

## Conference Paper

# ”The Framing of Gay Candidate for Human Right Commissioner in the Religious-Based Indonesian Online Portals”

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### Abstract

The representation of homosexuality in Indonesian media tends to be discriminative and negative, with stigma, prejudice, and stereotypes. It occurs not only in the mainstream but also in the cyber media such as online news-portals. The discriminating views against homosexuals have even penetrated into the political sphere. In 2012, when Dede Oetomo, an activist of LGBTIQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, and Queer) proposed as a candidate for the National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) commissioner, various reactions arose from people as he was exposed by the media. The controversy of Dede Oetomo’s candidacy occurs and spread widely, especially amongst online media portals. The public resistance to Dede Oetomo is mostly due to his gay identity.

This paper studies how Dede Oetomo’s candidacy as the Human Right Commissioner is portrayed in the Indonesian online portals, based on Robert Entman’s framing model. The results show the online media portals’ framing of homosexual issues is still influenced by the majority religion (Islam) and the local cultural norms. The portals also differ from one another concerning the way they depict the issue although showing similar resentment towards homosexuality.

**Keywords:** framing, homosexuality issues, online news, Dede Oetomo

Corresponding Author:

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Received: 14 July 2019

Accepted: 29 July 2016

Published: 4 August 2019

Publishing services provided by  
**Knowledge E**

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Selection and Peer-review under the responsibility of the IGSSCI Conference Committee.

## 1. Introduction

The representation of homosexuality in various media in Indonesia tends to be imbalanced and negatively perceived and, therefore, producing stigma, prejudice, and stereotypes in the news. Such a case occurred in 2012 when Dede Oetomo, the activist of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) rights who defends minorities, ran as a member of National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM).

The candidacy of Dede Oetomo sprouted reactions from the public as it was covered by the media. In online media, the news surrounding Dede’s candidacy mostly presented

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the pros and cons for the public. However, the cons dominated the news, owing to his sexual orientation identity as a gay. Not only presenting news but online media outlets in Indonesia, mainly news portals owned by some radical Islamic groups, also seemed to conduct black campaign efforts.

This paper focuses on the representation of homosexual issues in online media portals in Indonesia. It is interesting to study the online media as it is increasingly popular. The data of the Internet User Association of Indonesia (APJII) shows the number of internet users in 2013 increased to 71 million people. It was only 63 million the previous year. The increase is attributable to its unique features such as the speed in uploading updated-information and the infinite range of readers. The work of David T. Hill and Krisna Sen (2005) about the rise of Internet and democracy in Indonesia in the 2000's illustrates how the Internet industry has grown in Indonesia and influences the process of democracy, especially during the era of "Reformasi" after the fall of Suharto in 1998.

This study aims to learn how online media presents social realities for homosexuals to the public, especially when homosexuals run for the public officials. Our initial assumption is that it has a similarity to mainstream media; discriminative, as it is strongly influenced by the cultures and religions in Indonesia.

This paper studies the media text using the framing analysis of Robert M. Entman. The analysis applies four elements of Entman's framing—define problems (DP), diagnose causes (DC), make moral judgments (MMJ), and suggest remedies (SR). The research object is the news on the candidacy of Dede Oetomo as a member of the National Commission on Human Rights, published from January 2012 to October 2012. We scrutinized six (6) online media sources, divided into two groups based on their Alexa rank ([www.alexacom.com](http://www.alexacom.com)). The first group is online media based on Islamic principles without the printed version—[www.voa-islam.com](http://www.voa-islam.com), [www.arahmah.com](http://www.arahmah.com), [www.eramuslim.com](http://www.eramuslim.com), [www.hidayatullah.com](http://www.hidayatullah.com), and [www.islamedia.web.id](http://www.islamedia.web.id). The other group is that of online media with a printed version which is also based on the Islamic principles—[Republika.co.id](http://Republika.co.id).

The concept of framing or media framing was made popular by the works of Robert M. Entman. In his work *Framing U.S. Coverage of International News: Contrasts in Narratives of the Korean Air Lines and Iran Air Incidents* (1991) he found that every newspaper reported differently about the two airplane shootings. The newspaper constructed the accident through specific most-used words to describe those incidents which brought Entman to formulate five traits of media text to form media framing. They are importance judgments, agency, identification, categorization, and generalization (Entman, R.M., 1991: 25). Furthermore, other basics of framing assumptions are explained clearly in his paper titled *Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm* (Entman, R.M.,

1993). For Entman, “The concept of framing consistently offers a way to describe the power of communicating text... by transferring information from one location to that consciousness” (Entman, 1993: 51-52).

