

# A Quantitative Text Analysis Approach on LGBTQ Issues in Contemporary Indonesia

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## Abstract

This paper seeks to clarify how the major online media reports Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning or Queer (LGBTQ) issues in contemporary Indonesia. LGBTQ issues are a dividing factor within the Muslim community of contemporary Indonesia. Indonesia, with the largest Muslim population, is suffocated with criticism against LGBTQ. Major debates on Indonesian LGBTQ issues in precedent literature are from the anthropological perspective, focusing on how individuals identify or recognize themselves in society, with little discussed from a quantitative point of view. Thus, this paper aims to clarify, by using quantitative text analysis, the tones of online media about LGBTQ issues among four major online media news agencies in Indonesia; Republika, Kompas, Detik, and Antara. Specifically, regression analysis, using the ordinary least squares (OLS) model, was applied to verify the hypotheses from LGBTQ-related article texts published in these major online media platforms. This analysis showed that it is not only Islamic media or national media fueling the negative reporting tone of LGBTQ issues, but also online media with the largest number of readers and visitors among Indonesians.

## Keywords

Gender and Islam; LGBTQ in Indonesia; quantitative text analysis

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## Introduction

This paper seeks to clarify how the major online media reports Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning or Queer (LGBTQ) issues in contemporary Indonesia using a quantitative text analysis method.

The LGBTQ issue is a factor of social division in Indonesia. Unfair, violent attacks, and raids against LGBTQ persons, especially on Waria (which roughly translates as a transgender man) and gay people, have happened in Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, and in rural areas of Indonesia (Human Rights Watch, 2016, 2018).

Furthermore, the religious community has also expressed critical views about LGBTQ individuals and, as a result, activities designed to raise awareness in the LGBTQ community, which previously involved religious groups, were suddenly canceled and discontinued. In one example, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), one of the principal Islamic social organizations in Indonesia (Davies, 2018), demonstrated their attitude of non-acceptance toward LGBTQ people.

However, the LGBTQ community in Indonesia has played various roles in society. Some waria work as hairdressers or in the fashion industry, and some who live in rural communities oversee religious rituals. Ito (2000) argued that transgender males were regarded as sacred people who oversaw indigenous religious rituals in Bugis society. Additionally, the formation of self-help organizations by the LGBTQ people to protect their human rights clearly shows that, in Indonesian society, LGBTQ people have their own lives.

There is a great deal of preliminary research on LGBTQ issues in Indonesia, especially in the field of anthropology (Boellstorff, 2004, 2005; Ito, 2000). Boellstorff (2016) is the leading scholar on gender studies and especially on homosexuality, gay, and waria in contemporary Indonesian society. Some of his studies have focused on the incommensurability between being Muslim and gay individuals in Indonesia. His consistent examination of religion and sexuality in Indonesia highlights the absence of academic studies of sexuality in Islam within Indonesia. Boellstorff also focuses on the struggle and self-identification of LGBTQ people in society and discusses the structure of Indonesian society, which is full of anti-LGBTQ rhetoric. In his 2016 study, Boellstorff highlights the state promotion of heterosexualism or “state straightism”. In addition, there have been new developments in the perspective of LGBTQ issues, such as the political participation of waria during the 2014 presidential election. Additionally, Okamoto (2016) sought to clarify the process of integration and organization of the waria group.

Though waria were the primary focus of the abovementioned pilot studies, the broader emphasis can be observed of LGBTQ community actors as having agency within Indonesian society. The gap in the existing literature arises as these studies only focused on the aspect of “actorness” of LGBTQ; however, the studies did not take into consideration how society perceives LGBTQ issues. Thus, this paper seeks to clarify how the major online media companies in contemporary Indonesia report on LGBTQ issues.

In Section 2, some of the turning points will be discussed that brought about a critical change in how the LGBTQ community is viewed in Indonesia, and how or why those changes happened. Section 3 will review how data was collected and the results of the regression analysis. In the final section, the perception of society in relation to LGBTQ issues in contemporary Indonesia will be discussed.

## **Events and discourse of LGBTQ in Indonesia**

### **Issues of LGBTQ from the perspective of the Fatwa, and the reports**

There are some key turning points in consideration of LGBTQ issues in Indonesia, which are vital to the discussion from the pronouncement of Fatwa, to opinions by religious authority, and finally, accusation reports by foreign human rights organizations. A fatwa is an opinion or ruling on the point of Islamic law given by a recognized religious authority with no legal binding (Paradana, 2018). The religious authority that issued the Fatwa is called Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI), and members of this organization consist not only of members of NU and Muhammadiyah, another principal Islamic social organization in the country but also intellectuals who belong to other Islamic social organizations in Indonesia. Due to this wide range of influence and membership, people generally regard the Fatwa as an opinion that they should heed. Regarding the second turning point, some believe that the publication of a monumental report in 2016 on the issues within the LGBTQ community by Human Rights Watch, an international non-governmental organization, has had a significant impact on society and that this report will attract attention from both domestic and overseas groups, especially from the international community. Thus, in this section, these before mentioned turning points and related issues chronologically will be briefly reviewed.

