

RETHINKING BHINEKA TUNGGAL IKA: LGBT ISSUES AS NEW SOCIAL PHENOMENON IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia's official motto Bhineka Tunggal Ika refers to the diversities within the country that ultimately build a sense of unity among its people. This motto has been used to conceptualize Indonesian national identity as it was built on multicultural society. Therefore, Bhineka Tunggal Ika represents political as well as social aspiration and principle. The diversity that is reflected in Bhineka Tunggal Ika has been so far defined -if not limited to- the diversity of local cultures, local languages, race and ethnicity as well as religions and beliefs. However, the complexity of the Indonesian society is now growing along with the global development. Various new social issues emerge which may bring additional potential tensions and conflicts within the society. One of those social issues is the issue of sexuality and genders particularly the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) group. Within the term of heteronormative doctrine, LGBT group is the minority group who is often facing violence and discrimination politically and socially. Such phenomenon is in contradiction with the democratic system implemented by Indonesia as within this system all citizens regardless differences they may have must be treated equally. Therefore, in this research we want to analyze the recent understanding of Bhineka Tunggal Ika which may need to be re-examined to include more diversity of social issues including LGBT. The research method we used was focus group discussion (FGD). We interviewed 11 young adults consisted of 7 LGBT activists and 4 non-LGBT people. We use qualitative descriptive to processing the data we collected from the FGD. A comparative study of data collected from LGBT activist and non-LGBT people was performed to examine how they understand Bhineka Tunggal Ika particularly in responding LGBT as current social issue in Indonesia. The results of this research will be used to analyze how far the understanding of Bhineka Tunggal Ika accommodates diversity beyond cultures, languages, ethnicity, religions and beliefs.

Keywords: Bhineka Tunggal Ika, LGBT issues, sexuality, gender, diversity

BACKGROUND

Despite the fact that Indonesia has been established on a vast diversity, the republic has successfully survived through several calamities and generally remained peaceful. Indonesia consists of thousand islands home for very diverse communities in term of culture, language, ethnicity and beliefs or religions. Conflicts within such multicultural society are inevitable; however, Indonesia through its pluralism perspectives has embraced diversity as an important pillar for its national identity.

According to Song (2007:41-42) there are three kinds of circumstances that are especially relevant to multicultural societies which arise from histories of interaction between majority and minority cultures: (1) present discrimination, (2) historical injustice, and (3) state establishment of culture. Indonesia has been going through all those three circumstances. However it is interesting to see that since the beginning of the establishment of the state, Indonesia has tried to accommodate the multicultural societies within.

One effort of Indonesian government to accommodate the multicultural societies was the formulation of the national motto: *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*. This phrase was taken from the philosophical poem dated back from the era of Majapahit Kingdom in Kakawin Sutasoma by Mpu Tantular. It says:

*Rwāneka dhātu winuwus wara Buddha
Wiśwa, bhinnēki rakwa ring apan kēna
parwanosēn, mangka ng Jinatwa kalawan
Śiwatatwa tunggal, bhinnēka tunggal ika
tan hana dharmma mangrwa* (Pupuh 139: 5
in Setyani, 2009: 3)

Bhineka Tunggal Ika, in standard translation means “unity in diversity” was a description of a harmonious relations between Hindu and Buddhist who were living together and cooperating to develop the kingdom of Majapahit. As Indonesia has been established on a massive diversity where communal tension and potential conflict between various culture, racial and religious communities remain high, the adoption of this poetic phrase as a national

motto for the present-day republic is very relevant. The poetic phrase is a symbol that represents the unity of the newly born state which consist of different nations. On government regulation no. 66 year 1961, this motto describes the unity of Indonesia as one nation despite the differences of ethnic groups and customs. This diversity is not considered as a contradictory act but rather it unites and enriches nation itself.