Generally speaking, framing refers to a strategy in which various interests, communicators, resources, and culture integrate themselves to understand the world; and in the context of media life, framing aims to see media role in the political life (Reese, 2001: 7). The integration gives journalists an important position as a party who integrates and reports big issues, making the public dependent on the reports. (Gitlin, in Gamson, et al., 1992). In this sense, what journalists write and frame will shape public knowledge.

The assumptions about media framing started from Goffman’s assumption (in Gamson, 1992:384) on what defines a frame. It is defined as a balance between structure and agency. On one side, an incident and an experience are framed (by the media), on the other hand, one would frame the incident and experiences. This case, according to Goffman, involves an organizational premise which affects cognition and therefore “creates or constructs” and it is not derived from the cognition itself; at the same time framing becomes a concept that bridges cognition and culture. At this point, cultural analysis helps explaining how the political world is framed and incidents are reported in an organized manner (through the process of media production) and they are not received merely as raw information.

In the context of political news or political communication, framing analysis focuses more on political language which is often ignored. In the communication process, the political language can be inspected at different levels (Pan and Kosicki, 1993: 70). The framing concept in this study applies Entman’s approach. Entman perceives that the main dimension in framing is the selection or issue selection and the salience or issue highlighting, giving certain emphasis indicating a problem, interpretation, moral evaluation or recommendation and particular treatment on an issue (Entman, 1993: 52).

With news concerning politics, media organizations have an interest to provide affirmation and construct political issues or controversy in public. In this case, journalists choose which incidents to present and which to discard; which gets more news portions and which to be abandoned. Dealing with news in politics, media framing at least lies on two important values—*prominence*, which means the importance value of news, and *proximity*, meaning scale or the closeness of news (Norris, Kern dan Just, 2003: 95). Both news values explain why the case of Dede Oetomo’s running as a member of the National Commission on Human Rights raised controversy in the national scale.

## 2. Result and Discussion

### 2.1. The representation and framing of homosexuality issues on mass media in Indonesia

Sexuality in the life of Indonesian society is put paradoxical in the area of the sacred and the profane as it is the conception and the social construction of the society with obvious distinction (Hatib Abdul Kadir, 2007):

*In general, sexuality is perceived as sacred if it is kept away from any violations, intrusions, as well as pollution. Sex will be sacred as well if it not spotted, honored, and respected. To manage such action, the sexuality is therefore limited by the behaviors of the body (read: discipline). The rule in terms of the place to perform it and the time stated in religious beliefs shows that sexuality then becomes something quite sacred to run. Conversely, if sexuality is perceived as profane then it is something that is mediocre, not sanctified. In other words, profane sexuality is a behavior that is far from religious values. Profane sexual activity is performed without a rite compared to sacred sexuality.*

The difference between sacred and profane is obvious in sexual behaviors of the society involving various institutions such as the state and religion (Hatib Abdul Kadir, 2007):

*.. Simply the public perceives that sacred sexuality is something that aims at giving birth (procreation) to shape and create a variety of social relations within it. Between two parties who have sexual intercourse, they should be under official institutions that make up the institution of marriage such as religion and the state. The dominant discourse which controls sacred sexuality is patriarchy, morality with its source value is religion. While sexuality outside of marriage and it is not intended to give birth, choosing multiple sexual partners, there is no element of permanence and faithfulness in a relationship will be underestimated. As a concrete example is a prostitution, homosexuality, infidelity and a variety of sex acts which are not intended to give birth.*

From the above description on the social construction of sexuality, it can be discerned that homosexuality falls under profane sexuality. Profane sexuality becomes "a taboo talk" in public as it is against the sacred aspect widely supported by moral values,

mainly religion. In the frame of profane sexuality, it is common to highlight the aspect social values commonly believed by the society such as the morality of religion.

The morality of religion then becomes the foundation of what is called sexual morality and immorality. The foundation of sexual morality in Indonesia is heterosexual marriage which is understood as the most correct context of sexual expression (Bennet, 2018: 208), based on the logic that women should give birth as consequence:

Following this, the desire to give birth is kept as the most correct motivation of sexual relation... On the other hand, the heterosexual extra-marriage sexual relationship is normatively labeled deviant and immoral, with different degrees of immorality depending on the person and how his/her behavior. The immoral sex includes before and extra-marriage sex, queer sex, prostitution and sex representation on public domain which is more and more labeled as pornography. Deviant or immoral sexual behavior... is misunderstood as the cause of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV.

