

Education in the Asia-Pacific Region:
Issues, Concerns and Prospects 70

Zulfa Sakhiyya
Teguh Wijaya Mulya *Editors*

Education in Indonesia

Critical Perspectives on Equity and Social
Justice



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Education in the Asia-Pacific Region: Issues, Concerns and Prospects

Volume 70

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Rupert Maclean

University of Tasmania, Hobart, Australia

RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia

Zulfa Sakhiyya · Teguh Wijaya Mulya
Editors

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Justice

 Springer

Editors

Zulfa Sakhiyya
Faculty of Languages and Arts
Universitas Negeri Semarang
Semarang, Indonesia

Teguh Wijaya Mulya
Faculty of Psychology
University of Surabaya
Surabaya, Indonesia

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Foreword

Indonesia has the fourth-largest education system in the world. For that reason alone, a volume about Indonesian education commands international attention. Importantly, the critical sociology of education approach taken by the contributors takes the reader beyond description alone to an analysis of the complex forces which make up the system's policies and practices. The authors draw on their respective studies to illustrate the overall theme that education is a key institution in democracy's ideals of equality and justice. By interrogating the tensions involved in providing equal access to education for such a huge and diverse population, the studies explore how ideological and political tensions are experienced in the various policies and practices of the Indonesian education system.

It is in a country's national education that people create and transmit their collective representations—the peoples' understanding of themselves. These collective representations are not only symbols of the nation's ideals but the ideals themselves, democratic principles such as equality and justice serve to construct that reality. However, collective representations can also conceal the ideologies which separate ideals from reality and prevent a nation achieving those ideals. The hope of education systems in the modern world is the creation of a reality where equality and justice are possible for all people.

The introduction provides the theme of equality and social justice by identifying the overarching problem addressed in each of the chapters—that of unequal access to quality education. It is most clearly revealed in Indonesia's poor performance as measured by international rankings, particularly the ongoing low rankings in science, reading, and mathematics. In different ways, each chapter investigates the link between education performance and the resources available to people. Access to the key resource of education, knowledge itself, is affected by all the complex factors which combine to keep individuals and social groups from full and fair access. By identifying marginalized people, the contributors argue for a politics of redistribution to ensure that students of all ages have access to education and that education is of a standardized quality for all.

The editors and contributors maintain ties to an older sociological tradition; one which insists on the role of criticality in throwing light on where, why, and how

an education system may achieve or fail its democratic purpose. This places them firmly within sociology's critical tradition and the democratic principles underpinning that criticality. The book's critical sociological foundations can be seen in several features. The most important is its use of the tools of sociological inquiry to, as Immanuel Kant said in 1781, identify the "causes and processes that are hidden in the phenomenon itself". But before those causes and processes can be identified, sociological studies begin by identifying the problem in the phenomenon. If there is a link from causes to effects, then we would expect to see this link uncovered by the sociological method. That method requires identifying the problem in education to form a probable hypothesis of that problem. Established disciplinary tools of inquiry are used for the investigation with sociological concepts and theories employed as the tools of analysis and explanation.

A strength of the contributions is the use of this sociological method with contributors investigating not only the effects of exclusion from fair access to education but locating the causes of such exclusion in underpinning political and economic forces. While this contributes to the book's place in the critical sociology tradition, the editors are modest, saying only that the book "offers a degree of critical awareness about various socio-historical-political forces". Yet it is a confident and competent criticality, and the aim is admirably bold—to understand the causes of social injustice in education.

I have spoken of the centrality of identifying causal connections as the key feature of critical sociology. A second, and no less important feature is the historical component. The reference to the dangers of historical inertia shows the editors' awareness that all power operates in time as well as in a particular location. This is recognized in the historical accounts found throughout the volume. They include descriptions of the *pesantren*, Islamic boarding schools from pre-colonial to today, as well as education policies and practices in the previous authoritarian regime, the post-1998 rise of new religious conservatism, and current education initiatives.

Readers will note the two different philosophical approaches—postmodernism and sociological—in the book's studies. The former can be seen in the chapters which emphasize particular group identities and explain the creation and operation of power as discursive. This approach includes the concept of "discursive constitution of the sense of the self". In contrast, the philosophy informing the Marxist sociological approach employed by several of the authors explains educational inequality as the outcome of differential access to material resources, including the material resource of knowledge itself. It includes the analysis of how power and its accompanying ideologies come from, and contributes to, differential access to material goods, including education.

A number of contributors include in their explanations accounts of the effects of global capitalism in the post-1970's decades. Neoliberal politics such as the decentralization of education following the fall of the New Order in 1998 expand the sociological context when seeking causes for what happens at the local national level. Broader sociology explanations employing concepts such as social justice and equality within the democratic, human rights tradition of modernity are used in the

chapter about the legal system and education. Here the contributors provide a fascinating study of citizen rights by looking closely at the connection between the legal system and access to education.

I congratulate the editors for bringing together so many studies into one volume. This means that the studies can receive a wide readership. The range is a strength of the book. It includes studies about homeschooling, the English language, higher education, academics and knowledge, vocational education, the curriculum, sexuality education, the *pesantren*, and the impact of COVID-19 on access to education. The chapters about early childhood education, one about the (dis-)appearance of mothers, the other about school readiness, are important contributions to the sociology of education literature given the early childhood education tends to be a neglected area in the field despite the crucial importance of the education of very young children.