However, within a very diverse societies we cannot dismiss the claim that the differential impact of laws across social groups constitutes unfairness until we examine the claims and the circumstances under which they arise (Song, 2007: 49). What divide people? Belonging to different group. -e.g., for having incompatible interests and knowing about them. And what unites people? Belonging to the same group-e.g., for having the same or complementary interest and knowing about them. What promotes social integration? Mixing group instead of ghettoizing them, and facilitating social mobility. And what makes a society sustainable? Combining cohesion with efficiency (Bunge, 2009: 68).

While the understanding of diversity within the motto *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* has been generally framed –if not limited to the diversity of religious, ethnicity, language and culture, the violence or discrimination against those diversities seem to increase after the reform era. The emergence of radical groups such as Front Pembela Islam (FPI) has undermined diversity by using religious perspective to justify the use of violence to respond to differences. For example, on June 12th 2015, FPI raids Ahmadiyah basecamp in Tebet because Ahmadiyah is considered being different from the muslim majority.

Moreover, global development bring even more challenges to Indonesian plural society. For instance, the invention of technology tightens the interconnectedness among global communities which enable the transmission of information in a quick and extensive way and easily transfers social issues and development from one country to another. As a result, it encourages “new” social issues to emerge onto the surface; the diversity within Indonesia is becoming even more complex confronting its unity. Social issues, which

were unnoticed or intentionally avoided, are now openly exposed to the society and need to be addressed properly. One of those issues is the LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender) group.

To understand LGBT issues, we must first understand the concept of sex and gender. Most people think sex and gender are the same, but both are actually different concepts. The distinction between sex and gender serves the argument that whatever biological intractability sex appears to have, gender is culturally constructed: hence, gender is neither the causal result of sex nor as seemingly fixed as sex (Butler, 1999: 9-10). The statement indicates that sex is an inborn which can be seen from different body shape between men and women, while gender roles are socially and culturally constructed. Naturally, based on sex, things that distinguish between a man and woman is the ability to have menstruation and pregnancy. However, based on gender, we have stereotypes which later appeared on behalf of equality as a man and a woman.

The idea of equality is not a perfect mirror of the actual state of affairs but rather the basis of an ideal aspiration of democratic societies. The demand for equality has been at the core of many social and political movements, mobilized in opposition to various forms of hierarchy and oppression, (Song, 2007: 43). Some claims by cultural minorities ask not for special or differential treatment but rather similar treatment. Minority defendants, like mainstream defendants, want to be judged in light of considerations about what, for example, it would be reasonable to be provoked by or what it would be reasonable to take as constituting consent. In other cases, minority claims for accommodations are demands for differential treatment. (Song, 2007: 46). Instead of following aforementioned spirit of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*, Indonesian society shows irritation and reacts with social stigmatization and exclusion. Women who live "modern" life are forced back into traditional roles. Within the dominating heteronormative doctrine, men and women identified as LGBT are often facing violence, political and social discrimination, and experience collective stigmatization as "un-Indonesian". In

particular, the violence and discrimination against LGBT group has been occurring repeatedly. For example, in 2005 the FPI forcibly entered the "Miss Waria Indonesia 2005" beauty pageant and harassed contestants and in 2011 there was a threat on Q! Film Festival, an event organized by LGBT people that result on cancelation of the festival in several venues.

Such violence and discrimination are contradicting with the democratic principles where Indonesia promises to treat all citizens equally regardless of differences among them. As we know, democratic society is one in which citizens are owed equal standing and equal respect, then political democracy and the equal right to participate in collective decision-making is a natural concomitant. (Song, 2007: 46). But, discrimination and social exclusion to people referring to new form of heterogeneity thus is a problem for the democratic fundamentals of Indonesia as well as the guiding principle of statehood represented in *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*. Even though Indonesia has generally succeed in maintaining peaceful situation despite the vast plural society, but it must not be taken for granted.

By using the issue of LGBT, this paper aims to evaluate the mainstream understanding of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* among Indonesian society. Whether the society limits themselves on the established issues such as religions and ethnicity or they are willing to include new social issues as part of diversity that has to be addressed properly in a rational and peaceful manner. To analyze this issue the research questions are formulated as follow:

1. How does the society understand LGBT phenomenon in *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* framework?
2. How far the mainstream understanding of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* is matching the new social issues which further the complexity of diversity in Indonesia?