This sexual morality, according to Davies (2018: 42-43), is then packaged in the concept of “*kinships of shame*” which effectively supervises not only the representation but also the practices of sexuality in society including the same-sex romantic relationship. For Davies, same sex behavior is considered as something taboo and shameful. It's taught among family members from a very young age and they learn the importance of heterosexual marriage:

For the same-sex couple, if they presented themselves as heterogender, and seemed to copy the heterosexual norms, their shame would reduce... The shame also controls the same-sex sexuality to some point in which the needs are rather easier to fulfill when they are done in a heterogender relationship.

The kinship of shame, on this heteronormative sexual issue, is practiced systemically, and it has become a part of the system of norms, becoming the reference for the mass media. On the other hand, the issue of sexuality in mass media is one of the commodities of the media, competing with the commodity of other media content such as criminal, economic, or political news. Sexuality in the media is interesting to study since mass media provides important functions in society, specifically in presenting minorities in which, historically, these groups are often marginalized and the media plays an important role within the process (Castañeda and Campbell, 2006). One of the justifications frequently used is the mass media contribution in shaping the “social reality” as the reflection of the social reality. Surely, the so-called “social reality” is not an actual social reality, but rather has become a “media reality” constructed by the

media workers. Construction of reality by media is usually performed for the sake of "professionalism" in which journalists work referring to professional standards through the process of media production in a media institution, which has the potential to present a different reality about the reality (Norris, Ken, and Just, 2003: 95).

The representation of homosexuals in mass media refers to reality in society and values within it. If the common values assume that homosexuality is wrong, the mass media will construct more or less the same notion. Negative stereotypes of homosexuals in mass media are a product of homophobia experienced by the society. Journalists, in this case, are not merely media workers, but also members of society. It is not impossible that the ideology of patriarchy and homophobia are also deeply rooted in the awareness of the journalist as an individual, and it influences them in writing the narrative on homosexuality.

In Indonesia, there are controversial news reports related to LGBT and criminal activities, especially murder cases. At least there are three murder cases involving the LGBTs. *Firstly* the case of Siswanto, renowned as Robo Gedek, who killed 14 kids after committing sexual violence in 1996; *secondly* the serial killing conducted by Very Idham Henyansah (Ryan) who was accused as the murderer of 11 people in Jombang and Jakarta in 2008. The profile of Ryan was not only associated with his crime but also his sexual preference. On the news, his sexual preference was always written as "the disturbance of sexual orientation namely homosexual" (TribunNews, 2011). The words were repeated on other news reports on different occasions (TribunNews, 2011). Ryan himself as the perpetrator was liable to be cornered by the statements of the informant psychologists who affirm that homosexuality leads to violence:

"... the same-sex behavior often leads to violence due to the bad experiences during childhood" (Hari Suherman, the informant of Tempo.co, 2008). This argument was affirmed by the other informant on the same news, namely Haway'im Machrus, a psychologist of Universitas Airlangga, by arguing that, "They are very possessive" (Tempo.co, 2008)

*Thirdly* the murder case of Mirna, who was poisoned using a cup of cyanide-contaminated coffee. On certain news coverage, Jessica and Mirna were said to be "a lesbian couple." There's no clear reason why the media tells the story—yet there are several of them telling such story. In other words, the criminal news involving LGBTs always generate relatively similar stereotypes, namely, they are considered having sex deviation, possessive, madly jealous, and excessively resentful. Moreover, the words

such as gay, lesbian, transexual, or same-sex are always written on the news in order to give a hint of the proprietor’s identity.

## 2.2. Discussion

### 2.2.1. The analysis of news framing on Dede Oetomo’s candidacy as the commissioner of human right

From the finding of news framing using Entman’s method, it can be examined that news is constructed through elements of problem determination, cause, moral judgment and final recommendation or news resolution. The text analysis leads to the findings as follows:

#### a. The selection and news highlight from islamic online media without printed version

There are four media platforms examined in this study—*Arrahman.com*, *Hidayatul-lah.com*, *Islamedia.id*, dan *VOA-Islam.com*. The news titles of those media highlight a refusal towards homosexuals or persons whose sexual orientation is homosexuality. The choice of words tends to be negative in characters such as *fail*, *refuse*, *kill* and *dismiss*. The followings are the news titles of the four media:

TABLE 1: The News Title about Dede Oetomo in Islamic Online Media.

