

Social Movement Framework of Ikatan Muslimim Malaysia (ISMA) in Outdoing Malaysia Transgender Phenomenon 2014-2020

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Abstract

This study aimed to develop a social movement framework for Ikatan Muslimin Malaysia (ISMA) to address the transgender phenomenon from 2014 to 2020. The presence of transgender individuals in Malaysia, documented since the 1980s, became a focal point for ISMA, which experienced significant social changes and led a movement addressing this issue. A qualitative method was employed to analyze documents from ISMA's website over this period. The data were categorised into several themes and coded using Nvivo. The findings revealed that ISMA had undergone social changes in addressing the transgender phenomenon, based on concepts of gender equality, social participation, universal religious perspectives, and specific transgender laws. These findings confirmed that ISMA experienced a social movement aimed at addressing the transgender phenomenon in Malaysia. The study identified six key variables: belief, organisation, involvement, strategy, and effect. According to Lofland's theory, the social change within ISMA led to a social movement with positive impacts on the NGO's efforts to address the transgender phenomenon. Further studies on gender equality should be carried out on other NGOs such as pro-LGBT NGOs in Malaysia with semi-structured interview to understand and evaluate their school of thought.

Keywords: Transgender Phenomenon, Gender Equality, Social Movement, ISMA, Malaysia

Introduction

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) play a paramount function in the transgender phenomenon in Malaysia. Ramanath (2016) maintained that NGOs provide infrastructure for civil society through non-profit organisations, mass organisations, community-based organisations, charities, and volunteer organisations. NGO organisations are voluntary institutions independent of political or government influence, and the principle of their establishment is for the benefit of humanity without profit (Kechot & Haliza, 2012).

In the Malaysian context, NGOs deal with the transgender phenomenon. These NGOs are a movement that is actively interested in transforming the social life of the community to live with better quality, more civilised, and reflect Islamic values. Lim (1995) noted that NGOs in Malaysia are active and engaged in environmental issues, consumer protection and rights, human rights, development issues and feminism movements. The NGO movement is a force to deal with human rights phenomena such as transgender people both locally and internationally. Matters concerning fundamental rights delivered by NGOs manage to garner the attention of all parties, whether in government departments, NGOs, mass media, or the public.

Nonetheless, in reality, Malaysians are still doubtful about the NGO movement's capacity to achieve its goals in dealing with the transgender phenomenon since this phenomenon is becoming more widespread and alarming. With the existence of NGOs such as Ikatan Muslimin Malaysia (ISMA) (2005), some Muslim communities in Malaysia may only follow (*taklid*) when encountering the social movement. There are transgender phenomena that NGOs intend to address; the impact leads to positive or adverse effects. This is evident in the articles published by this movement. NGOs, which consist of various social movements, are due to the purpose of an organisation being established, historical differences in schools of thought Farid (2005) and the expansion of knowledge (Mugiyono, 2016). NGOs constantly discuss transgender phenomena through their writings on websites, social media, and newspapers. In this study, the researcher investigated the NGO Ikatan Muslimin Malaysia (ISMA) (2005) as the focus of the analysis. Further, the researcher chose this NGO as a case study because its aspiration is straightforward and progressive regarding the transgender phenomenon that transpires in Malaysia.

This is evident through the writing of NGO articles from 2014 until 2020. ISMA has written 35 articles on the website. ISMA is an organisation that presents Malay issues to the whole community, from social welfare, human development, family, youth and youth development, women, and thoughts on the LGBT group. Although ISMA documents no official stance on the issues mentioned, one can explore numerous disputes from ISMA's website. For example, a statement by the Deputy Minister of Perak, Ustaz Zamri Hashim, saying that he supported the view of the then Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Datuk Dr Mujahid Yusof Rawa, that LGBT practise is a sin and haram - overtly or covertly. He also told ISMA he welcomes dialogue with the LGBT group, but it needs to be evaluated by the government from various angles. The intended dialogue project is a bilateral meeting between the Director of JAKIM and Nisha Ayub, a transgender activist who founded Justice For Sisters 2010.