RESEARCH METHOD

This is a descriptive qualitative research. Descriptive study (Whitney in Nazir, 1988: 63) is fact-finding study with correct interpretation. Qualitative research is a procedure that produces descriptive

data in the form of written or spoken words and observes people's behavior (Moleong, 2001: 103). Using this method, we study the problems in society, as well as specific situations, including on relations activities, attitudes, views and processes and the effects of a phenomenon. This research describes the understanding of LGBT issues within *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* framework for LGBT group and non-LGBT group. The informants of this study were LGBT activist, they were Renate (30s), Bison (21), Amir (23), Fairy (31), Sie (30), Ines (29) and Nano (25); and non-LGBT people, they were Ida (28), Hendra (31), Irawan (25) and Hans (25). The informants selection was based on their understanding of LGBT issues and *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*.

The data was obtained through observation, in depth interviews and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The FGD was used to obtain focused and interactive information about the research topic involving the target group and related parties. The focus group data illustrate the provisional and developmental character of personal opinions, with group members qualifying and extending their views in the course of the discussion (Bloor et. al, 2001: 11). Presentation of data (data display) is done by narrating the FGD data and relate it to how LGBT and non-LGBT group understand *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*.

DEFINING DIVERSITY

Diversity refers to the complex differences and similarities of perspectives, identities, and points of view among individuals within community. Meanwhile human identity itself is built from various interrelated aspect such as gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, age, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, nationality, citizenship and ability. Some people may associate diversity with pluralism. However, those two terms have different meaning. Pluralism is the engagement that creates a common society from all those differences. In other words, pluralism is only one of the possible responses toward diversity, which exist within a community. Pluralism suggest to engage all differences in a peaceful manner, however many times the opposite happens when people feel threatened by

diversity and give hostile response to it (pluralism.org:2015).

Diversity means two things for social cohesion, it can be a strengthening or a weakening factor. Thus, a proper management of diversity is becoming essential. Defining diversity was the first question we gave to the respondents during the interview and for most of them it was rather challenging.

"Diversity is confusing, I don't know the list of diversity. Actually everything is diverse and no need to tell it one by one." (Bison, 21)

"[List of] diversity will never end. The point is that all differences should not be considered as a problem because we all were born different." (Renate,30s)

"The meaning of diversity must be enriched. We born as different person, even brothers are different. Diversity can be formed naturally or it can be constructed. Diversity must be defined as freedom of thinking and freedom of feeling without violence." (Nano, 25).

Nevertheles, respondents agreed that diversity is a concept representing a wide similarities and differences which are not necessarily to be listed. This is in accordance to what Wellner in Washington (2008) argues that diversity is representing a multitude of individual differences and similarities that exist among people.

Each individual is basically different and it brings effect to the establishment of the wider community. Those differences and similarities however encourage individuals to align themselves to each other which finally creates different groups within the community. When different groups are established, the problem that occur is then how do people react to differences they encounter. Some groups may try to dominate others and impose their values to response any differences they find.

"...we have politics of diversity. There are some individual interests who impose fundamentalist thought and their concept of diversity is full of violence." (Sie, 30).

As mentioned above, one of many

problems related to diversity in Indonesia is that many people still unable to accept differences and at worse they respond it with violence. The ability of people to accept differences is correlated to social cohesion and inclusion which lead to the question whether or not certain groups are being excluded from the society.

We often see that minority groups within a society are vulnerable to discrimination, stigmatization and violence. Such issues were also the concern from both groups of respondents. At this point, the respondents suggest that the present of the state to ensure that all citizens must be treated equally before the law and are given the same access to their basic rights is required. It is the obligation of the state to protect all of its citizens regardless their differences as one of the responden said:

“Diversity is very wide, [therefore] the question is how the state able to manage diversity and accommodate all of its citizens to enjoy the same rights” (Amir, 23).