#### **Event 1: The first fatwa**

The first turning point was when the initial fatwa, that addressed lesbian, gay, sodomy, and molestation (Lesbian, Gay, Sodomi dan Pencabulan), was issued on 31 December 2014 (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 2014). This fatwa banned sexual intercourse between people of the same sex, as well as extra-marital relationships. This fatwa also included recommendations to the government for the provision and establishment of rehabilitation programs for LGBTQ people together with plans for the outlawing of the LGBTQ community and same-sex marriages (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 2014). Before this point, on 27 September 2014, Aceh Province, where Islamic law (Sharia) is implemented, also instituted amended Islamic criminal law, which was also determined for same-sex intercourse (Qanun Aceh, nomor 6, 2014 tentang Hukum Jinayat). Under this law, Aceh Province executed flagellation (beating the human body with special devices) against people for their homosexual acts (Setyadi, 2017).

#### **Event 2: The second statement**

The second turning point came just two months after the first fatwa, when on 3 March 2015, the Majelis Ulama Indonesia and heads of the supreme council of Islamic social organizations

issued a new statement (pernyataan sikap) which said that homosexuality, gay, lesbian, and sodomy is haram (i.e., forbidden). According to the head of the Fatwa Committee of MUI, these acts are vile deeds, and those people who participate in any of the above acts should be sentenced to death. The committee also explained that the purpose of this statement was to warn that society was full of sexual deviances and to remind the society that all sexual intercourse, except that which takes place in a licit relationship, is haram (Detik, 2015, 3 March).

Interestingly, digital copies of fatwa and other statements in recent years can be found on the official website of MUI, yet this statement is not posted on the MUI's website. As far as can be seen from the newspaper article, the printed statement was shown to the journalist when MUI was holding a press conference on that day.

### **Event 3: Opinion from the religious authority**

On 17 February 2016, MUI and other Islamic social organizations (Organisasi Masyarakat Islam) expressed their opinion during a press conference to urge the LGBTQ community to comply with the Constitution and religious codes, such as Marriage Law, which was amended in 1974. These religious leaders also urged the government to legislate against LGBTQ and related activities. Ma'ruf Amin, the chairman of the MUI, stated that the MUI and other Islamic social organizations expected the government to criminalize and ban LGBTQ activities as well as what these leaders considered deviant sexual intercourse (The Jakarta Post, 2016, 17 February). He also insisted that not only LGBTQ people but also people who promoted activities related to the LGBTQ community, or those who provided financial support to LGBTQ groups or encouraged sexual intercourse should also be criminalized (The Jakarta Post, 2016, 17 February).

In response to the MUI statements, Lukman Hakim Saifuddin, the Minister of Religious Affairs, stated that the LGBTQ people are Indonesian citizens, and we should not hate them (Human Rights Watch, 2017). He also said, however, that we should not change the country's religious values (nilai nilai agama) or national character (kepribadian bangsa) by justifying the LGBTQ movement. Ultimately, Hakim concluded that LGBTQ people are social problems that threaten religious life, family values, and national character (Detik, 2015, 2 July). Though Lukman Hakim Saifuddin's statement began with what felt like a positive tone, his conclusion implies that he supports the opinion of MUI.

### **Event 4: First report by a human rights organization**

On 23 August 2016, the Human Rights Watch (HRW) published a report. This report, based on a number of interviews with those involved, revealed the terrible situation of hate speech and violent attacks against the LGBTQ community in Indonesia.

After the first critical report was published, there were a series of raids and attacks against LGBTQ people by radical Islamist group as well as by the police. According to another report issued by HRW in 2018, in November 2016, for instance, Islamic Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam, FPI), a radical Islamist political organization, stormed a private house in Jakarta, and the police detained 13 people who were suspected of holding a "Gay Party". In

January 2017, in response to a request from MUI, the police forced the cancellation of cultural and sports events in South Sulawesi, where more than 600 participants, including waria, were blocked. Another example that also highlights the acceleration of raids and punishment was in May 2017, when in Aceh, a man was sentenced to be flogged 83 times because he was suspected of having sexual intercourse with another man. In Jakarta, one of the fitness clubs was subjected to a search, and more than 100 people who were in the club at that time were detained (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

### **Event 5: Second report by human rights organization**

On 1 July 2018, two years after their first report, HRW published a second report entitled, "Scared in Public and Now No Privacy: Human Rights and Public Health Impacts of Indonesia's Anti-LGBT Moral Panic", as a warning that anti-LGBTQ movements reduce the effect of various public health initiatives, and to request that the government protect the LGBTQ community and the official healthcare programs that help HIV/AIDS patients (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

Likewise, from 2016 to 2017, after the report was released, crackdowns and arrests occurred across Indonesia. In October, two men were arrested under the suspicion that they had operated Facebook fan pages that openly discussed their life as a couple (Dipa, 2018). In November, police arrested ten women in West Sumatra for sharing pictures of themselves participating in gay kissing on Facebook, which may have led to same-sex sexual intercourse (Jawa Pos, 2018, 5 November).