Contributions such as this play an important role in building a discipline's literature. This book's quality ensures its place in the international sociology of education literature as well as in Indonesia's sociological literature. The complex matter of education's intersection with politics and the economy is of sociological interest in all countries and in developing countries in particular. National education is inherently democratic in intention but molded according to the history and circumstances of each country. For this reason, the book will find a ready readership in Indonesia and internationally. Readers will enjoy the contributors' empirical studies and theoretical explanations as they test the book's claim—that it is “contextually situated, critically provocative and progressively disruptive with the hope of advancing social justice in and through education in Indonesia”.

August 2021

Professor Elizabeth Rata
University of Auckland
Auckland, New Zealand

Acknowledgements

The argument of this edited book is modest yet important. By taking diverse cases of education in Indonesia, this volume proposes the use of critical perspectives in analyzing educational policies and practices. As the contributors of this volume acknowledge that critical issues such as marginalization, neoliberalization, and decentralization in education require critical perspectives and solutions.

During the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, when this volume has been written and finalized, education is in crisis, and it is one of the hardest hit sectors. Especially in Indonesia, whose education sector is the fourth largest in the world, and likewise, its covid transmission is fourth worst in the world. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of critical perspectives and alternative discourses. In a critical tone, Damien Barr eloquently captures equity issues posed by the pandemic: “we are all in the same storm, but not in the same boat”, showing that the impact of COVID-19 has fallen unevenly and unequally on society, including in the education sector.

Given the struggle, we each have to bear during this pandemic, we would like to thank all the contributors of this volume. While grieving of losing their loved ones, fighting against the infection, tending to their loved ones to stay healthy, and managing a large-scale community donation, they remain committed to think academically and write. This volume stands in solidarity with those who have been struggling to recover and bounce back from the pandemic, and thus it has been an emancipating struggle to do so. We also would like to thank our dear colleague, Dr. Anindito Aditomo for his support during the conception of this volume.

Managing education in Indonesia has always been challenging due to the complex, diverse, and multifaceted nature of the sector. We hope this collection of chapters contributes to a wider understanding of Indonesia’s changing education landscape and offers an alternative perspectives to education.

Series Editor's Introduction

This highly informative book, edited by Zulfa Sakhiyya and Teguh Wijaya Mulya, entitled *Education In Indonesia: Critical Perspectives on Equity and Social Justice*, is the latest book to be published in the long-standing Springer Book Series *Education in the Asia-Pacific Region: Issues, Concerns and Prospects*. The first volume in this Springer series was published in 2002, this book by Sakhiyya and Mulya being the 70th volume to be published to date.

Indonesia is a fascinating and complex country, an archipelago of 17,000 islands with a population of almost 274 million inhabitants. Located in South East Asia and Oceania, it is the second biggest economy in the region and part of the G20 group of the worlds richest countries. Indonesia is projected to be the 4th largest economy in the world by 2045. Although Indonesia has a diverse economy, including a large agricultural sector, manufacturing is the largest component of the country's economy.

The enormous size, geographical diversity and multi cultural nature of Indonesia presents major challenges for the design, content and management of the education and schooling system.

This book provides a fascinating portrait of education and schooling in Indonesia. The manuscript is divided into four parts, and contains 12 chapters plus an introduction and conclusion. The twenty one contributors provide a holistic portrait of education in Indonesia and between them cover a wide range of important topics including: equality and inclusiveness in Indonesian education; the neoliberalisation of the Indonesian education system; education and the state apparatus with regard to religion, law and local politics; and, critical alternatives to strengthen democratic practices. The contributors examine many important aspects of education including higher education, vocational education, early childhood education, home school education, education and decentralisation, the right to education, sexuality education, the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on education and schooling, and the roles of international development organisations in Indonesia.

In terms of the Springer Book Series in which this volume is published the various topics dealt with in the series are wide ranging and varied in coverage, with

an emphasis on cutting edge developments, best practices and education innovations for development. Topics examined in the series include: environmental education and education for sustainable development; the interaction between technology and education; the reform of primary, secondary and teacher education; innovative approaches to education assessment; alternative education; most effective ways to achieve quality and highly relevant education for all; active ageing through active learning; case studies of education and schooling in various countries in the region; cross country and cross cultural studies of education and schooling; and the sociology of teachers as an occupational group, to mention just a few. The series also includes volumes, such as this one, which provide case studies of education and schooling in individual countries. More information about the book series is available at <http://www.springer.com/series/5888>.

All volumes in this series aim to meet the interests and priorities of a diverse education audience including researchers, policy makers and practitioners; tertiary students; teachers at all levels within education systems; and members of the public who are interested in better understanding cutting edge developments in education and schooling in Asia-Pacific.

The main reason why this series has been devoted exclusively to examining various aspects of education and schooling in the Asia-pacific region is that this is a particularly challenging region. It is renowned for its size, diversity and complexity, whether it be geographical, socio-economic, cultural, political or developmental. Education and schooling in countries throughout the region impact on every aspect of people's lives, including employment, labour force considerations, education and training, cultural orientation, and attitudes and values. Asia and the Pacific is home to some 63% of the world's population of 7 Billion. Countries with the largest populations (China, 1.4 Billion; India, 1.3 Billion) and the most rapidly growing mega-cities are to be found in the region, as are countries with relatively small populations (Bhutan, 755,000; the island of Niue, 1,600).