Amir’s opinion is in accordance with the definition of citizenship proposed by Gagnon and Iacovino (2007:124) who argue that “Citizenship is a status, where individuals are endowed with a set of rights, and justice is a remedial value”. Thus no individuals may impose or force their way of life to others as all members of the society have the same status and set of rights.

In the case of Indonesia, diversity has been formally embraced as a positive aspect that should strengthen the state and is viewed as a factor that encourages the unity. The decision to formulate a national motto of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* should be interpreted that diversity is the core of the country’s establishment which must be properly managed in order to strengthen the unity. The management should come by law enforcement that treats each different group and each individual equally. On the other hand, it is essential that the society learn to respect each other differences. However such ability is arguably difficult and that the realization of the national motto of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* is then also questioned.

BHINEKA TUNGGAL IKA AND INDONESIAN LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

Mouffe (2006: 318-319) defines liberal democracy as “much more than merely a form of government” because it represent the social interaction which emphasize on the “politically organized human coexistence”. Liberal democracy consists of two different tradition that are “political liberalism (rule of law, separation of powers and individual rights), and the democratic tradition of popular sovereignty” (Mouffe:319)

Liberal democracy principally respects individual freedom and promotes equality values. Individual freedom implies that each member of the community has the right to express their opinion, perspectives, and identity without being confined while equality refers to the situation where each member of community is given the same right to participate in the establishment of norms that will regulate the society itself. Therefor as Song (2007:43) argues that democracy is the presumption that no person is intrinsically superior to another that all persons are of equal moral worth. This means that in managing the society justice has to be committed to ensure the implementation of democratic principles.

However, the implementation of democratic principles is always related to the politics of which it may be defined as the art of facing or evading social problem (Bunge, 2009: 49). In relation to diversity, politics is seen as means to manage heterogeneity whether securing or controlling social division (Bunge, 2009: 68).

In the Indonesian case of managing diversity, *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* was a political means to deal with the vast heterogeneity. It reflects the conceptualization of national identity as a heterogeneous society. It refers to the political program of the founders of Indonesia who were challenged to define a mutual understanding of nation within the huge diversity of cultural reference system. They created a spirit that reinterpreted diversity as strength of the new nation rather than as weakness. *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* also represents political perspective acting as the guiding principle of an inclusive social order. Diversity in this matter was understood as heterogeneity of local culture, plurality of local languages,

race and ethnicity as well as religions and beliefs.

Even though the definition of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* has been adjusted by each ruling government and may have been understood differently by each community but it is a representation of political and social aspirations of Indonesian society who hope to live together as a nation. *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* reflects the conceptualization of national identity as a heterogeneous society. It refers to the political program of the founders of Indonesia who were challenged to define a mutual understanding of nation within the huge diversity of cultural reference system. They created a spirit that reinterpreted diversity as strength of the new nation rather than as weakness. *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* also represents political perspective acting as the guiding principle of an inclusive social order. Diversity in this matter was understood as heterogeneity of local culture, plurality of local languages, race and ethnicity as well as religions and beliefs.

Under the New Order, the management of diversity to achieve an ideal national identity however was highly controlled by the state. The authoritarian regime under Suharto treated the diversities within the society as a complex issue which has to be simplified by unifying them into a uniform identity that was rooting to the dominant values. For instance, during the new order many Javanese symbols and values were imposed as dominant element in creating the uniformity of Indonesian national identity. The absolute control by the regime left a little space for other groups especially the minorities to express their values which created calm and stable situation on the surface by suppressing the pluralism. The diverse society was forced to follow the unified identity which was created by the regime.

After the fall of the new order, the reform era began to change the face of Indonesian political system. The reform era has been changing the social dynamic drastically with democratization unleashes the freedom of expression and the pluralism has been gaining its momentum once again. The absolute control by the government is replaced with the

empowerment of civil society which enables different groups to embrace their own values and identity. Calm and stable situation is replaced by chaotic situation as the uniformity begins to fade. Diversity once again becomes a complex social matter that poses either opportunities or challenges for Indonesian identity. For instance, minority and or marginalized groups have better chances to express their values and perspectives but on the other hand it also open up opportunities for the emergence of radical and vigilante groups that try to claim power and domination.

