesia. The vulnerability itself increases the potential for a decrease in the quality of life of bisexuals, especially when they have to have conflicts with other co-workers and find new jobs. Intolerance in Christianity

contributes to the complexity of the challenges faced by bisexual groups who work in predominantly Christian workplaces. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbates health and social vulnerabilities. The challenges faced by bisexual groups are multidimensional, so that the liberation carried out needs to be multidisciplinary, as stated by Badgett.

These facts can show that sexual orientation, as stated by Badgett, is very influential in the livelihoods of non-heterosexual groups. Violence, oppression, and discrimination experienced by bisexuals must be analyzed within the framework of unequal power relations within a heteronormative society structure. Thus, bisexuals as part of a non-heteronormative group occupy a marginal and vulnerable place in the heteronormative structure. Unequal power relation causes the normalization of acts of violence and oppression against non-heteronormative groups. Therefore, it is reasonable that bisexuals experience various problems in their livelihoods. The pandemic period increases the vulnerability of individuals with a bisexual orientation compared to individuals with a heterosexual orientation.

The second finding is that in the face of a pandemic, bisexuals develop a particular resilience strategy. Don can be said to be in a weak and vulnerable bargaining position in his livelihood. His resilience strategy is considered weak because he only relies on salaries from the foundation where he works. Don uses his income to help finance the house. To get additional income, he only tried to make a modest selling of superhero figure toys. On the other hand, Rick has a better resilience strategy. Although he works in the informal sector, Rick tries to find additional income through his network of sexual minority groups. The network of sexual minority

groups provides an opportunity for bisexuals to maintain their livelihoods. This action is an act of building an agency based on a common identity to defend fellow groups affected by the pandemic. Moreover, the network built between sexual minorities shows the existence of an economic system built in a non-heteronormativity atmosphere. The informal resilience built by Don and Rick can be understood in Badgett's framework as the inability of the heteronormative economic system to affirm non-heterosexual groups. However, both Don and Rick are experiencing financial and social livelihood problems. Those in the informal sector are very vulnerable to the multidimensional threat of the impact of the pandemic. The tension between maintaining livelihoods and health is also apparent since both are classified as individuals with vulnerable physical conditions.

Another interesting finding to be explored further is religious support for bisexual groups. In particular, religion is a source of oppression as well as support for bisexual groups. Religion -in this context Christianity-became a source of oppression because of its belief system, which closed itself to bisexuality. In addition, he gives support because the values it contains support bisexuals to have a positive perspective on the reality of oppression, discrimination, and persecution they experience. Two sides of religion -a source of oppression and support-need to be investigated further, considering that the focus of this research is not directed at examining the belief system of bisexuals.

Conclusion

The bisexual group represented by the two case examples above shows that the intersectionality between gender, sexual orientation, religion, and other identities significantly

impacted their livelihoods both before and after the pandemic. Financial and health vulnerabilities have increased after the pandemic. The social struggles experienced as a non-heteronormative group are very diverse, particular, and dominated by experiences of oppression, discrimination, and social exclusion. Sexual identity-based threats to bisexual livelihoods existed even before the pandemic. After the pandemic, social vulnerabilities are reduced as physical distancing policy occur, but that does not mean the disappearance of stigma and discrimination in society. Bisexuals develop particular resilience strategies according to their respective contexts. Even though it is particular, there are similarities in sustaining livelihood to achieve a state of well-being. Therefore, the study on the struggle for social inclusion towards gender and sex minorities in Indonesia to achieve a well-being state for the whole society is strongly needed, especially in the post-pandemic context.[]

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