The Name of the Media	The News Title Observed
Arrahmah.com	Gay Activist Dede Oetomo Fails to become a Commissioner of National Commission of Human Rights; FPI Urged to Dismiss National Commission on Human Rights if Gay Figure Runs as Commissioner; KAMMI Aceh Refused Becoming Commissioner of National Commission on Human Rights.
Hidayatullah.com	Standing for LGBT in National Commission on Human Rights Is Simply Killing Lives.
Islamedia.id	Refusing Gay Activist Being A Commissioner of Human Rights, Followers of Islam Should Join the Petition.
VOA-Islam.com	Gay Figure Dede Oetomo Wishes to Legalize Same-Sex Marriage; The National Parliament Appointed 13 Commissioners of Human Rights, and the Gay Activist Failed to Manage the Selection Criteria; Let’s Send Refusal Letters to Gay Activist as Member of National Commission on Human Rights.

The above titles, reflecting the media refusal, indirectly led the reader to be against the candidacy of Dede Oetomo. Not only the title, but also the choices of words and choices of the source persons showed strong disagreement on homosexual issues—let alone their choosing of sources. These were namely the chairperson of the Takmir

Masjid Agung Al Azhar, a researcher from Institute of Islamic Study who stands against homosexuality, and the FPI which represents the hard-liner organization with Habib Rizieq and Habib Husin as the figures.

Concerning Dede Oetomo’s sexual identity as gay, all four media outlets did not contain any positive points of view. The negative images are conveyed in offensive words such as calling him an insane gay, person with the mental disorder, a human being with same-sex orientation; however, VOA Islam acknowledged one of Dede Oetomo’s achievement as the doctorate graduate from Cornel University.

The choice of words used by these four Islamic online media platforms related to homosexuals shows not only strong refusal but also hatred toward homosexuals. All stigmas and negative stereotypes—as an insane person, a scumbag, the source of HIV/AIDS disease, social disease, damaging social order, degrading moral values and community faith—were immersed in the body of the news while discussing homosexuality.

The following is one of the examples of framing analysis on Dede Oetomo in one of the Islamic online media without a printed version. The news is from Arrahmah.com, titled *The Islamic Defenders Front Urges for the Dismissal of the National Commission on Human Rights if the Gay Figure Becomes the Commissioner*.

TABLE 2: The News Framing of The Islamic Defenders Front Urges Dismissal of the National Commission on Human Rights if the Gay Figure Becomes the Commissioner.

DP	DC	MMJ	SR
Through the news title: The Islamic Defenders Front Urges for the Dismissal of the National Commission on Human Rights if the Gay Figure Becomes the Commissioner. And through news lead: The Islamic Defenders Front, through the Head of Preaching Division and interfaith Division Habib Muhsin Ahmad Alatas, criticized the National Commission on Human Rights for its liberal thoughts. According to him, the National Commission on Human Rights might harm Islam for agreeing on a gay figure.	Dede Oetomo was in the list of a candidate of Human Right Commissioner.	The National Commission on Human Rights functions as a tool for liberal groups to fight for ideas which harms Islam.  The Islamic Defenders Front considers the main aim of the National Commission on Human Rights as not in line with Islam.	Followers of Islam are in disagreement towards the National Commission on Human Rights and the gay group should be confronted.  The Islamic Defenders Front considers the National Commission on Human Rights as suppressing Muslims.



It can be discerned from the title—*“The Islamic Defenders Front Urges for the Dismissal of the National Commission on Human Rights if the Gay Figure Becomes the Commissioner”*—and through the *lead* in paragraph 1 that Arrahmah.com strongly rejected Dede as the human right commissioner. This rejection is displayed through the subject of the mass organization, the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), recognized as an Islamic group which often violates for the sake of religion and was going to be terminated (Laztania et al., 2012). The title affirms that as an Islamic mass-organization, the FPI showed strong disagreement when a gay person became a commissioner. This is made more obvious by the *lead* in which the leaders of the FPI, particularly the Preaching and Interfaith Division Habib Muhsin Ahmad Alatas, is used as the subject of the sentence. The word “criticizing” in the phrase “criticizing the members of parliament who are liberal-minded” highlights how this is something incorrect according to the FPI. The *lead* shows the presence of gay people is not in line with the teachings of Islam.