The discussion on *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* whether on academic or public discourse has been dominated by long-established issues on cultural, racial and religion issues. While other aspect of diversities such as individual preferences and identity has been, so far, put aside under the discourse.

“The diversity within *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* is still limited to racial, ethnicity and religions. Other diversity such as sexual orientation is not yet considered yet..and that was what we learnt at school.(Bison, 21)

“*Bhineka Tunggal Ika* was formulated because the diversity in Indonesia in term of religions, culture and racial. It is a symbol of unity. (Hans, 25)

“*Bhineka Tunggal Ika* is still understood from the perspective of racial and religions that are recognized by the state (Nano, 25)

“Nowadays, the understanding of diversity within *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* is bias due to the repressive government of new order. It is now limited to religions and racial. (Hendra, 31)

We should admit that those established issues of diversity have indeed remained sensitive and fragile for the Indonesian social cohesion. However, the complexity of Indonesian society is also growing which means the perspective of diversity within *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* should be widen to incorporate the growing social complexity.

We should also admit that the expectation of the Indonesian unity in diversity is not yet fully fulfilled, even if we are talking on the level of the established

issues. We still see many conflicts and violence based on racial and religion issues. Meanwhile, according to Mouffe (2006:323) in a state that follow liberal democratic principles, the differences among its people must not be seen as an enemy that should be eliminated but rather as “adversary whose existence is legitimate and must be tolerated”. This was also the concern of our respondents:

“Historically, Bhineka Tunggal Ika was a political concept to unite and accommodate what we now call Indonesia. Bhineka Tunggal Ika is a big ambition but the realization is still far from the expectation.” (Renate, 30s)

“Bhineka is about how we define diversity, as simple as that. But unfortunately now we have to witness that Bhineka Tunggal Ika is just a memory due to a regressive development [in term of tolerant society].” (Fairy, 30s) .

“As I am growing up, I see that the spirit of Bhineka Tunggal Ika is fading away because the state is unable to protect it.” (Sie, 30)

“Unfortunately Bhineka Tunggal Ika is a symbol. I feel transgender people never be heard [by the government]. (Ines, 29)

The difficulty of the realization of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* from a mere concept to practical guidance of living for Indonesian society cannot be separated from the fact that most Indonesians still unable to accept and respect differences. This problem is then worsened by the government who does not do its function in law enforcement well.

“Many people still have difficulty to accept differences.” (Hendra, 31).

“Bhineka Tunggal Ika is a value and it depends on our democracy and the representation within the government... however it is difficult to apply in my region due to cultural issue.” (Irawan, 25)

“Bhineka Tunggal Ika is unity in diversity. It’s a political contract to unite differences in Indonesia. However I see many problems particularly in border area where the people feel neglected by the government. It

is the government obligation to protect all differences which are bound together within this republic.” (Ida, 28).

SOCIAL DILEMA OF SEX, GENDER AND SEXUALITY

Before we talk about LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgendered) it is important to know how people understand the differences of sex, gender and sexuality. The most basic way of categorizing a person by sex is in terms of chromosomal sex. Humans typically have twenty-three pairs of chromosomes, the units of genetic material. One chromosome from each pair comes from an egg and one comes from a sperm (Stein, 1999: 24-25). Gender has come to be used for the roles, characteristics, and stereotypes associated with members of a particular sex, that is, a person's gender concerns a person's masculinity or femininity or some aspects thereof (Stein, 1999: 31). When the constructed status of gender is theorized as radically independent of sex, gender itself becomes a free-floating artifice, with the consequence that *man* and *masculine* might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and *woman* and *feminine* a male body as easily as a female one (Butler, 1999: 10). Later, sex does not mean determining the gender of a person. A man is not necessarily has role as man and vice versa. However, sexuality is an historically specific organization of power, discourse, bodies, and affectivity (Butler, 1999:117).

“Sexuality is divided into man and woman. And they are different because of their gender. Woman's right is different than man's right.” (Ida, 28).