Furthermore, the premises presented by Dr Nor Saleha Mohd Salleh, as Head of the ISMA Women's Bureau, totally opposed all forms of LGBT practices by making comparisons in countries such as Turkey and Indonesia. Then, the Malaysian community was shocked by the meeting of transgender activists Nisha Ayub and Datuk Dr Mujahid Yusof Rawa at Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM). Following the bilateral meeting, Nisha submitted

several issues, such as the rights of transgender people in employment and their acceptance in public places, especially using toilets. Following the meeting, the Chairman and Founder of the OKU Central Association, Ras Adiba Radzi, objected to the recommendation of the Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Religion), Fuziah Salleh, to allow transgender people to use the toilet for disabled people (OKU). Through her open letter, Ras Adiba requested the Minister to contemplate and respect the sentiments of disabled people before rashly suggesting any measure without knowing their rights (ISMA Website, 2018). It is essential as transgender people's existence is unwelcome by the public, particularly in Malaysia.

Problem Statement

In the Malaysian context, these LGBT groups are active in fostering their thoughts to professional groups, students, and the public. Meanwhile, this NGO movement expressed their thoughts and concerns on the phenomenon of the minority group, which is transgender in Malaysia. The ISMA movement criticises the actions of LGBT individuals, including the transgender community itself. ISMA attended the analysis in Malaysia by researching how NGOs address the phenomenon of transgender people. Interestingly, the researcher discovered that this NGO wrote many articles and offered suggestions about the transgender community phenomenon in Malaysia. It is evident through their website. The existence of the NGO, ISMA, splits NGOs into two - one that claims to be conservative and another that denies being liberal about transgender phenomena. As for ISMA, they wrote many articles about the transgender phenomenon published on their website. Many of them were written by activists and NGO members. The study problem became apparent by examining the background and claims tendency from ISMA, distinguishing the contradictions of ISMA's approach and views on the transgender phenomenon, evaluating the confusion of the concept of gender equality by ISMA and analysing social participation, the universal angle of religion and transgender special laws on the idea of gender equality.

Research Background and Claims Tendency from NGO

Generally, ISMA triggers many provocations and demands, even though they have different schools of thought. Nevertheless, the research study was based on the articles written on the website. The background and claims tendency from NGOs are as follows:

ISMA Claims Tendency

NGO such as ISMA is Islamic NGO that claim to terminate the transgender phenomenon in Malaysia in particular. ISMA members also demand that the government does not tolerate the intimidation of the LGBT groups in Malaysia. ISMA's demands can be classified into three issues: a particular bill banning the spread of LGBT influence, rejecting pro-LGBT members of parliament and terminating all forms of LGBT practice. The first issue involves LGBT and the sovereignty of Sharia Courts and religious institutions. For example, Ustazah Madidah Binti A Rashid, a representative from ISMA Seremban, stated that law enforcement and prosecutors only rely on general laws and the absence of special laws regarding LGBT (ISMA Website, 2020).

The second issue is evident when ISMA members firmly rejects parliamentarians and their allies who are pro-LGBT. It is crucial as parliamentarians play a paramount role in enacting laws. For example, in Charles Santiago's call on 21 November 2017, Klang, a Member of Parliament in the Democratic Action Party (DAP), asked the government to abolish all laws

and regulations that supposedly discriminate against transgender people. Charles, in his previous statement, also urged religious agencies such as the JAKIM and the Selangor Islamic Religious Department (JAIS) to stop arresting transgender or LGBT people. Furthermore, Tanjung Bungah Assemblyman Teh Yee Cheu also chaired the Penang Transgender Committee on 17 May 2016. Consequently, it is confirmed that LGBT bodies also took the initiative to spread their influence by using the channels of non-Muslim politicians (ISMA Website, 2017).

As for the third issue, terminating all forms of LGBT practice includes the strategies of entrepreneurs who use lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) components to promote their business. Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Senator Datuk Dr Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki, also reprimanded the individual involved. This phenomenon is apparent when transgender individuals openly change their gender through surgery. For instance, Nur Sajat, Safiey Ilias and Rizu Lala, who are transgender, openly promote their business through their Instagram page. Thus, it implies that the buyers of their products support their perverse behaviour. With an extensive following on Instagram, they employ social media as a platform to market their products and possibly encourage more people to become transgender (ISMA Website, 2018).