The sixth paragraph shows the protestation by the FPI against the candidacy of Dede Oetomo. The FPI snapped through a direct quote, that “the National Commission on Human Rights has no benefits, it’s better to be dismissed.” The comment was cynical, and aggravating for the public as the FPI has been one and the same with the anarchy which they have been performed so far. Therefore, the choice of the word “dismiss” might have led the public to the violent actions lead by FPI.

The moral judgments in this news appear in many sentences quoted from Habib Husin’s statements, as follows:

1. *“The National Parliament has no morality. It has less militancy for such things. They are liberal-minded, being unaware of the harm when a gay figure becomes a member of the National Commission on Human Rights,”* said Habib. “The Parliament has no morality” implies that the FPI was angry because of an unaware attitude of the national parliament. The morality in this context refers to FPI’s definition.
2. *“The Islamic parties are soluble in parliament’s coffee. Liberal-minded people with their various ways and funds gain their position and spread their incorrect notions,”* said Habib. The use of “parliament’s coffee” conveys a different meaning. Coffee is a drink consumed by many people. However, in this context, coffee is not literally defined as a drink consumed by the parliament. It implies Islamic parties are floating away by the power of parliament affected by other ideologies and simply forget their vision and mission while getting the position on the parliament. This has been expanded further by the FPI, claiming that liberal people in the

parliament will eagerly spread wrong notions when Dede Oetomo manages to be a commissioner.

3. In paragraph 5, 6, 7, there are words chosen from Habis Husin's statement on behalf of the Islamic Defenders Front regarding the National Commission on Human Rights as a tool of the liberal groups to spread notions against Islamic values, and it is considered against nationalism as it is not in line with Islam:

"Indeed the National Commission on Human Rights is a tool to perpetuate the notions of the liberal group. These liberal persons always have seats in National Commission on Human Rights. Those who have had the position in the institution do not put in much effort to defend Islam," said Habib Muhsin. (par. 6)

Despite the refusal, the National Commission on Human Rights has been prepared to defend those against Islam such as Ahmadiyah, gay, and lesbian groups," said Habib Muhsin. (par. 7)

"In brief, what is contrary to Islam is the things that are being defended by the National Commission on Human Rights. In fact, the National Commission on Human Rights has lost its nationalism and stand against the rights of Islam. Therefore, it is not beneficial and it's better to dismiss it," said Habib Muhsin. (par.8)

Those words affirm that, according to Arrahmah.com, the National Commission on Human Rights and the national parliament have made a mistake in allowing Dede to nominate himself as a commissioner. Furthermore, according to the Islamic Defenders Front, the National Commission on Human Rights and the national parliament are no longer in line with Islam in Indonesia.

The offer of resolution in the closing sentence states strong refusal on Dede Oetomo's candidacy due to his social orientation as gay and the dismissal of the National Commission on Human Rights, as seen from the indirect quote by the end of the sentence,

*We suggest for followers of Islam standing against the National Commission on Human Rights and the candidate from the gay group should be confronted. The National Commission on Human Rights, I affirm not coming from us and not for us. The purpose of the National Commission on Human Rights is harming Islam.*

In this context, Arrahman.com using Habib Muhsin's words not only suggest all Muslims stand against Dede's candidacy, but also against the National Commission

on Human Rights. The reason is the National Commission on Human Rights aims to harm Islam, and therefore it should be dismissed (par. 8).

**b. The selection and news salience on the online news portal with printed media: Republika.co.id**

The religious-based online media platform studied in this research is Republika.co.id. Even though the news in Republika.co.id does not support Dede Oetomo’s candidacy, the voice of the online news is less resentful as the other four Islamic online portals.

TABLE 3: The News Title on Dede Oetomo in Repblika.co.id.

Media	The News Title Observed
Republika.co.id	<i>Jimly: Transwoman Runs for the National Commission on Human Rights, Please Do</i>

The table below (table 6) shows how Republika.co.id selects the source persons and words for news framing on Dede Oetomo:

TABLE 4: The Selection and Salience of News in Printed Online Media with Particular Ideology.