“Yes, our society discriminate woman, for example, in Nusa Tenggara Barat, a civic servant can have two wives.” (Irawan, 25)

Ida and Irawan's statements tell us that the concept of sex, gender and sexuality are overlapping. However, they can understand the concept of gender. The best way to tell people about the concept of sexuality is by telling them about sexual orientation. A person's sexual orientation seems to involve a person's sex-gender and the sex-gender of other individuals in relation to that person. Sexual orientation

has to do with a person's sexual desires and the sexual activities in which he or she is disposed to engage (Stein, 1999: 40).

“Sexuality, from political aspect, man and woman's rights are the same. But it will face some religious values and then we understand those rights differently.” (Hans, 25)

Hans statement also show us the understanding of sexuality is still about man and woman. However, based on that statement, the problem is when we meet religious values which lead to the connection of an individual and the social context. The symbolic centrality of sexuality is partly due to the way it connects the individual to the social: Sexuality has become a point of entry to the psyches and lives of individuals and to the life and welfare of the population as a whole (Weeks in Yep, 2003: 12).

“Sexuality in political context is acceptable, but culturally it cannot be accepted because we don't have national culture. We still confuse when we talk about culture as our identity (Hendra, 31).

Indeed, Indonesia has many different cultures and no specific national cultural identity. Society eventually confused when we have to mention the nation's culture. In fact, the understanding of sexuality is inseparable from cultural understanding. Hendra confirms Hans's statement about how sexuality is politically acceptable, meaning that the state has a duty to treat people as equal regardless of their sexuality. In the end, we must understand that sexuality was “naturalized” in two senses: first, in the dominant assumption that human sexuality should be understood as a biological function rooted in evolutionary imperative which are then translated straightforwardly into social institutions and cultural norms; second, in the acceptance of corollary that certain expression of sexuality are “natural”, while others are therefore “unnatural” (Epstein in Seidman (ed.), 1996: 146). In our context, natural means heterosexual and unnatural means homosexual. We divide natural and unnatural based on heteronormativity doctrine.

HETERONORMATIVITY DOCTRINE IN INDONESIA

The notion of ‘sex’ made it possible to group together, in an artificial unity, anatomical elements, biological functions, conducts, sensations, and pleasures, and it enabled one to make use of this fictitious unity as a causal principle, an omnipresent meaning: sex was thus able to function as a unique signifier and as a universal signified. (Foucault dalam Butler, 1999: 117). Then, sex and gender leads to heteronormative doctrine. Heteronormativity, as the invisible center and the presumed bedrock of society, is the quintessential force creating, sustaining, and perpetuating the erasure, marginalization, disempowerment, and oppression of sexual others (Yep, 2003: 18). More simply put, heteronormativity is violent and harmful to a range of people across the spectrum of sexualities, including those who live within its borders (Yep, 2003: 48).

Heteronormativity produces “the equation ‘heterosexual experience = human experience’” and “renders all other forms of human sexual expression pathological, deviant, invisible, unintelligible, or written out of existence” (Yep, 2003: 167). It means, the common value in our society is heterosexual value, so everything will be judge in heterosexual law. For example, man should act like man (macho) and woman should act like woman (feminine). Because of that, everything different from heteronormativity concept is politically incorrect.

“For me, it's difficult to accept LGBT because I get heterosexual doctrine, a man should marry a woman. LGBT can be accepted in society but legally I still against them because of my religion. I won't attack them because it is their choices, but legally I can't accept them.” (Ida, 28).

As an institution, heterosexuality is rooted in gender hierarchy and manifested through its central mechanism, marriage (Jackson in Yep, 2003: 30). More over, based on the interview, non-LGBT people understand LGBT issues is only about marriage, same sex marriage. In fact, LGBT

issues is not only about marriage, but many things.