Levels of economic and socio-political development vary widely, with some of the richest countries (such as Japan) and some of the poorest countries on earth (such as Bangladesh). Asia contains the largest number of poor of any region in the world, the incidence of those living below the poverty line remaining as high as 40 percent in some countries in Asia. At the same time many countries in Asia are experiencing a period of great economic growth and social development. However, inclusive growth remains elusive, as does growth that is sustainable and does not destroy the quality of the environment. The growing prominence of Asian economies and corporations, together with globalisation and technological innovation, are leading to long term changes in trade, business and labour markets, to the sociology of populations within (and between) countries. There is a rebalancing of power, centred on Asia and the Pacific region, with the Asian Development Bank in Manila declaring that the 21st Century will be 'the Century of Asia Pacific'.

We believe this book series makes a useful contribution to knowledge sharing about education and schooling in Asia Pacific.

Any readers of this or other volumes in the series who have an idea for writing their own book (or editing a book) on any aspect of education and/or schooling,

that is relevant to the region, are enthusiastically encouraged to approach the series editors either direct or through Springer to publish their own volume in the series, since we are always willing to assist perspective authors shape their manuscripts in ways that make them suitable for publication.

March 2022

Professor Rupert Maclean
Faculty of Education
University of Tasmania
Hobart, Australia

The Education University of Hong
Kong
Hong Kong, China

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Chapter 12

Envisaging a Critical Sexuality Education in Indonesia: A Poststructuralist Offer



Teguh Wijaya Mulya

12.1 Introduction

The current chapter engages with sexuality education in Indonesia, which currently, is virtually non-existent. Most Indonesian young people learn about sexuality from informal sources such as friends, social media, the Internet, pornography, films, comics, boy/girlfriends, religious leaders, and, sometimes, parents (Wijaya Mulya, 2017). Without undermining the valuable contributions of these informal sources, there might be some benefits in including sexuality education in the national curriculum where sexuality can be discussed openly in an educational setting. Since sexuality is a battleground of various social–political–religious ideologies, envisioning a form of sexuality education has always been a contention, including in Indonesia. Based on my research on Indonesian young people’s sexual subjectivity (Wijaya Mulya, 2017, 2018a, 2018b, 2019, 2020), this chapter proposes a sexuality education approach that might be connected with the ways contemporary Indonesian young people understand themselves as sexual being.

The chapter begins with a contextual introduction into the debates around sexuality education in contemporary Indonesia, including the wider socio-religio-political contexts from which the debates occurred. After a brief note on the theoretical framework and methodology, I highlight the findings of my study on Indonesian young people’s sexual subjectivity. Reflecting on these findings, in the final part I put forward some recommendations (or, imaginings) for sexuality education in Indonesia which is critical, democratic, and, hopefully, contributing to social and sexual justice in Indonesia.

T. Wijaya Mulya (✉)
Universitas Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia
e-mail: teguh@staff.ubaya.ac.id

12.2 Sexuality and Education in Contemporary Indonesia: Some Discursive Tensions

This section describes how debates around the provision of sexuality education for Indonesian young people in the last two decades have revolved around tensions between (religious) moral discourses—which silence and restrict youth sexuality into heterosexual, religiously sanctioned marriage—and other discourses such as sexual health promotion, anti-violence campaigns, and LGBT+ movements. Historically, the patterns of Indonesian young people’s dating relationships have perceptibly changed. A generation ago, dating meant a man comes, sits, and talks with a woman in her parents’ house. In contrast, contemporary young Indonesians’ dating involves going out to the cinema, cafés, parks, or malls (Parker & Nilan, 2013; Smith-Hefner, 2005). The concern for contemporary parents is that while virginity—particularly for girls—is deemed considerably important, strict supervision of their children’s dating is not possible, and talking about sex with their children is culturally inappropriate and embarrassing (Manggala, 2013; Parker, 2009). Therefore, some parents expected the school to provide sexuality education (Utomo, 2003).

Currently, there is no sexuality education in the Indonesian curricula other than Biology lessons on reproductive anatomy in year 8 (±age 13) and year 11 (±age 16) (Bennett, 2007; Parker, 2009). Current and previous Ministers of Education in Indonesian cabinets has/had either been silent or refused to include sexuality education in the national curricula, both implicitly and explicitly. An example of the explicit ones was Muhammad Nuh (2009–2014) who stated that “sex is a natural act” so that “young people should have known themselves” (Burhani, 2010). Moreover, in 2013, his ministry proposed an increase in the number of hours that schools spend teaching Religious Education in order to tackle young people’s “moral problems”, including premarital sex (Virhdhani, 2013). Here, sexuality is not just silenced but also (religiously) moralized before it even exists in educational settings.

Although sexuality is currently not taught in schools, there are sexuality education programmes available for some Indonesian young people offered by Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and the National Board of Family Planning (BKKBN, under the Ministry of Health). These programmes are generally short-term, small-scale, non-compulsory, and sexual-health-focused. Such initiatives were responses to the call by Indonesian sexual health researchers who drew attention to the risks of unprotected sex, such as Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), HIV/AIDS, and unplanned pregnancy (Ford et al., 2007; Simonin et al., 2011). These sexual health researchers concertedly suggested provision of sexuality education to dispel young people’s ignorance about the risks of sex, and condom use as protection against STIs and unplanned pregnancy (e.g., Diarsvitri et al., 2011; Leerlooijer et al., 2014; Widystari et al., 2015). The importance of promoting safer sex has been persistently voiced by these researchers; however, taking up safer sex practices might not be simple and straightforward; it requires young people to negotiate various competing social–political discourses that enable/constrain their possibilities of engaging in such practices.