As it is observed from these events, the situation that surrounds the LGBTQ community in Indonesian society has been subject to many changes over the last few years. Politicians, as well as religious figures, have made hate statements against the LGBTQ community in public, and there have been continuous violent attacks on LGBTQ people, especially against waria and gay people. The LGBTQ community in Indonesia has faced difficulties, including oppression from religious authority, unwarranted attacks, and arrests by radical Islamic groups and the police.

### **Characteristics of online media**

The purpose of this paper is to clarify how the major online media in Indonesia are reporting on LGBTQ issues. With the rapid establishment and provisions of an online environment, people can easily access the internet and get information. Therefore, the internet becomes the largest source of information for the public (Lim, 2012). Before proceeding to the hypothesis section, the historical transition of the news media, mainly newspapers, in Indonesia will be outlined, and the nature of the four major online publications (*Antara*, *Detik*, *Kompas*, and *Republika*) which are analyzed in this paper, will be described.

During the Soeharto regime, in 1982, all media companies were required to obtain an operating license (Surat Izin Usaha Penerbitan Pers, SIUPP) per the amendment of Press Regulation, Act 21, article 33 of the Minister of Information Regulation No.1. This amendment

authorized the minister to limit the operational licenses (SIUPP). Prior to this amendment, Operational Command for the Restoration of Security and Order (Komando Operasi Pemulihan Keamanan dan Keterbitan: KOPKAMTIB) was overseeing the issue of the licenses (Surat Izin Terbit) (Saeki, 1997, pp. 140-141). These changes meant that publishing and journalism were monitored by the security department, and no longer by the information department, indicating that journalism was considered a threat to the nation and should be subject to monitoring.

*Kompas* and *Republika* publish printed newspapers, and the two other companies, *Antara* and *Detik*, only provide online news. According to Lim (2012), all these companies reach a substantial audience. *Detik* was once a weekly tabloid with roughly a 450,000 copy circulation prior to 1994, when it was banned by the government for discussing sensitive political issues. *Detik* was restored as an online media publication in 1998 after the ban was lifted (Saeki, 1997, pp. 141-142). Now *Detik* owns a news website that has the largest number of visitors, both daily and monthly, with approximately 681,000 daily visitors and more than 13,900,000 monthly visitors (Lim, 2012, p. 8).

*Kompas*, the second-largest news website in Indonesia, has a somewhat smaller audience with roughly 486,000 daily visitors and 9,906,000 monthly visitors (Lim, 2012, p. 8). *Kompas* was established as a daily morning newspaper in 1965 and had a strong affiliation with the Catholic party. Initially, *Kompas* played the role of party press, but the relationships with the political party deteriorated around the early 1970s (Sen & Hill, 2007, p. 57). Today *Kompas*, under the name Kompas-Gramedia Group, is one of the largest media conglomerates in Indonesia, with holdings in a TV station, radio stations, magazine publishing, and hotel management (Sen & Hill, 2007, p. 57; Lim, 2012, pp. 3-8).

*Republika*, which has the ninth-largest number of visitors, owned by Mahaka Media Group, was established in 1991 and had a strong connection with the Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals (Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia: ICMI). It also published daily newspapers with the same title *Republika*. Though it receives only about 14% of the visitors in comparison with *Kompas*, with the number of daily and monthly visitors is around 71,000 and 1,444,500, respectively (Lim, 2012, p. 8), it is the most popular newspaper among Muslims in Indonesia. According to Hefner, *Republika* represents the “entire Muslim community” in Indonesia (Hefner, 1997, p. 92); thereby, it can be said that *Republika* is a media with an Islamic orientation.

Finally, *Antara*, established in 1937, is a national news agency and the oldest news media company in Indonesia. It has the eleventh largest number of visitors, with 51,660 daily and 1,053,000 monthly visitors to its online site (Lim, 2012, p. 8). As a wire service provider, *Antara* is the only agency in Indonesia allowed to distribute news from foreign press and media. The company is operated under the umbrella of the Ministry of State-Owned Enterprise; thus, *Antara* reflects the views and attitudes of the government (Romano & Senior, 2005, pp. 108-109).

As described above, both *Detik* and *Kompas* have the largest number of visitors, which establishes them as one of many large media conglomerates. Though the other two media

leaders, on the other hand, have relatively smaller numbers of the visitors. *Republika* belongs to a media group, Mahaka Media Group, and has a more religious aspect than the other because of its sizeable Muslim readership. *Antara* is an independent company; still, it is said to be under the influence of the government (Romano & Senior, 2005, p. 109).

## Hypotheses

Three hypotheses can be formed based on the events which became turning-points related to the LGBTQ issues and the nature of the online media, which was outlined in the previous section.

Focusing on the nature of online media, each of the previously mentioned media conglomerates has their own tendencies. Once again, *Detik* and *Kompas* are the media groups with the largest number of visitors, *Atnara* is a national media which reflects the views of government, and *Republika* is said to represent the Muslim community. As highlighted in the events and discourses on LGBTQ issues, religious authorities issued the fatwa and statements to ban and oppress LGBTQ activities, especially from 2014 to 2016. These series of the fatwa and statements encouraged the violence against LGBTQ people by hardline Islamist groups and the police. Furthermore, as has been pointed out in previous research, the government is critical of the LGBTQ community and thus promotes “state-straightism” (Boelstorff, 2016). Thus, the following hypotheses were developed:

Hypothesis 1a:

Islamic media is more likely to demonstrate a negative tone against LGBTQ issues.