“Socially, I accept LGBT but personally I think LGBT is wrong. The problem is, LGBT phenomenon is different from what we understand now.” (Hendra, 31)

It shows that heteronormativity is an absolute doctrine in Indonesia, that's why society can't understand LGBT rights. Two of our non-LGBT informants still think that LGBT as something different from their belief. Ida's statement tell us that accepting LGBT is a dilemma, part of her is accepting it but at the other side she cannot. The reason why LGBT cannot be accepted because Indonesia has strong religious value, a value based on heteronormativity. Ida and Hendra statement was confirmed by our LGBT informant. Society can not fully accept LGBT and it often create new problems.

“LGBT is not a problem, but there are certain groups who always reject us. Our country do nothing about it so there's no understanding in our society. For example, people banned LGBT event.” (Fairy, 30s).

“I look at our society's acceptance of LGBT is like it's okay to be gay if you do not show you're gay. It was a false acceptance. Yet we expected acceptance. My thought of ideal acceptance is we can get the same rights as heterosexuals.” (Nano, 25)

Fairy and Nano's statement show that the acceptance and understanding of the LGBT remains weak. Although most people would accept LGBT, but for some others, but LGBT is some kind of taboo. In the end the people who refuse LGBT are often the target of anti-LGBT program. Our non-LGBT informants confirm the false acceptance.

“I'm confuse what should I do with LGBT. They are exist but they are wrong. Personally I can accept LGBT but how about the society? Can they?” (Ida, 28)

“If LGBT existance gives no harm so let them. Personally I have no problem with LGBT but for some people, LGBT should be destroyed.” (Hans, 25)

Hans and Ida's statements show how they have a dilemma about acceptance. They experience confusion when dealing with people who are filled with heteronormativity doctrine that is based on heterosexuality. Warner (2002) said that heterosexuality escapes critical analysis through its “now-you-see-it” and “now-you-don't” character: It is simultaneously marked as a natural and given category and unmarked as a ubiquitous and invisible force permeating all aspects of social life (Yep, 2003: 13).

Actually, when we discuss about the phenomenon of LGBT, our LGBT informants said that LGBT is not a phenomenon, LGBT is reality. Yes, LGBT exist since ancient times, nowadays people call it phenomenon because LGBT is being exposed. Media reported it widely since United State of America legalize same-sex marriage in the entire state.

“LGBT is not phenomenon, it's reality. LGBT is as old as humanit. In the past, LGBT is not exposed because people don't want to show it. Now, I see LGBT is used to blur corruption issue.” (Renate, 30s)

More over, when we talk about *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*, sexuality is not part of the issues. Our informants, both LGBT and non-LGBT agree with that. Mereka justru melihat hal yang sebaliknya, dimana LGBT sering diperlakukan tidak adil, terutama dalam perlakuan kekerasan dan bullying.

“I personally feel more and more setbacks here. We get violence everywhere and society do nothing about it. The worst thing is they said LGBT is a mental illness.” (Sie, 30th years old)

“Based on research in 2012, 90% LGBT get violence. Seeing that, it's only a little who can accept LGBT.” (Amir, 23th)

World Health Organization (WHO) has actually mentioned that LGBT is not a mental illness. A team of American doctors is looking to remove that classification for good, and what research has already shown: There is no scientific basis for the classification of sexual orientation-related mental illness. Being LGBTQ is not a disease. (Kutner, 2014). However, most

Indonesians still do not understand LGBT and still considers LGBT as an illness. It is eventually led to the minimum acceptance from society. Lovaas and Jenkins (2000) said that the discourses concerning gender identities in a heteronormative culture assert the position that there are two distinct, complementary genders (man and woman) that all members of that society must conform to, with their biological sex, gender identities, and gender roles collapsed into one sex-gender identity (Saraceno, 2013: 3).

"Consequences of democracy is we have to accept and pay attention to LGBT. In fact, we are still in transition, so of course LGBT is not acceptable." (Irawan, 25)

THE FUTURE OF *BHINEKA TUNGGAL IKA*

Wishes related to LGBT issues are not as heroics as they are often pointed out by the media. Still a long way and will be full of pros and cons. The idea of marriage equality like in the USA or Mardi Gras celebration in are not even yet in the agenda of the LGBT movement. The objective of their movement is still to ensure that the state able to accommodate the basic needs of each Indonesian citizens regardless of their sexual orientation.