Media Category	The Title Selection
Online Media— Religious-based which has printed media (Republika.co.id)	Providing a Chance for Transwoman to Run for Selection in the National Commission on Human Rights
	<b>The Source Person and Stances</b>
	Jimly Ashiddiqie as the Committee Head of National Commission on Human Right Selection was trying in neutral position but he did not show his support for Dede Oetomo either
	<b>Dede’s Oetomo Gender Identity</b>
	Republika.co.id He may not be selected
	<b>Words Related to Homosexuals in News Body</b>
	Republika.co.id Transwoman, gay, humanity

The issue arose is whether or not homosexuals such as gays and transwoman can participate in politics, in this case, the election of the commissioner of the National Commission on Human Rights, as can be obviously depicted from the title: *”Jimly: Transwoman Participates in National Commission on Human Rights, Please Do,”* and the news lead *The Election of the Head of National Commission on Human Rights is open for all, including transwomen and gays.* The lead clearly informs readers that transwomen and gay people can participate in the National Commission on Human Rights, which is in line with Jimly Asshidiqie’s statement—as a member of parliament

and the head of the election committee commissioner for National Commission on Human Rights—on [Republika.co.id](http://Republika.co.id)

The issue is whether or not transwomen and gay are allowed to join the election of the commissioner of National Commission on Human Rights, which is triggered by Jimly's statement that "*society, of course, is not prepared to accept that.*" His commenting "on behalf of society" leads readers recognizing that in the social lives there is rejection of the existence of gay and transwomen.

The cause of the problem of the participation of homosexual people and transwomen in the selection process leads to moral judgments, conveyed through the reluctance to accept transwoman and gay as committee members, although, in the beginning, the reluctance is hidden by saying that becoming a member of the National Commission on Human Rights is open for all. This is noticeable when [Republika.co.id](http://Republika.co.id) published ambiguous statements such as: "But we all understand that the society is not prepared. Besides we should be aware of the values of humanity."

The news' resolution was to publish Jimly's long description about the selection process for members of National Commission on Human Rights. However, [Republika.co.id](http://Republika.co.id) closed the news piece using his direct quote: "The procedures have been set and he may not be chosen." On the one hand, this indirect quote confirms the commissioner candidate would be selected in terms of quality; on the other, it also implies that gay people or transwomen may not be elected.

It can be perceived that although [Republika.co.id](http://Republika.co.id) seems to view that Dede Oetomo's candidacy as the human rights commissioner is not a problem, Jimly's statement at the end of the news—"He may not get the vote"—indicates a subtle rejection of the existence of homosexuals as members of the National Commission on Human Rights. However, the selection of source person that only comes from one party—Jimly Asshidique as the Head of the Selection Committee (the selection committee) of Human Rights Commissioner—indicates that there are no any other opinions related to the issue of National Commission members coming from the homosexual groups such as gays and transwomen.

### 2.2.2. The morality of religion in framing news on homosexuality

The process of framing is a unique concept, and it is not easy (rather, sophisticated) because, *firstly*, it is beyond a matter of differences—pros or cons, likes and dislikes, as well as negative and positive. Framing also shows issues of choices of attitudes and beliefs, and emotional responses started from the cognitive dimension. *Secondly*, the

process of framing also demonstrates the ability of the media in defining the situation or putting it in a certain situation (Tankard Jr., in Reese, 2001: 96). In relation to Tankard Jr.'s explanation, it can be seen how the morality of religion and socio-cultural norms becomes a reason and justification, as well the issue, which dominates the whole conversation in news on online media about the nomination of Dede Oetomo as a commissioner.

The capacity of the media to define the situation surrounding an issue is performed through the framing process. Some of them, according to Tankard Jr. (Tankard Jr., in Reese, 2001: 100), are by giving a title or subtitle, lead, source persons, or choices of words and expressions. Referring to Tankard, news framing through religious-based morality appears from the choices of words and the words connection related to the context of homosexuality and persons whose sexual orientation relate to homosexuality—in this case, Dede Oetomo. From the result of the study, the words aim at supporting the truth of religious morality, namely Islam. Although Dede is not a follower of Islam, the references used by some media, mainly the four online media without printed editions, are the Islamic norms. Additionally, social norms and culture are applied as well, to strengthen the religious norms and, simultaneously, represent Islamic followers in Indonesia.