One possible (discursive) constraint that might have hindered Indonesian young people from adopting safer sex practices is opposition from conservative religious groups. They often condemn sexual health education as encouraging the practice of premarital sex, which they deemed immoral or against conservative beliefs. A condom awareness programme to battle HIV infections by the Ministry of Health, for example, was eventually cancelled due to objections from conservative religious groups (Natahadibrata, 2013, Dec 5). In fact, young people's possession of condoms is generally considered problematic by schools, parents, and religious authorities because this is interpreted as preparation to engage in sex outside of marriage. Accordingly, access to contraceptive services in Indonesia is legal only for married couples (Manggala, 2013). Considering this legal-political situation, Davies and Bennett (2015) noted that, although sexual health promotion by some NGOs and the Ministry of Health has achieved a degree of success, the prospect of seeing compulsory sexual health education in Indonesian national curricula remains in a distant future. These tensions indicate how some forms of (religious) moralism have competed with sexual health discourses in constituting meanings around Indonesian young people's sexuality.

Beyond educational settings, moral rejection of any sexual expression and relationships outside of marriage can also be seen in everyday Indonesian political, legal, and social practices, which sometimes involve violent acts. From time to time, there are media reports on raids carried out by community members to catch unmarried (heterosexual) couples engaging in consensual sex, either in their own homes, rented rooms, or motels (e.g., Padang, 2012). The police also conduct schoolbag inspections at Internet cafés and schools searching for pornography (e.g., Surbakti, 2012). Since the passing of Anti-Pornography Bill in 2008, every form of pornography and its production, dissemination, and consumption has been prohibited in Indonesia. The government actively censors any pornographic materials from being accessed by Internet users in Indonesia. Drawing on moralistic arguments, violent protests conducted by hard-line Islamic groups have also successfully cancelled various events deemed incompatible with "Indonesian moral values" (Parker, 2009). These include Lady Gaga's 2012 concert in Jakarta (Liu, 2012), the 2010 ILGA (International Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, and Intersex Association) Congress in Surabaya (Akbar, 2010), and a human and sexual rights seminar for transgendered people held by the National Commission on Human Rights (Astuti, 2010). As these examples indicated, another field of heated debates and violent actions is the acknowledgement and protection of sexual minorities, particularly LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and other) sexualities.

Growing significantly since the 1998 democratic reformation, Indonesian LGBT+ movements are often regarded as the oldest and largest in Southeast Asia (Laurent, 2005; Suvianita, 2013). These LGBT+ movements have successfully circulated ideas previously unfamiliar about LGBT+ sexualities in Indonesia, and have offered alternatives to the dominant heteronormative discourses. LGBT+ sexualities have been featured in mainstream Indonesian movies (Murtagh, 2013), reported in national media (e.g., Sukmana, 2016), and have been increasingly studied by researchers in Indonesian contexts (e.g., Boellstorff, 2007; Davies, 2010; Wieringa, 2015). One

significant event in these movements was the inauguration of the Yogyakarta Principles (Corrêa & Muntarhorn, 2007) which involved international experts gathering at the University of Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and discussing the application of international human rights law in the field of sexual orientation and gender identity. The Yogyakarta Principles are often considered a ground-breaking achievement in the international LGBT+ movement (O'Flaherty & Fisher, 2008), and have also been utilized by LGBT+ activists in Indonesia. However, despite all these efforts, these movements have still not achieved any legal recognition from the Indonesian government, nor protection for LGBT-identified people.

Quite the opposite, reactionary responses against LGBT+ movements have grown extensively in recent years. Some examples include the temporary closing down of a transgender Islamic boarding house in Yogyakarta by the local authorities after a complaint from Front Jihad Islam in 2016, the cancellation of a pro-LGBT+ peaceful rally in Jakarta and Yogyakarta by the police, and the statement from the Minister of Research, Technology, and Higher Education that LGBT+ sexualities "corrupt" Indonesian values and norms (Amnesty International, 2016, March 18). Earlier, in 2015, The Council of Indonesian Ulama (Muslim leaders) issued a fatwa (i.e., formal recommendation to the government based on an Islamic point of view) that "sodomy, homosexuality, or gay and lesbian practices" should be punished with a death sentence (Mutiar, 2015). This fatwa was a response to, among others, the infamous case of child sexual violence in the Jakarta International School (JIS), in which kindergarten boys were allegedly threatened and then penetrated in the toilet by male school cleaners (Hawley & Smith, 2016). Notwithstanding the highly contested facts around the case, the Council of Indonesian Ulama demonized same-sex sexuality by conflating it with paedophilia and sexual violence and furthered their conservative agenda of stronger surveillance, control, and punishment for sexual immorality. Such views and disciplinary actions exemplify the complex interplay and tensions between discourses of sexual orientation, sexual morality, and sexual violence in Indonesia.