ISMA's Approach and View Towards the Transgender Phenomenon

In Malaysia, some NGOs have conflicting views and opinions on the transgender phenomenon. As a result, it worsens the condition of Muslims in Malaysia. The transgender phenomenon is a current issue that delivers diverse views, whether it conforms to the Sharia or not. Therefore, the researcher discussed the contradictions of ISMA's views on the transgender phenomenon.

ISMA is a prominent NGO offering its thoughts on contemporary issues involving the affairs of the Malay community and the Islamic religion. This was proven when JAKIM received a bilateral meeting with Nisya Ayub, a director of JFS. The live press conference received criticism from netizens in Malaysia. Activists from ISMA also strongly criticised JAKIM's actions. For example, Mohd Hisham Mohd Sharif, an ISMA activist, noted:

" Malaysians, especially those who are Muslim, need to protest and put pressure on the government so that Malaysia continues to forsake the recognition of LGBT rights completely. Political parties, Islamic NGOs and the public must unite to ensure that the LGBT agenda will not prevail in our country. The Islamic movement must bolster its position and express a firm stance against anyone promoting such an issue in Malaysia " (ISMA website, 2014).

Furthermore, Abu Adam, one of the ISMA activists, expressed:

"Dr Mujahid should know the difference between Allah's sibghah (Islamic model) and the Western model, between human rights promoted by the Non-Muslim West and human rights outlined by Allah SWT and between the Western view of the world and the Islamic world. The Non-Muslim model of human rights is based on the logic of reason alone, but Muslims model human rights based on divine revelation" (ISMA website, 2014).

Confusion of ISMA's Concept of Gender Equality Against the Transgender Phenomenon

Some may misinterpret the notion of gender equality. Various theories emerged regarding gender inequality between men and women (Ridgeway, 2011; Tilly, 1998). Nonetheless, Islam maintains equality between men and women, which includes rights and responsibilities and does not differentiate one from the other. Shehu (2006) remarked that Islam does not discriminate against people based on gender. A question that often arises when referring to

the gender position of the transgender community in Malaysia is the third gender. Malaysia does not recognise the LGBT community, including transgender people, but this community insists on being acknowledged in the country. Ironically, the concept of gender equality brought by ISMA is distinct. This can be explained by the fact that ISMA rejects the LGBT community, which includes transgender people, and the concept of gender equality by ISMA as follows:

ISMA gender equality concept

The concept brought by ISMA is rejecting the third gender, which is the transgender group. The excerpt issued by ISMA activists demonstrates their idea.

“The Terengganu state government's plan to hold a conversion therapy course targeting transgender individuals has sparked discussion among lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) activists in the country. The course will be held for a few days starting next year after the authorities have completed a study on the transgender population, as Terengganu Exco Member Ghazali Taib said. Informing that participation in the course is voluntary, he said, among other things, the program will be attended by medical, psychological and religious specialists, as well as transgender people who have now practised normal life”. (ISMA website, 2017).

He also added:

“Transgender people are part of the community. They are our responsibility. However, ultimately, it is up to them to decide. The government's policy cannot be forceful. We construct a path for them to make the best life choices.” Human Rights Watch's 2017 report says discrimination against LGBT people in Malaysia is widespread, where there are laws on sodomy, where offenders face prison terms and caning. Nevertheless, the plan is opposed by LGBT activists who claim the course will widen the gap of social isolation. They accuse the action of therapy for correction violates the fundamental rights of individuals. Unofficially, the Ministry of Health estimated that there were 24,000 transgender people in Malaysia in 2014. (ISMA website, 2017).

Meanwhile, Professor Dr Rafidah Hanim Mokhtar, a lecturer at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences USIM, mentioned:

“Nisha labelled the staff working at the hospital as 'transphobic' or holding a deep-rooted hatred for the trans community. Nisya's statement, nevertheless, contradicted the staff's dedication at the Ministry of Health in carrying out their responsibilities in handling HIV/AIDS patients in the LGBT community. Nisya also asserted that the health ministry is allied with JAKIM. When they (the hospital and JAKIM) share the same idea, they will render health-related information from a religious perspective, which is not new in health science. This is also because socio-cultural and religious factors influence society”. (ISMA website, 2017).