Hypothesis 1b:

National media is more likely to demonstrate a negative tone against LGBTQ issues.

Throughout the period from Event 1 to Event 3, MUI issued the fatwa, expressing their stance to prohibit the activities of LGBTQ people in the society and to deny the LGBTQ people themselves. At the time of Event 3, the MUI statement included an opinion that the government should ban not only LGBTQ people but also people and groups who supported and showed sympathy to LGBTQ people. Since this statement was issued by such a prominent religious authority, it can be said that the whole media may follow this perspective. In the same manner, from Event 4 to Event 5, when Human Rights Watch issued their reports, which requested the protection of the LGBTQ community, it is possible to say that the tone of media might also follow this tone of the argument. Thus, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

Hypothesis 2a:

The release of the fatwa and statements criticizing the LGBTQ community is more likely to strengthen the media’s negative tone on LGBTQ issues.

Hypothesis 2b:

The release of the reports criticizing the government's response to the LGBTQ community is more likely to strengthen the media's positive tone on LGBTQ issues.

Finally, it is time to focus on both the nature of the online media and the series of events for considering the effect of these two factors on the reporting tone. As discussed previously, the MUI, together with Islamic social organization, issued the fatwa and statements criticizing the LGBTQ community and regarded the community as deviant. Islamic social organizations, whose members often hold important posts in the MUI and the Ministry of Religious Affairs, are, as it were, a bridge between Islamic religious authority and society. It can be assumed that the reporting tone of the Islamic media, *Republika*, would be in accordance with the attitudes of the religious authorities. Therefore, the third hypothesis was developed:

Hypothesis 3:

When religious authorities issue the fatwa and opinions with banning LGBTQ, Islamic media is more likely to increase negative reporting tone.

To verify these hypotheses, a quantitative text analysis method was applied. In the next section, the way of constructing the dataset, followed by an overviewing Latent Semantic Scaling, will be reviewed.

## Research design and quantitative text analysis of major online media

### Construction of dataset and methodology

Articles and other various news texts were collected that contained 11 keywords related to LGBTQ issues from four major online media sources. These keywords were comprehensively selected by calculating the appearance frequency within the entire corpus and the weight of each keyword within each article. The selected keywords and their translations are listed below.

**Table 1:** 11 keywords related to LGBTQ

Keywords		
Banci	Bencong	Biseksual
Gay	Lesbian	LGBT
Mami	Perzinahan	Transgender
Wadam	Waria	

*Note: Created by the author*

The 11 keywords were: Banci, Bencong, Biseksual, Gay, Lesbian, LGBT, Mami, Perzinahan, Transgender, Wadam, and Waria. A brief explanation for each keyword is given below.

Banci and bencong are colloquial words for male transvestites. Waria is a combination of