The use of religious morality can be understood when we refer to the thoughts of Hatib Abdul Kadir in his book, *Tangan Kuasa dalam Kelamin: Telaah Homoseks, Pekerja Seks dan Seks Bebas di Indonesia (2007)*, translated as *The Hand of Power: A Study on Homosexuals, Sex Workers, and Free Sex in Indonesia (2007)*. Hatib describes how sexuality is classified as sacred and profane. It is sacred when it is performed according to religious standards and it is defined as profane when it shows sexual behaviors which are not in line with the referring standard of the religion (Hatib Abdul Kadir, 2007). Behaviors and homosexual identity is something against the religious values and therefore it raises rejection even in the representation of media such as news.

The issue of sexuality, primarily homosexuality, and its depiction in the media becomes important as media plays a significant role in defining the process and marginalizing the group (Castañeda and Campbell, 2006: 38). The marginalization of homosexuals and persons whose identity is homosexual is clearly stated through the dichotomy of right and wrong in Islamic perspectives and used as justification. This is strongly connected with the classification of sexuality—sacred and profane. Therefore, homosexuality is wrong and heterosexuality is right. Sacred sexuality is dominated by morality with religion as its main source. Contraposition toward religious values means against God's willing (Hatib Abdul Kadir, 2007). Therefore, it is clearly understood that all

Islamic online media without printed editions represent their religion as its main source in their rejection of the issue of Dede Oetomo's nomination whose sexual identity is gay. Additionally, it stated that homosexuality is against religion, against nature, and against God's willing.

### 2.2.3. The power relation presented by words in news framing of homosexuality

Basically, a framing by the media of a specific event shows both, directly and indirectly, a power relation. This is highlighted by Gitlin, presented in his work, *The Whole World is Watching* (1980) about the news on the issue of New Left and student protests in 1960. Gitlin focuses on how dominant social power is produced, and how a hegemony is reproduced in the media (Durham in Reese, 2001: 126). The reproduction of hegemony in the media, according to Gitlin, becomes ideological by grabbing all the spaces available to show what things that are important and meaningful to the public.

In the context of online media framing on the nomination of Dede Oetomo as the commissioner candidates of human rights, both on the Islamic-based online media without a printed version (Arrahmah.com, Hidayatullah.com, Islamedia, co voa-islam.com), online media with a printed version with some particular ideologies (Kompas.com, Republika.co.id, Tempo.co), and public online media such as merdeka.com and detik.com, power relations can be noted through the position of online media in determining the title, source persons, and the choices of words to show their stances towards the issue. The process of selecting and sorting is relevant to what is referred to by Entman as a particular treatment on a problem with the selection and highlighting the issue (Entman, 1993: 52).

In religious-based online media, especially those without printed versions, the power in determining things highlighted lies in the hand of the online media manager. Therefore, it can be observed from the news how the media often only chooses one source person, and that person fits the interests of the online media to reject Dede Oetomo as a candidate for commissioner of human rights. Even though it is wrong, when a fact is presented, it would still be dominating the news battle in the context of refusal. For example, the news on Islamedia.co still writes that homosexuality is a mental illness that must be cured, whereas the Classification Guidelines for Diagnosis of Mental Disorders (PPDGJ) since 1993 and the WHO have left these terms since 1990. A similar case, the news of Hidayatullah.com, states that homosexuality spreads HIV / AIDS, though the facts say differently. However, the false information means nothing for the Islamic

online media. Such hatred of homosexuals allows the authors or editors to freely write inaccurate information aimed at making the public aware of the danger when Dede Oetomo, whose sexual orientation is gay, manages the selection of commissioner members of human rights.

The issue selection and highlighting cannot be separated from the background or the values of the media. For religious-based media such as Arrahmah.com, Hidayatul-lah.com, Islamedia.co, VOA-islam.com, and Republika.co.id which represent Islam, and kompas.co which represents Catholics, the messages conveyed are dominated by the values in which they believe, in this context it is the moral values of religion. These values affect both direct and indirect ways of thinking and writing articles that finally shape the framing or specific framing. Aware or not, these values affect how authors choose their words, which words or phrases are highlighted or presented and which are not, including presenting the keywords or specific information, and lastly the certain stereotypes which confirm a specific theme according to their background and their beliefs (Durham in Reese, 2001: 125). The word choice tends to mock and mistakenly judge that LGBT is madness, a disease to be treated, worse than an animal—widely used by Islamic online media which has no media industry basis.