Therefore, based on the excerpts highlighted by ISMA activists, one can conclude that their concept of gender equality focuses more on educating transgender people to practice their lives based on their innate human nature. The number of transgender people is also advancing yearly, and the majority are Malays who are Muslim.

Analysis of social participation, religious universal angle and transgender special laws against the concept of gender equality

One can explore the transgender phenomena that occur in Malaysia into three aspects: social participation, the universal angle of religion and special transgender laws against the concept of gender equality. Preliminary research on the three aspects was discussed as follows:

First, one can discuss social participation in the ISMA through the writing of an article titled "Heaven Awaits Gays, An Open Letter to LGBT Practitioners" on 3 April 2017 and the essence of this article stated that the support of the Malaysian community is needed to lead these groups to the right path. Second, the religious universal angle states that all religions reject LGBT behaviour because such acts are vile, sordid and disgusting. The statement was given by Ustazah Nornajwa Ghazali, Head of Women of Isma Ipoh, on 3 March 2017. Thirdly, one can examine the special transgender law when the draft bill on National Harmony and Reconciliation does not recognise the sexual orientation of LGBT practitioners. However, the bill protects the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people not to be discriminated in aspects such as employment. The issue was raised in 2014 by Datuk Dr Mujahid Yusof Rawa, Chairman of the Law and Policy Committee, National Unity Consultation Council (MKPN).

Literature Review

The term transgender was introduced by Virginia Prince, an American transgender activist, in 1960 (Ekins and King, n.d.). Nonetheless, the term transgender was popularised in the 1980s and alludes to a gender identity that does not correspond to the gender at birth. Transgender is an umbrella term for a gender identity that differs from the biological sex at birth. In Schneiders's study (2014), he stated the term transman "Female to male (FtM)" or "F2M" and "transwoman" as "Male to Female (MtF), "M2F" or "female". Nonetheless, the term transsexual was defined by Mageswary *et al* (2016) as a group recognised by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and the World Health Organization (WHO) as a manifestation of gender identity disorder (GID). Ellepola (2018) also recorded that GID exists when an individual shows symptoms of depression regarding physical sex.

Chang *et al* (2012) reported that transgender people can be recognised as non-entities in Malaysian society, and most of them have been raised with such beliefs. Most transgender people are happy when they undergo surgery, but they still have to face legal challenges such as identity cards. However, the term transsexual can be referred to in Teh's study (2001), defining these transsexuals as transsexual men who desire to become women in various aspects and transsexual women as those who want to become men in multiple elements. Nevertheless, titles such as *mak nyah*, *pondan* and *bapak* are more fitting to be used to describe transsexuals in the Malaysian context (Teh, 2001). Hassan & Suriati (2013) remarked that transsexuals are considered uncommon in the customs or culture of a society. There are many terms used to describe the issue of transsexualism in Malaysia, such as 'male emailing', 'male eliminate', and 'male transsexual' (Hassan & Suriati, 2013).

In Islam, gender equality exclusively involves two genders, male and female. However, the third gender, which is transgender, is a much-debated issue. Islam has established four genders: male, female, *khunsa* and *mukhannis* or *mukhannas* (Abdul Aziz, 1987). *Khunsa* is also known as a hermaphrodite, while *mukhannis* or *mukhannas* are male behaviour that resembles a female. *Mukhannis*, on the other hand, has a different gender identity from the time a person is born. Although they are physically male, they want to be female. For the *mukhannas*, Wan Azmi (1991) proposed that they have feminine characteristics but do not want to change their gender. Therefore, Islam only allows the *khunsa* or hermaphrodites to undergo surgery in which they can become either male or female. Thus, it verified that Islam

prohibits *mukhannis* or *mukhannas* from imitating nature and becoming women, especially in applying make-up and, injecting hormones to enlarge the breasts and hips and performing sex reassignment surgeries (SRS).