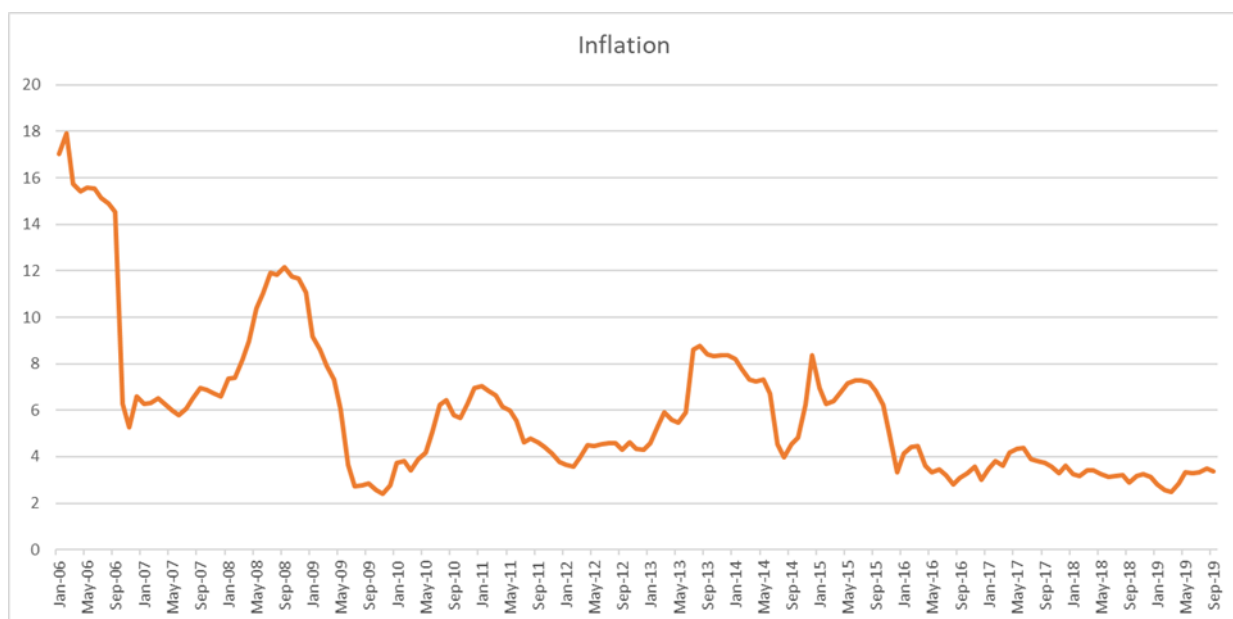


wanita (female) and pria (male). People sometimes use the word wadam instead of waria. According to Boellstorff (2004), waria is a much more popular term than wadam, and people tend to use waria more than wadam. He also points out that waria means explicitly a male who wears female clothing, and that this is not the same as being homosexual. The word wadam was used before the 1980s and is also a hybrid of hawa (female) and Adam (male). Since Adam is the name of a prophet, MUI reacted strongly against this usage and urged society to use waria instead of wadam. Once MUI issued this request, the minister of Religious Affairs approached President Soeharto about this concern and got permission to use the word waria. Since then, the word waria has been used instead of wadam (Okamoto, 2016, p. 234). Mami refers to elderly waria, who demonstrate strong leadership among other waria, like a boss. Waria has less education and no other occupational choices except prostitution, but a mami, as the waria’s boss, helps them in various ways, such as finding jobs and guiding them for making a living (Okamoto, 2016, p. 238).

The data was collected over a span of 13 years and 8 months, from January 2006 to September 2019, and collected from 10,288 different data sources. The collected data were entered into R statistical software and listed chronologically based on the dates they were published. With this data, a corpus was established that provided certain variables, which enabled the researcher to identify which articles were written by which media source.

Deterioration of the economic situation leads to an increase in inflation, and often uncomfortable situations in people’s lives (especially for minority groups, including the LGBTQ community); inflation was included as a control variable to corroborate whether there is any relation. To confirm the robustness of the ordinary least squares model (OLS), which was applied in a later analysis, external variables of the text as control variables were introduced (Kume, 2013; Mizuochi & Hatano, 2017). Figure 1 illustrates the transformation of inflation during the analysis period.

**Figure 1:** Changes in inflation from 2006 to 2019



Note: Bank Indonesia, 2020

With the dataset, the reporting tone of articles from the four major online media was analyzed. For analysis, a semi-supervised model of machine learning called latent semantic scaling (LSS) was applied. LSS is an algorithm that is designed to automatically calculate the distance between the designated words (hereafter referred to as ‘seed words’) and all the other words in the corpus. It then weighs these words and assigns sentiment scores to every document by adding all the word scores (Watanabe, 2017, 2018).

The seed words that were assigned are: toleransi (tolerance), hak (rights), diterima (being accepted), and didukung (being supported) to emphasize a positive reporting tone, such as tolerance and solidarity with the LGBTQ community, and these words were weighted +1. To emphasize the negative reporting tone or intolerance to LGBTQ issues, the following words were designated: zina (adultery), penyakit mental (mental disorders), gangguan jiwa (another term for mental disorders), and haram (prohibit by Islamic law), and were weighted -1. Words that were closely associated with the seed words, i.e., words often used in the same sentence, were selected from the entire corpus by machine learning, then scored and weighted. Table 2 shows the major weighted words of both scores. Gusdurian refers to supporters of Abdulrahman Wahid’s former president of Indonesia, and the head of the largest Muslim social organization, Nahdlatul Ulama, and is based on his nickname, “Gus Dur”. Wahid is remembered for his moderate legacy and insisted on LGBTQ rights protection. His daughter, Yenny Wahid, also declared that Islam ought to ensure the right to life for all people, including those whom some might consider sexually deviant (The Jakarta Post, 2016, 2 August).

**Table 2:** Major weighted words based on scores

Pemenuhan (fulfillment)	0.08664455	Rejeksi (rejection)	-0.10579313
Penghormatan (honor)	0.08354433	fatwa	-0.09826435
Demokratis (democratic)	0.07978848	Syaitan (devil)	-0.09427451
Kecairan (liquidity)	0.07864047	Menyerahkannya (hand it over)	-0.09144442
Gusdurian (Gusdurian)	0.07832464	Mengharamkan (make it haram)	-0.09007541
Keberhasilan (success)	0.07784636	Kesejukan (cool)	-0.07381200
Pilihan (choice)	0.07625201	Pelakunya (culprit)	-0.07730344
Persamaan (equality)	0.07469217	Batu (stone)	-0.07590546
Melanggengkan (perpetuate)	0.07374481	Berpendapat (contend)	-0.0706935
Ulung (excellent)	0.07337980	Menyimpang (deviate)	-0.07012452
Kontribusi (contribution)	0.07172856	Shabaab (fellow)	-0.06977837
Mendewakan (adore)	0.07161939	Mirisnya (sad)	-0.06941847