The JIS case above is one example of how sexual violence cases have become national media headlines in Indonesia. In general, sexual violence (particularly against women and children) has gained public attention after the 1998 reformation, partly because of the awareness-building efforts by the National Commission on Violence against Women. This commission was established in October 1998 after the systematic mass rape of hundreds of Chinese Indonesian women during the riots that toppled president Soeharto. One of the commission's achievements has been the passing of the Domestic Violence Law in 2004 which criminalizes various acts of domestic violence, including sexual violence by family members. Through this commission's advocacy and campaigns, a discourse of sexual violence previously unfamiliar in Indonesia became more widely circulated. This commission also identified that one barrier to eliminating the increasing number of sexual violence cases in Indonesia is the justification of violence through conservative interpretations of religious beliefs (Komnas Perempuan, 2015). Responding to this report, religious leaders argued that increasing statistics of sexual violence documented by the National Commission on Violence Against Women and the National Commission for Child Protection are caused by deviations from the moral standard of sexual

abstinence outside of (heterosexual) marriage (Mutiar, 2015). As a result, the Anti-Sexual Violence Bill proposed in 2017 is stalled, and officially excluded from the list of legislative priorities by the parliament at the time this chapter was written (Nurbaiti & Sutrisno, 2020). This debate around sexual violence provides another example of how competing discourses (i.e., sexual morality and sexual violence) are at play in constituting meanings around sexuality in Indonesia.

It is against this social, political, historical, and religious backdrop that contemporary Indonesian young people came to understand themselves as sexual subjects—where tensions between discourses of sexual morality, sexual health, sexual orientation, and sexual violence have characterized everyday socio-political-sexual practices. While these tensions are apparent in public discussions such as those reported in the national media (Mutiar, 2015; Padang, 2012; Sukmana, 2016), little is known about how Indonesian young people have engaged with, negotiated, and resisted these discourses in their ways of understanding themselves as sexual beings. Consequently, decisions regarding how young people should be educated about sexuality—such as the increasing of Religious Education hours to address “sexual immorality”—might have been detached from young people’s own ways of being sexual. It is this gap that my research seeks to fill: where the complexities of young people’s sexual subjectivities are explored from their perspectives, including their resistance towards dominant discourses of sexuality in contemporary Indonesia.

12.3 Notes on the Theoretical Framework: A Poststructuralist Feminist Approach

This chapter draws upon a poststructuralist feminist reading on Foucault’s theorization of power, discourse, and subjectivity. According to Foucault, pre-modern power expressed its murderous splendour by killing enemies or torturing individuals who did not comply, resulting in continuous revolts which were both costly and created social instability (Foucault, 1978). In contrast, modern power governs, administers, regulates, and transforms individuals into docile subjects who desire to conform to the norms and support the existing power relations. Central to this operation of modern power is the notion of discourse, that is, a formation of interconnected ideas which define the “nature” of certain experiences or things, constitute ways of seeing the world, and guide possibilities for action (Weedon, 1987). It is through discourse that power governs the knowledge circulated in the society and regulates which ways of thinking are deemed intelligible (Foucault, 1978). Dominant discourses appear as “natural” or commonsense, tend to reproduce existing power relations, and are often supported by state apparatuses and social institutions. Some discourses are less popular and represent marginal political interests, but they always have the potential to gain greater currency. A dominant discourse of sexual morality in Indonesia, for example, has constituted all sex outside of (heterosexual) marriage as immoral. This discourse has been supported by major religious groups and is featured in some

Indonesian laws such as the Marriage Laws and Anti-Pornography Law. It is also expressed in everyday social events such as public debates, religious sermons, and media reports. In contrast, other discourses such as the discourse of sexual rights—which constitutes sex and sexuality as individual rights that must be protected by the state—have not yet enjoyed such wide circulation in Indonesia.

Discourses circulating in a given society enable individuals to give meaning to their experiences and also their sense of self (i.e., subjectivity). Understanding oneself as lesbian, for example, involves the subject drawing upon a set of ideas which constitutes sexual identities as categorizable based on the gender of the preferred sexual partner. Since discursive constellations in any domain of knowledge are always in flux, one's subjectivity is also perpetually reconstituted. Such a continuous process of subjectivation opens up new ways of understanding oneself, which is precisely where the possibility of resistance lies. As individuals draw upon alternative discourses and take up a new subject position, modern power's agenda to govern and create docile subjects may be slightly destabilized.

Following these poststructuralist theorizations of power, discourse, and subjectivity, the education system becomes a crucial site for discursive contestation and disciplining the subjects. Since any knowledge is neither objective nor neutral but inextricably related to power, knowledge taught in schools discursively enables and limits students' ways of seeing and being. Silence on contraception or condemnation of LGBT+ sexualities by teachers, for example, may discursively (re)produce students to be sexually abstinent, heteronormative subjects, particularly when coupled with other disciplinary mechanisms such as school rules. It is within these poststructuralist understandings of the contested nature of knowledge, possibilities for resistance in the constitution of alternative subjectivity, and education as a site of disciplinary mechanisms, that this chapter discusses sexuality education in Indonesia.

12.4 Methodology

This chapter was based on qualitative data about Indonesian Christian young people's sexual subjectivity which were collected for my doctoral thesis (Wijaya Mulya, 2017). As the data came from a small, non-representative, religion-specific sample, I do not intend to make any generalizable claims. The notion of generalizability is also against my theoretical framework which positions knowledge as discursively contested, contextually situated, and always-already perspectival. Nevertheless, some narratives might resonate with the experience of other Indonesian young people and therefore may offer a degree of relevance and transferability. While parts of the thesis have been published elsewhere (Wijaya Mulya, 2018a, 2018b, 2019, 2020), the current chapter specifically focuses on the insights the data may offer for sexuality education practices in Indonesia.