The questions and issues arose regarding the concept of gender equality in the 1980s. In 1983, the Conference of Rulers in Malaysia decided on a *fatwa* banning sex change, which was enforced on all Muslims in Malaysia in particular. A series of bans on sex reassignment surgeries (SRS), which were once carried out by four surgeons, including Muslim doctors at university hospitals and semi-government hospitals, were cancelled even when the doctors tried to convince the religious authorities to carry on the operation. Furthermore, in October 2008, the National Fatwa Council announced a *fatwa* against *pengkid*, a term used for tomboys for individuals in the Malay Muslim community known as transman. Julian (2010) asserted that the announcement of a *fatwa* against tomboys or transmen caused protests from the public, especially non-Muslims. Nevertheless, most conservative Malay Muslims, such as members of the National Fatwa Council, nationalists, pressure groups, politicians and bloggers, perceive the protest of non-Muslims against the *fatwa* for *pengkids* as interference in Islamic matters.

The transgender phenomenon also involves non-Muslims in Malaysia, namely Chinese, Indians and other ethnic minorities. Azhar *et al* (2013) declared that LGBT issues are not prohibited in Islam alone. Different religions, such as Christianity in the Bible, forbid the act despite no clear text. Aldridge (2013) commented that the church has opposed same-sex marriage and transsexual surgery. Besides, for the Hindu religion, LGBT acts are considered unethical and against the fundamentals of Hinduism. Also, Buddhism cited its third precept regarding immoral sexual behaviour (Willy, 2007). The diversity of religious concepts should be studied by examining the differences in religious concepts in transgender issues.

Engagement from a social context means bringing transgender people into civil society. Divan *et al* (2016) explained that social inclusion includes gender recognition, freedom from violence and oppression, health access, and human rights. The outcomes of this study could guide the United Nations agencies, governments and transgender activists in achieving specific standards in health, access to justice and social involvement of the transgender community. The impact of social engagement is to lessen the stigma, challenges, and problems faced by the transgender community in Malaysia.

From a legal point of view, Amsyar *et al* (2018) stated that there is Sharia legislation in Malaysia. Nevertheless, when it comes to LGBT people, Sharia law provides more than civil law. Sharia law is only applied to Muslims, but the punishment imposed on offenders is very low and limited. Malaysia has yet to implement Hudud penalties that have provisions for LGBT people in general. Flores and Park (2018) maintained that the social participation of LGBT people through The Legal Environment Index (LEI) is a parameter. A breakdown conducted in 133 countries around the world recorded that Malaysia does not accept the engagement of LGBT people through law, and it scored 0. Other Muslim countries such as Iran, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco and Pakistan also scored 0 from 1990 to 2016.

Theory of Social Movement

The researcher used the social movement theory by Lofland (2009), and it was chosen because it involved a case study in an NGO to explore transgender phenomena in Malaysia. Lofland's social movement theory has been widely adopted by researchers (Juhari, 2014; Syarifuddin, 2013). Case studies on social movements raise various questions that would be

answered using social movement theory, including beliefs, organisations, variables, involvement, strategies and effects.