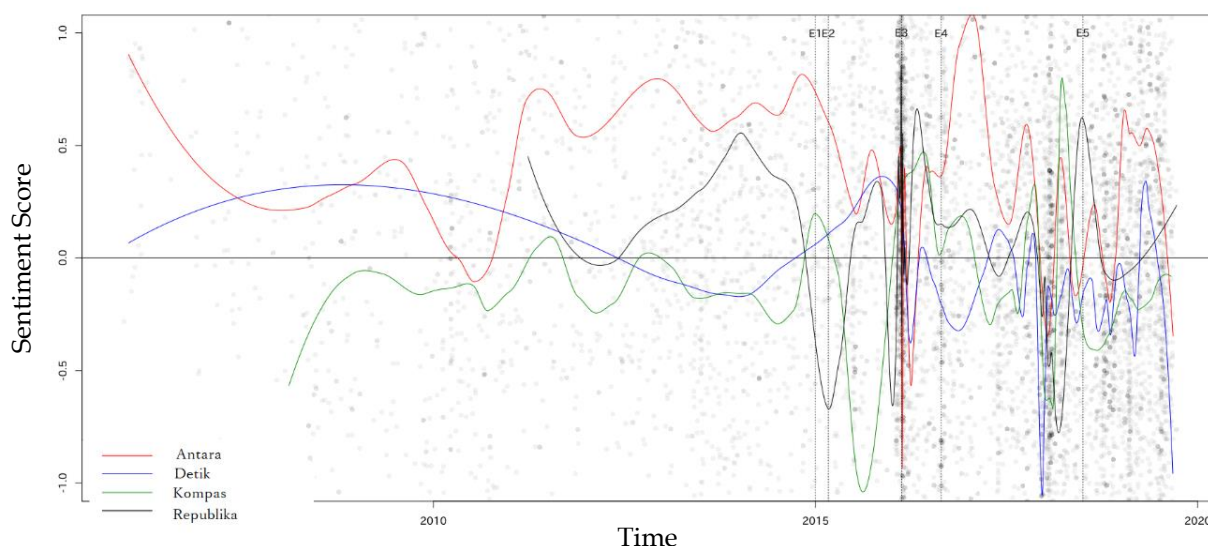
*Note: Created by the author*

This table shows the major weighted words. For a positive tone, words such as pemenuhan (fulfillment), penghormatan (honor), and demokratis (democratic) had high scores. For negative tone, words such as rejection and devil had high scores.

Figure 2 visualizes the transformation of each media’s LSS score and the tone of the news distributed by the media. An increase in score indicates that the reporting tone was inclined to a more positive nature on LGBTQ issues. Conversely, a decrease in score indicates that the reporting tone tended to be more negative. Each light grey dot represents the position of the text. The red line shows the transformation of the LSS score of *Antara*, the blue line is *Detik*,

the green line is *Kompas*, and the black line is *Republika*. The vertical line E1 indicates the day the first fatwa was issued, 31 December 2014, which proclaimed a ban on homosexuality. E2 indicates the date of the second statement, 5 March 2015, which expressed that homosexuality deserves the death penalty. Line E3 indicates 17 February 2016, the date when religious authorities stated that third parties who helped or supported the LGBTQ community should be punished. E4 indicates the date, 23 August 2016, when Human Rights Watch published their first report, and E5 indicates the date, 1 July 2018, of the release of their second report. When the changes in reporting tone are focused on, it seems that *Antara* was the most likely to maintain a positive tone as compared to the other three media sources. Further, focusing on the vertical line, it seems that the E3 and E5 were the most controversial points because each line drastically fluctuates, which means reporting tones were not constant.

**Figure 2:** Transformation of LSS score and reporting tone



Note: Created by the author

## Statistical analysis

Next, these reporting tones (E1-E5) will be examined for statistical significance, and then the three hypotheses shown above will be analyzed. The ordinary least squares model (OLS) was applied to the regression analysis. The dependent variables for this analysis are the LSS scores of every collected text, and three models were designed to verify the hypotheses. As mentioned above, to confirm the robustness of the OLS model, the external variables of the text, which is the inflation rate of the Indonesian economy, were introduced as control variables to all models.

Model 1 was designed to verify the reporting tones of each of the four online media sources. Dummy variables of each media were applied as independent variables. Model 2 was designed to verify the reporting tone as influenced by the events discussed above. Dummy variables were applied for each event, from Event 1 to Event 5, as independent variables. The

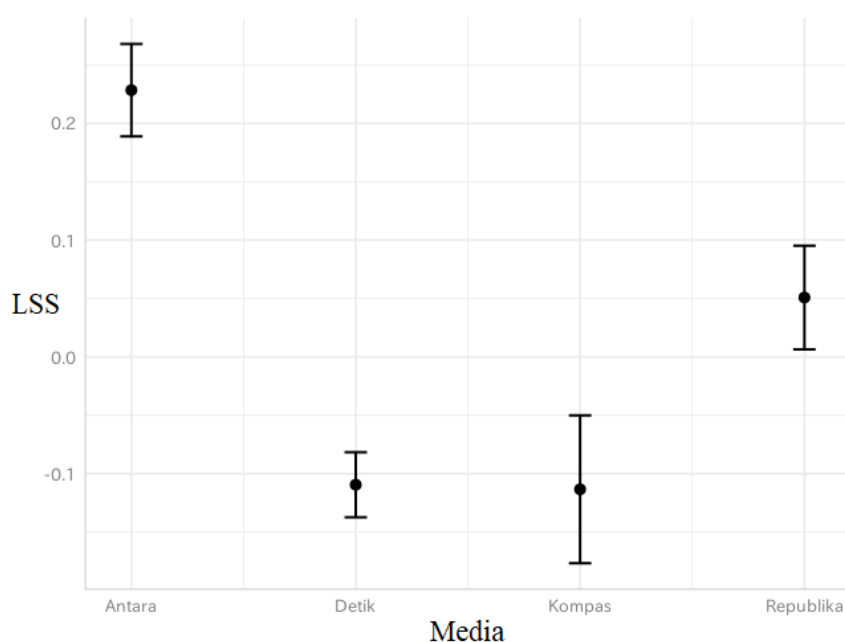
base category is a variable referred to in regression analysis and is set independently by statistical software. In this model, the period before Event 1 is the base category. Finally, Model 3 was designed to verify the reporting tone based both on events and online media responses. The dummy variable of the interaction term of media and events was applied as an independent variable. The base category is the intersection of *Antara* and the average LSS score before Event 1 when the first fatwa was issued.