Participants were recruited through an advertisement/invitation distributed to universities, NGOs, and relevant personal networks. As many as 22 young Indonesians aged 16–24 participated; 12 participants identified as male, 9 as female, and

1 as neither gender; 14 identified as heterosexual, 4 gay, 2 lesbian, 1 bisexual, and 1 asexual. At the time of the data collection (mid-2013), participants were college students (8 participants), high school students (6 participants), employees (5 participants), a freelance journalist (1 participant), a postgraduate student (1 participant), and an NGO activist (1 participant). All participants' names in this chapter are pseudonyms.

The participants were interviewed via Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) research methods, which included email correspondence, a session of instant messenger interview, and a short autobiographical essay. The interview questions were around their sexual learning, knowledge, experiences, and identity. Narratives quoted in this chapter were translated into English by the researcher, who is a native Indonesian speaker. The data were analysed using a thematic analysis technique (Braun & Clarke, 2006), which involved the researcher familiarizing himself with the data, organizing them, and then he identified, named, and discussed key themes found in the data.

12.5 Contemporary Indonesian Young People's Sexual Subjectivity

In this section, I briefly highlight some key findings of my doctoral research, upon which my visions for Indonesian critical sexuality education were built. The research identified at least four dominant discourses through which participants understand themselves as sexual being, namely, a discourse of (religious) sexual morality, a discourse of sexual orientation, a discourse of sexual health, and a discourse of sexual violence. Each of these will be discussed in the following, including possibilities for resistance demonstrated in the constitution of participants' alternative subjectivity.

A discourse of sexual morality, in which youth sexuality is mainly given meaning through a binary of "right and wrong", has permeated the ways participants in this study think about and practice sexuality. Religious rhetoric played a significant role in this regard, as the source of moralistic views on sexuality was frequently attributed by participants to (conservative) religious interpretations. This dominant discourse positions young people within a binary of being either "moral" (i.e., heterosexual, maintaining abstinence outside of marriage) or "immoral" (i.e., non-heterosexual, engaging in sex). Through various mechanisms of censorship, surveillance, and punishment, Indonesian young people were disciplined to become obedient moral subjects. Consequently, the moral imposition of sexual abstinence has constrained possibilities for participants to understand and practice sex ethically; because any form of sex is deemed sinful for unmarried youth. Nevertheless, some other participants' narratives demonstrated various ways to contest this dominant discourse of (religious) sexual morality—which was often claimed as "Divine truth"—and gave meaning to their sexual self in more complex ways; from leaving the organized religion completely, reinterpreting religious morality, and living the contradictions

of being religious/sexual/moral/ethical (Wijaya Mulya, 2018a). For instance, Anto (male, 24 yr, gay) drew upon his personal spiritual experience with God (who is understood as kind and loving) to reinterpret religious condemnation of his sexual identity and practices.

Another discourse widely drawn upon by participants in understanding their sexual self is a discourse of sexual orientation, in which sexual desires are categorized based on the gender of the preferred partner. Accessing this discourse mainly through informal/non-educational sources like friends, the Internet, and religious condemnations, some young Indonesian participants have taken up subject positions offered by this discourse, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, and other newer categories such as asexual. However, participants' narratives also exhibited forms of resistance to this discourse, where their ways of becoming sexual subjects indicated alternative creative possibilities of understanding sexual identity, pleasure, and relationship beyond the containment of sexual desires into categorizations of LGBT+ sexualities. These include a sense of (sexual) identity in being a gay-themed comic fan, a "sexualized" engagement with skin cutting, and a new approach to intimate relationship through the label of "relationship without status" (Wijaya Mulya, 2020).

My research also unpacks how the discourse of sexual health has been dominant in the constitution of Indonesian young people's sexual subjectivities. Extensively drawn upon by previous studies particularly in the field of psychology and public health, this discourse considers health risk management as the most crucial aspect in understanding youth sexuality, most notably, unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Generally advocating reproductive health awareness and condom use, this discourse often represents young people as vulnerable and in urgent need to be saved by medical-objective-universalized information provided by sexual health educators. While some participants have evidently been informed by this discourse in giving meaning to their sexual selves, some others have resisted the positioning of young people offered by this discourse. Two specific constitutions which they have resisted are the positioning of young people as (1) hormone-driven and hyper-sexual subjects who are inevitably driven into sex when they started dating, and (2) uninformed, vulnerable, and passive recipients of sexual health knowledge. Some participants exhibited other competing versions of understanding their sexual practice, health, and well-being. For instance, participants' narratives showed that youth were not necessarily and inevitably driven into sex in their dating relationship; for some, sex had very little part in their dating experiences. Instead of being uninformed, some participants actively learned about sexuality from available informal sources and took care of their sexual selves beyond concerns with STIs and unplanned pregnancy (e.g., emotional well-being, physical safety) in ways that are unique and relevant to the contexts of their social worlds; from non-coital, non-heterosexual, to computer-mediated sexual activities (Wijaya Mulya, 2019).

