

# **SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF MALAY LESBIANS' SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR IN MALAYSIA**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

- The theory of social functionalism views homosexuality as something that cannot be promoted on a large-scale as a substitute to heterosexuality in the society.
- Durkheim-social order greatly depends on how the society can control an individual's behaviour through social control and stability in the social structure of the society

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- The premise of discussion on the issue of lesbianism is still limited to the sphere of the family and is normally associated with the changes in the society's complex social structure as a result of the process of modernisation.

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- The lesbian population in Malaysia and the process of development of lesbian sexual behaviour in Malaysia are still vague and require in-depth investigation from the lesbians' own worldview.
- This is because this minority group moves secretly and the development of their sexual behaviour is often viewed from the religious perspective and not from the health perspective nor the human rights' perspective .

- In the context of Malaysia, the issue of lesbianism has been deemed illegal by the National Fatwa Council who gave out the ruling in 2008

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## SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR OF GAYS AND LESBIANS FROM SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

- Sexual behaviour of gays and lesbians is viewed as something that disrupts the social order of the society, is a way of life that deviates and is contrary to human values and norms.
- One of the factors that influences the behaviour of gays and lesbians is identity disorder.
- Identity disorder occurs as a result of two factors, namely past factors and emotional factors.

- Based on the theory of gay and lesbian identity development proposed by Cass (1979), it was found that there are six stages of lesbian and gay identity development.

- The six stages consist of the stage of identity confusion, comparison, tolerance, acceptance, pride and synthesis.

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- Phenomenological approach
- Explain and describe the experiences and knowledge
- This study used a qualitative approach through the method of face-to-face in-depth interview data collection technique.
- This study involved a total of ten informants where the informants voluntarily participated after being selected through purposive sampling and snowball sampling techniques.

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- The informants selected comprised females whose age ranged between 20 to 31 years old. All the informants involved in this study are Malay Muslims who were selected through the social media Twitter.

- The selection of informants were made using Twitter because most lesbians are comfortable using this platform to communicate among themselves without any interference from the community out there.

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## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- Overall, there were five factors mentioned by the informants that aided the process of sexual behaviour development of Malay lesbians in Malaysia.
- The factors consist of feelings of attraction towards women, the experience of being let down in their relationship with men, lack of confidence in their own physical appearance, distrust of the marriage institution, and sexual desire through pornographic videos especially movies that involved sexual relationships between women.

## Feelings of Attraction Towards Women

- Men are said to have a harder time understanding women's desires or feelings.

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## Experience of Being Let Down

- The feelings of hurt and anguish because of being let down by men is also one of the causes of the development of lesbian sexual behaviour in the informants.

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## Lack of Confidence in their Own Physical Appearance

- Unattractive and unappealing physical appearance, it was difficult for them to get a boyfriend.
- Good understanding between same sex couples further heightens the likelihood for them to be involved in this phenomenon.

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## Distrust of the Marriage Institution

- Do not believe in marriage and consider marriage as something that is troublesome.

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## Sexual Desire from Pornographic Videos

- The age of children's or adolescents' involvement in exposure to sex and pornographic videos begins from childhood.
- Almost all the informants have experienced watching pornographic videos with one informant doing so as early as 12 years old.

# CONCLUSION

- The phenomenon of lesbianism has become an issue that is seriously discussed in Malaysia because of the increase in the number of lesbian community in this country.
- The conclusion of the study is that the process of an individual's sexual behaviour and sexual identity development is a result of the interaction between the individual and the outside community through social support involving six stages, namely confusion, comparison, tolerance, acceptance, pride and synthesis that are experienced by the individual.

**THANK YOU  
AND  
HAVE A BLESSED EVENING**