"We as transgender can get a decent education, because transgender could not fight for their rights because of economic factors and education." (Ines, 29)

"Health and education for all people no matter their sexual orientation. An access to equal justice for LGBT who often feel insecure and exposed to violence. Let equal distribution of wealth." (Amir, 23)

Ines and Amir say that the ease of education is required by LGBT to obtain a better life. During this time, LGBT, especially transgender, are often discriminated while getting education because of their physical appearance. We should be able to see Thailand, transgender in Thailand could acquire education without the need to eliminate identity as transgender. Education was supposed to be the main focus in order to achieve national unity. Education and employment are very

important in order to achieve the ideals of a free nation from colonialism. Ines and Amir statements are also considered by our non-LGBT informant.

"The citizens rights such as education and employment, should be fulfilled. I appreciate the humanitarian context, they are free to choose their choice. Transgender can have job and they have the right to live." (Ida, 28)

In addition to education, education about sexuality discourse should also be applied in *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*. During this time, people receive sex education only stop on reproductive issues without understanding the sexuality. As a result, LGBT people often experience sexual confusion and discrimination.

"Comprehensive sexual education from an early age so that there is no gender orientation-based bullying because kids understand sexuality. And LGBT kids do not experience confusion and fear because of discrimination." (Fairy, 31)

"A comprehensive sexual education in elementary school, junior high school is important. I used to be depressed during every sports lesson because I have to play football." (Bison, 21)

Rules and laws are also an important aspect that must be considered in the perspective of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*. Law enforcement is needed, regardless the sexual orientation so it can be a protection for LGBT people from the threat of violence. During this time, the regulations in Indonesia are still weak so LGBT people are often subjected to violence because of discrimination.

"We need a special law for them, for example, the state guarantees the right to life, and not seeing them as a virus. The state may give law as a guarantee of their protection." (Irawan, 25)

"Long-term expectation is an ideal acceptance but for now we only need law enforcement regardless of who they are." (Renate, 30s)

The next thing that may be included within the concept of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* is

a matter of acceptance of any differences that occur in the society. For now, the acceptance is a major goal desired by LGBT people. Acceptance from society without discrimination and bizarre view of the LGBT is the beginning of LGBT tolerance.

"The main goal is acceptance. If we are not able to liberate our selves let alone other things. Change begins by ourselves."
(Nano, 25)

Hence, an understanding of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* basically needs to be reconsidered. LGBT as Indonesian citizens need to get a place in the framework of diversity within the concept of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* so they can obtain their rights as citizens.

"I need to see how we define Bhineka Tunggal Ika. And I'm okay in embracing LGBT. In terms of humanity, we need to have equal law enforcement for them"(Hans, 25 years old)

"Firstly, LGBT need to be recognized. And our country should learn how to look at the issues of diversity."
(Hendra, 31)

Both statements agree on how we need to see the depth of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*, so we can have understanding on LGBT issues as part of our diversity. The concept of "*Bhineka*" acknowledges the uniqueness or diversity, while the concept of "*Tunggal Ika*" is a desire for unity. Diversity characterized by difference, while unity characterized by the similarity (Purika, 2009: 16).

CONCLUSION

Based on the research data, we conclude that it is necessary to rethinking the understanding of the concept of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*. So far, *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* has only been understood as a symbol, without deeper understanding of its meaning. The understanding of the diversity concept within *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* has been following the ide of New Order era where it was generally limited to diversity of ethnicity, religion, race and culture. However, as the complexity of Indonesian society is growing, we need to rethink and

redefine the understanding of diversity within the concept of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* to accomodate any possible differences which occur in the society. Diversity should be understood as all things that distinguish each member of the society. Therefor, we need to see diversity beyond cultures, languages, ethnicity, religions and beliefs. It includes the existence of LGBT people. Tolerance and perhaps acceptance toward LGBT people should not be excluded from our understanding of statehood because they are also citizens who deserve the same rights as other Indonesian citizens.

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