The final key discourse through which participants' subjectivity is constituted was a discourse of sexual violence, where the possibility of (and protection against) sexual violence becomes a dominant aspect of understanding youth sexuality. Tracing the root of sexual violence to unequal power relations, this discourse highlights the

positioning of men as desiring, women as (non-sexual) gatekeepers, children as innocent, and adults as exploitative, which sustains and normalizes sexual violence among Indonesian young people. While some participants have occupied these subject positions, some others resisted such discursive positionings, for example, a female participant who expressed herself as desiring, a gay male participant who refused the positioning of a survivor of child sexual abuse, and a participant who characterized himself as both exploitative and innocent during his childhood sexual experience (Wijaya Mulya, 2018b).

The study demonstrated how participants' ways of understanding their sexual selves were complex, nuanced, and involved various forms of discursive contestation. Their sexual subjectivity was not static nor unified, but multiple, fragmented, and evolving as they encountered new discourses; both discourses like human rights, feminism, and LGBT+ sexualities, and others like religious moralism. Taking these complexities into consideration, how sexuality education in Indonesia, which is relevant, critical, and acknowledging young people's agency, might look like?

12.6 Imagining a Critical Sexuality Education in Indonesia

Linking analyses of young people's sexual subjectivity discussed above with pedagogical practices in the context of sexuality education in Indonesia, my main argument here is that educators might find benefit in directing curriculum attention from teaching the "correct" sexual knowledge to accommodation, examination, and contestation of multiple sexual knowledges. For, as participants' narratives in this research have shown, Indonesian young people's ways of being sexual subjects are multiple, complex, and contradictory. A focus on one "correct" sexual knowledge might not be able to accommodate such complexities. In contrast, young people might find sexuality education practices that acknowledge and critically examine multiple sexual knowledge are more connected with their complex ways of understanding sexuality, and thus, are more likely to be practiced in their sexual relationships. Based on participants' narratives, I will elaborate on how these practices might look in sexuality education settings.

My discussion is predicated on the premise that, in order to better engage with young people's sexual subjectivities, it is important to recognize the complexities of their ways of being sexual. For instance, instead of assuming that all young people are inevitably driven into sexual activities when they start dating, sexual health education may find additional value in acknowledging that, for some Indonesian young people, sexual relationships are just one part of (or perhaps play no part in) their dating experience. Educational messages may also recognize that sex is not always heterosexual and coital, so that the risks of unplanned pregnancy might not be the only consideration for young people in deciding whether to engage/not engage in sex. Rather, there are other kinds of sexual practices that Indonesian young people engage in, such as same-sex, non-coital, or computer-mediated sexual activities. There are also other health considerations to take into account, such as their physical safety and

emotional readiness. It is these insights and complexities that this section attempts to draw together, and subsequently, employ to generate some suggestions for sexuality education practice in Indonesia.

The discussion in this section also acknowledges various agendas underpinning existing sexuality education initiatives in Indonesia and is simultaneously cognizant of my own poststructuralist position in approaching sexuality education. Some previous sexuality education initiatives in Indonesia have focused on building a healthy future generation free from STIs and unplanned pregnancy (e.g., Diarsvitri et al., 2011; Utomo, 2003), some promoted a religious–moral standard of sexual abstinence until marriage (e.g., Ihsan, 2009), and others emphasized the recognition of LGBT+ identities and rights (e.g., Mazdafiah, 2011; Suvianita, 2013). Following the poststructuralist framework employed in this study, the goal of sexuality education is to challenge dominant discourses of sexuality and encourage socio-political-sexual transformation. I am aware that this agenda might not be (politically) relevant for some researchers and practitioners in this area. Educators who emphasize a moral code of (hetero)sexual abstinence based on conservative religious interpretations, for instance, might find young people’s narratives of ethical sexual relationships irrelevant. Considering that this poststructuralist approach to sexuality education is not common among Indonesian educators and policymakers, my suggestions here might not be welcomed by those who do not share a similar approach to education, knowledge, and social change. Therefore, the aim of this section is modest, that is, to provide possible resources for those who find it relevant, and hopefully draw the interest of those who do not.

One implication of acknowledging and accommodating the complexities of Indonesian young people’s sexual subjectivities is that sexuality education might need to embrace the contradictory nature of knowledge as both enabling and constraining (Foucault, 1978; Weedon, 1987). As the findings of the current research indicated, some Indonesian young people have given meaning to their sexual selves through discourses around unplanned pregnancy, STIs, and condom use; which—to some extent—have enabled them to practice safer sex. However, at the same time, those discourses have also constrained participants’ ways of seeing their sexual selves, such as when young people are positioned as vulnerable and passive recipients of sexual health information. Some participants in this research do not understand themselves as passive, but rather, as agentic sexual subjects. Here, a sexuality education underpinned by a discourse of sexual health might be both enabling and constraining young people’s sexual subjectivity and practices. Therefore, to accommodate these complex and multiple ways of being sexual, sexuality education might need to acknowledge the importance of both learning a new set of knowledge and simultaneously contesting it (e.g., analysing its limit, unearthing its assumptions, and examining its implications).

Another example of the enabling/constraining nature of learning sexuality can be seen in participants’ lack of access to formal educational messages about LGBT+ sexualities. Receiving affirming messages about LGBT+ sexualities in educational settings might have enabled them to understand, for example, their same-sex desire as legitimate. However, some participants’ ways of understanding sexual desire are

much more complex, contradictory, and cannot be contained in the scientific specification and categorization of LGBT+ sexualities. Engaging with knowledge on sexuality while simultaneously discussing its limits, consequences, and perspectival nature might be more accurate and appropriate. By recognizing the contradictory nature of knowledge and learning as such, Indonesian sexuality education might connect better with Indonesian young people's nuanced and multiple ways of being sexual.