### Model 1

First, the marginal effect in the reporting tone of each online media based on the results of Model 1 is shown in Figure 3. The black dots indicate the probability of the reporting tone of each media source. The vertical bar that extends from each dot represents the 95% confidence intervals.

As illustrated in Figure 3, *Antara*, a national media source, and *Republika*, an Islamic media source, were more likely to report on LGBTQ issues in a positive direction. In contrast, *Detik* and *Kompas*, which have the most extensive readership, were more likely to report on LGBTQ issues in a negative way. In brief, the reporting tone on LGBTQ issues of both national and Islamic media is more positive. Thus, both hypotheses 1a and 1b are not statistically supported.

**Figure 3:** Marginal effect of media

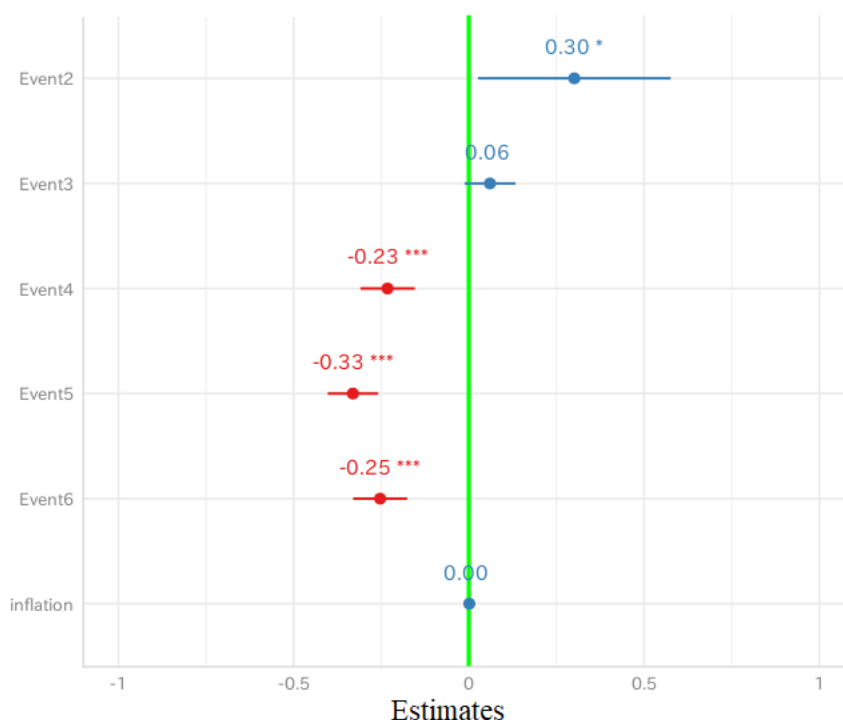


*Note: Created by the author*

Model 2

Figure 4 is a diagram plotting the regression coefficients of the reporting tone of each online media in each period based on the regression analysis. The vertical axis shows the turning point for the LGBTQ issues in Indonesia, while the horizontal axis indicates the regression coefficient. Event 6 indicates the period after Event 5. The horizontal bars attached to the dots indicate a 95 % confidence interval. This figure plots the result compared to the reporting tone for the period prior to the time when the first fatwa was issued. Event 2 indicates the period from E1 to E2, Event 3 indicates the period from E2 to E3, Event 4 indicates the period from E3 to E4, Event 5 indicates the period from E4 to E5, and Event 6 indicates the period from E5 onward to the date of data acquisition. The regression analysis results show that during Event 2 and Event 3, the media was more likely to emphasize a positive tone toward LGBTQ issues, but during events 4, 5, and 6, the media was more likely to emphasize a negative tone toward LGBTQ issues. Thus, hypotheses 2a and 2b are not statistically supported. In addition, inflation rates, imposed as a control variable, had no statistically significant effect on the reporting tone.