The relation of power generated through the language and the words, as categorised by Norman Fairclough (Fairclough, 1989: 46), consists of three things; *first*, the issues related to the content, in which the party which holds the power can control the direction of the conversation and control when the talk is ended or terminated; *second*, social relations involving anyone who can speak or participate in it; and, *third*, is subjecting a person in a particular position. When referring to the three concepts of Fairclough, it is obvious that most of the media control the 'setting' to reject the candidacy of Dede Oetomo as a member of the National Commission on Human Rights. The set includes the headlines, the choices of words in the body of the news and to put it in a contrary position to the dominant values, which in this case, is religion. According to Entman, it refers to making moral judgments on the news which are used as a moral justification to legitimize the news (Entman, 1993: 52). And of course, it is considered correct so long as it fits the interests of the online media manager.

It is a similar situation with the source persons chosen in the media. Most media platforms choose people holding a certain power, whether a researcher from a reputable institution, a Habib of an Islamic organization in which many people are frightened due to his violations for the sake of religion, a respected member of parliament from the Islamic party, or even the person involved actively in the selection committee of the human rights commissioner. Their standpoint will be adjusted to fit the interests of

the online media manager, in this context, disagreeing with the candidacy of Dede Oetomo. In terms of position, online media mostly regarded him as a subject who has been rejected or failed because of his gender identity, considered to be disturbing and harmful if he were to be elected as a member of the commissioner on human rights. However, there is also one online media platform placing Dede Oetomo in a more respected position—an academic—and consider his orientation as gay as part of pluralism in Indonesia.

From this discussion, it can also be concluded that themes related to sexuality are controversial. In the case of homosexuality, the issue does not merely stand in a certain position of power, even though it is controversial and there will always be the dichotomy of pros and cons, as stated by Gamson. These themes will always be dialectic; competing between the normative and conventional to a person or party which is considered in contra and controversial position. (Gamson, 1988: 6).

### 3. The Conclusions

The framing of online media in Indonesia on Dede Oetomo's candidacy as the commissioner of human rights shows the following:

1. The Islamic online media without printed copies tend to highlight the morality of Islam, to regard homosexuality as wrong, unacceptable, and violating the norms of religion, law, and Pancasila. For these media, people with a homosexual or transgender identity do not deserve to engage in the political process and decision-making on a national scale such as being a commissioner of the National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM). The rejection of the candidate whose social orientation is gay, in this case, Dede Oetomo, is always voiced on behalf of Muslims in Indonesia.
2. For the category of print-based online media based on religion such as Republika, these publications do not have the tendency to view homosexuality as something wrong and perceive it as a negative or black and white. However, based on the selection of source persons as well as the wording and the sentences expressed by the source persons on the nomination of Dede Oetomo, republika.co.id show their contra standpoint for Dede's nomination. We assume that Republika.co.id place the printed newspaper as the basis of their industry, which surely influences the image of their media.



3. The shaping of framing on Dede Oetomo's nomination as a commissioner on human rights cannot be separated from the socio-political atmosphere of Indonesia. There are multiple factors influencing situations of the pros and cons of homosexuality in Indonesia. The main factor is the religion which affects almost all aspects of lives including public and private, creating situations in which sexuality is perceived as something controversial, or a taboo to be discussed openly. The binary of right-wrong, black-white, sacred-profane dominates the discourse of sexuality in various media, especially surrounding homosexuality. And therefore the media framing of Dede Oetomo's nomination as the commissioner member of human rights cannot be separated from the discourse of politics of sexuality in Indonesia, which is religious-based and heteronormative.
  
4. Mass media, specifically online media, become a kind of moral supervisor possessing the heteronormative standard values and has concluded that same-sex behavior is immoral and deviant. The immorality, for Indonesian, has grown a systemic prudency which is inherited through family values and taught from childhood (kinship of shame). Therefore, it is considered natural that religious-based mass media conduct the framing of rejection over the reporting of Dede Oetomo's candidacy for Komnas HAM.

The weakness of this research is that it includes no interviews with the media editorial. The interview with the media editorial in framing method is used to analyze the context level. For further study, the interview process is necessary in order to provide deep analysis for the level of the text. The deep analysis is to scrutinize which factors of editorial media determine news framing of Dede Oetomo.

In terms of methodology, the study on framing using Entman's elements cannot be used to probe how media ideology works in detail. Therefore, *firstly*, it would be advisable for further research to use more comprehensive framing method such as Zhongdang Pan and Gerald Kosicki. The Pan and Kosicki's methods enable us to dig up in detail the ideology process in media on a particular topic by identifying the logic flow of the media. *Secondly*, enriching the framing methods will surely produce a more comprehensive discourse analysis.

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