A further educational implication of recognizing the complexities of young people's sexual subjectivities might be that educators could acknowledge the limitations of their own knowledge (and any sexual knowledge). Participants' narratives of resistance in this study evidenced that any existing "truth" about sexuality and young people is a discursive constitution of sexual realities that have been (re)produced, shared, and believed by specific communities. Religious sexual morality, for example,—which is often considered as absolute Divine truth—can be rejected, (re)interpreted, or practiced differently by Indonesian young people. To accommodate such diversity in being a sexual subject, learning sexuality might not be able to focus solely on the teachers filling students' minds with the "right" sexual knowledge, or replacing one version of sexual knowledge with another. Instead, learning sexuality might need to be a series of meaning-making activities in which different sexual knowledges are acknowledged and scrutinized—including the teachers' own knowledge.

This approach to learning sexuality might open up educational space where information from educators, religious leaders, activists, parents, and medical practitioners is treated as recommendations rather than being prescriptive. Simultaneously, young people's personal experiences as narrated by some participants (e.g., watching their pet dog copulate, finding their clitoris when using the toilet wash hose, or reading gay-themed comics) can be acknowledged as valuable sources of sexual knowledge. Young people can then be encouraged to reflect on and discuss these (discursively constituted) personal learning moments, as well as information they receive from formal sources, in order to develop their own sexual knowledge, values, and decisions. Through a recognition and examination of various sexual knowledges (including their limitations), sexuality education might engage more effectively with the complexities of Indonesian young people's sexual subjectivities, and encourage more diverse ways of being sexual.

Indonesian sexuality education might also benefit from providing students with opportunities for resistance in the continuous reworking of young people's sexual subjectivities. Participants' narratives have shown how their subjectivities have been constantly reworked and how, within this reworking, there lie opportunities for resistance toward the dominant discourses of sexuality. A male heterosexual participant, Daniel, for example, demonstrated how his sexual subjectivity has evolved alongside his journey of becoming a born-again Christian. In the reworking of his sexual subjectivity, he has been enabled—in a way—to resist discourses that normalize sexual violence. In educational settings, educators might facilitate students to identify, question, and redefine dominant knowledges or regimes of truth taken for granted

in the classroom, in order to seek more ethical understandings of sexuality. Educators and students might already have assumptions about sex and religious morality, for instance, about categorizations of sexual desire, or about birth control and STIs prevention. While these various knowledges are acknowledged, it might also be beneficial to provide resources and invite students to exchange questions so that both educators' and students' understandings of sexuality can be enriched and contested.

A practical example of such an opportunity for resistance is bringing Indonesian young people closer to the life of certain groups in order to contest the dominant assumptions surrounding those groups, such as LGBT+ people, asexual people, polyamorous people, or survivors of sexual violence. Inviting them or bringing their narratives to the classroom through information technologies might enable educators and students to engage with the complexities of these people's lives and scrutinize dominant ways of thinking about them. In so doing, sexuality education might be more relevant to young people's diverse ways of being sexual subjects that, as the participants have shown, are always being reworked and involve resistance towards dominant discourses of sexuality.

12.7 Conclusion

This study has examined key discourses of sexuality that young Indonesian participants have drawn on and/or resisted in becoming sexual subjects, and proposed some recommendations for sexuality education which are connected with the complexities of contemporary Indonesian young people's sexual subjectivity, critical of the discursive operation of power, and therefore, may promote social and sexual justice.

In discussing the implications of this research for sexuality education in Indonesia, I recognize various structural, policy, and everyday barriers to implementing some of the educational practices suggested. The implementation of these suggestions might not be realistic in the near future, considering the religio-sexual-educational politics in contemporary Indonesia, not to mention the schools' and teachers' readiness. Underpinning such impediments are silencing, homogenizing, and moralizing discourses around sexuality, that mainly promote obedience to a moral code rather than accommodating the diversity of young people's sexual subjectivities. However, if Indonesia is committed to continue the 1998 democratic reformation in various social-political spheres, and to advance social justice including sexual justice, the diversity of (ethical) ways of seeing and ways of being in any domain including in sexuality might need to be acknowledged and respected. While such democratic advancements in the field of sexuality in Asia are evidently slow and difficult, Taiwan has managed to be the first Asian county to legalize protections for marginalized sexual identities in 2019, and Thailand is on its way during the writing of this chapter.

To conclude, I reiterate Foucault's (1997) call, which has driven this research, for the creation and proliferation of "new forms of life, relationships, friendships in society, art, culture, and so on through our sexual, ethical, and political choices"

(p. 164). It is with this radical opposition towards homogenizing discourses that I hope future research may continue to explore the extraordinary diversity of ways of seeing and ways of being sexual in Indonesia.

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Teguh Wijaya Mulya is Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Psychology, University of Surabaya. He has a doctorate in education from the University of Auckland, New Zealand. Informed by feminism and poststructuralist theories, his research has been centered around the identification and destabilisation of dominant discourses in various domains, including higher education, gender, sexuality, and religion. His work has been published in journals such as *Gender and Education*, *International Journal for Academic Development*, *British Journal of Religious Education*, *Asian Studies Review*, and *Psychology and Sexuality*.