**Figure 4:** Coefficient of events



*Note: Created by the author*

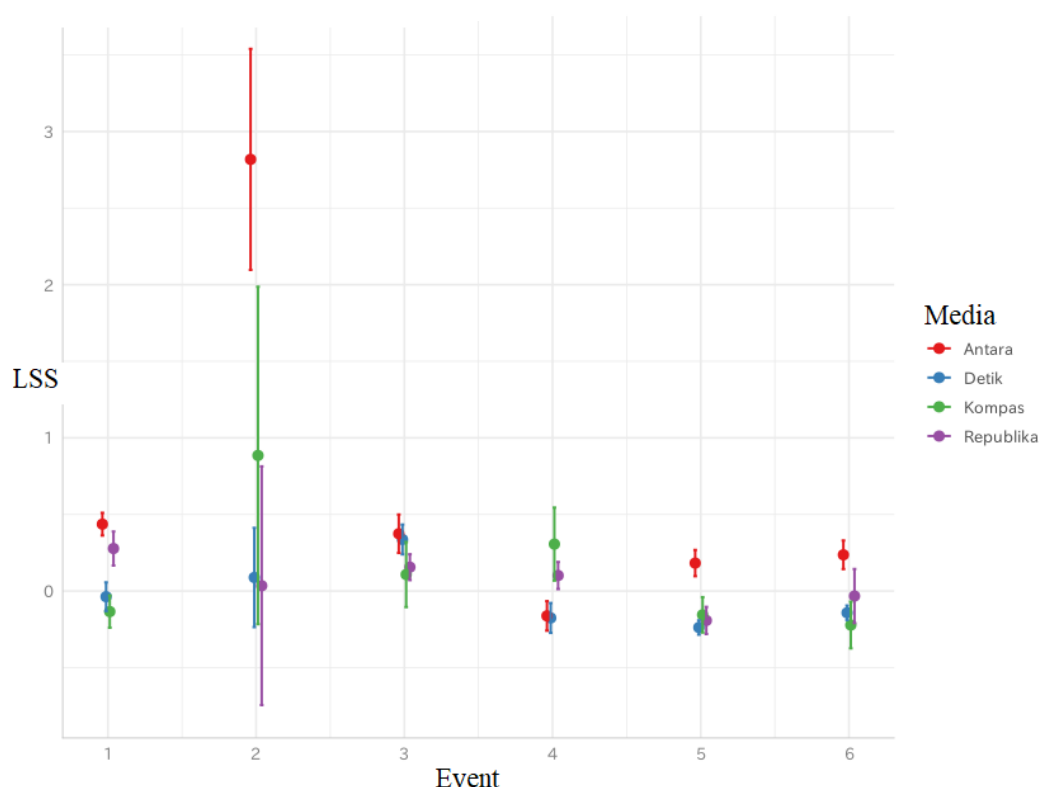
Model 3

The third model was designed to verify the reporting tone based on the events discussed above and the online media sources. The independent variable is the dummy variable of the interaction term of online media and events. Figure 5 illustrates the marginal effect of the

reporting tone of each media company at each turning point based on the results. The dots indicate the probability of a reporting tone at each turning point of each media outlet. The vertical bar extending from the dots corresponds to the 95% confidence interval.

As can be seen from the marginal effect of events by media reporting, Islamic media is more likely to emphasize a positive reporting tone toward LGBTQ issues when MUI issued a series of fatwa and statements. In other words, the reporting tone of Islamic media does not follow the attitude of the Islamic religious authority. Thus, hypothesis 3 is not statistically supported.

**Figure 5:** Marginal effect of events by media



*Note: Created by the author*

## Conclusion

This paper attempted to clarify how the LGBTQ issues are reported by major online media outlets through the analysis of the reporting tone. In this study, three models were designed and examined using the LSS method. Model 1 considered the differences in the reporting tone of online media outlets. The results showed that both national and Islamic media have a positive reporting tone for LGBTQ issues. Model 2 focused on critical events that could be viewed as turning points for LGBTQ issues in Indonesia and analyzed how each event affected the reporting tone of the four media companies. Through this, it can be said that the tone of media reporting was more likely to be positive in the period when the MUI insisted on penalties for the LGBTQ community and its supporters. On the other hand, the reporting

was more likely to be negative in the period when international human rights organizations had issued critical reports on the LGBTQ people in Indonesia. Finally, Model 3 was designed to verify the reporting tone based both on key events and online media responses to these events. This model showed that when MUI announced series of the fatwa and statements, Islamic media increased the number of positive reports against the LGBTQ issues.

The results of the statistical analysis showed that none of the hypotheses based on the precedent researches were supported. Precedent researches on LGBTQ issues in Indonesia, especially by Boellstorff (2016), argued that the state promotes either “heterosexuality” or “state-straightism”. However, this study showed that the national media was more likely to positively report on LGBTQ issues. Additionally, according to the initial hypothesis, Islamic media was supposed to follow the fatwa and statements issued by the religious authority, but as a result of this research, Islamic media, despite its close relationship with the religious authority, did not always support their attitudes. On the other hand, the online media with the largest number of readers in Indonesia, *Detik*, and *Kompas* were more likely to demonstrate a negative reporting tone towards LGBTQ issues.

Thus, it can be pointed out that it is not Islamic media nor national media that is fueling the negative reporting tone of LGBTQ issues. However, online media with the largest number of readers and visitors among Indonesia, belonging to the massive media conglomerates, are agitating the issue.

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