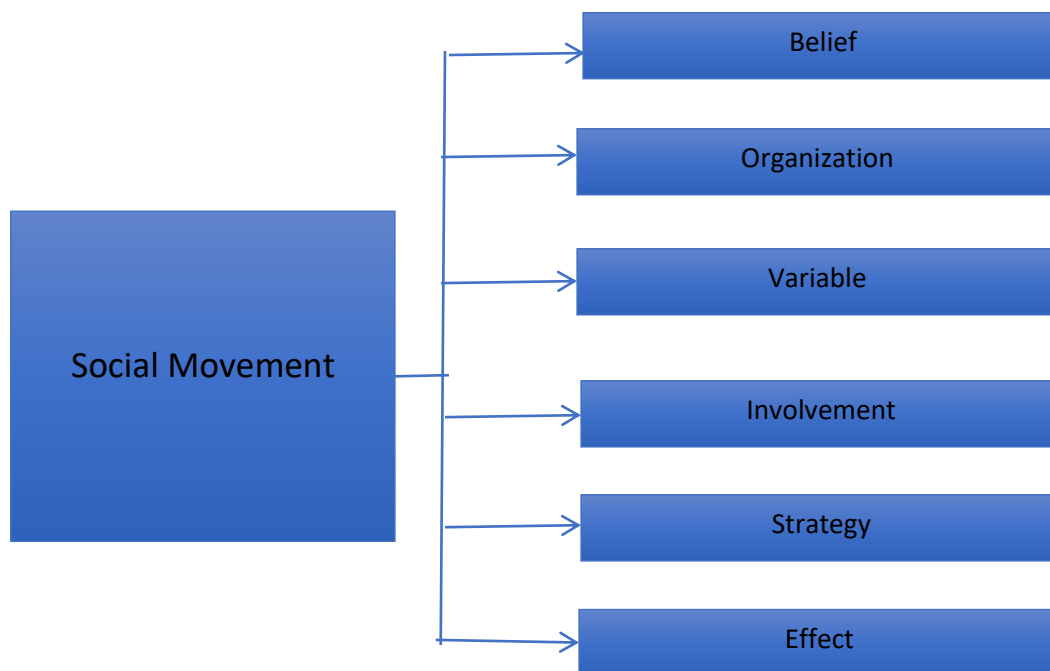


Figure 1: Social Movement Theory by Lofland (2009)

Source: Lofland (2009)

The theory, oriented by Lofland (2009), is to analyse social movements. The researcher discovered that the element of belief is an ideology, doctrine, view, hope, framework, vision and perspective of a movement. The researcher identified what they want to claim and fight for in a movement. The element of trust is more focused on (social location) because the mainstream is in a particular social context. For example, it involves social constructs such as democracy, capitalism, individual freedom, and human rights.

Then, an organisation will have members with the same views and tendencies. An organisation will be determined by the type of purpose and goal to be achieved. Membership in the organisation must have specific criteria, namely by agreeing to the vision and mission of the organisation. Social movement organisations also need movement leaders and aspects of generating or financial resources to immediately carry out activities and endeavours. After that, the variables that the NGO movement wants to fight for would be formed. There are many variables, but the researcher focused on the current state of thought regarding the transgender phenomenon in Malaysia. This variable is the central platform for analysing the tendencies of an organisation. Most social movements proliferate because of tradition, culture, belief systems, and doctrines. Therefore, the variables of the transgender phenomenon would be used as the focus of the study.

Then the next element is involvement, which is membership in a movement. The movement triggers many questions, such as why the public must participate, the extent of their participation in the organisation and who the supporters are. This element arises when there are a few who disagree with discrimination. Therefore, the public's involvement can change something manifested in a movement, individually or collectively. The organisation will recruit members and their followers to materialise involvement in the organisation.

Strategy is a way or methodology of doing something through the efforts that want to be done, whether these movements are overt or covert. In achieving a strategy, every social movement has an achievable target that can be attained in the short, medium and long term. The organisation's approach is used to achieve goals in a specific matter. The last element is the impact of the Muslim community in Malaysia towards NGO in outdoing with transgender phenomena. The effects could be measured through reactions in social media, responses among social movements and reactions of the authorities. The impact of an organisation motivates change and the way of view of any party. Every social movement in an organisation affects its members and has its followers.

Research Methodology

Burns and Grove (2003) described research design as a model for conducting research with maximum control over factors contributing to research findings. Meanwhile, Parahoo (1997) stated that research design is a plan used to determine how, when, and where to obtain research results. The researcher chose a qualitative approach that uses a case study design to analyse the flow of thought of NGO in outdoing with transgender phenomena in Malaysia. Creswell (2007) noted that qualitative research is used to explore and understand a specific individual or group.

Epistemologically, the researcher used interpretivism, adopting an open-minded approach to any information obtained from the website. This is because the researcher examined the role of NGO in dealing with transgender phenomena in Malaysia. In addition, a case study of NGO was carried out to see how they would like to deal with the transgender phenomena with the social movements brought about. The researcher would use the data collection process through document analysis. The document analysis method is the collection of data from content analysis of communication messages that have been printed, broadcast or illustrated (Sabitha, 2009). In other words, the researcher referred to the content of the text and articles published by members and activists as a reference for analysis in the form of documentation.

Discussion

The results of this study could be seen in the social movement brought by the NGO ISMA by applying the theory of (Lofland, 2009). Another finding that stands out from the results reported earlier is there are five components to establish whether ISMA is carried out a social movement in outdoing the transgender phenomenon in Malaysia. A proposed of social movement framework has drawn up by the researcher could be described as follows:

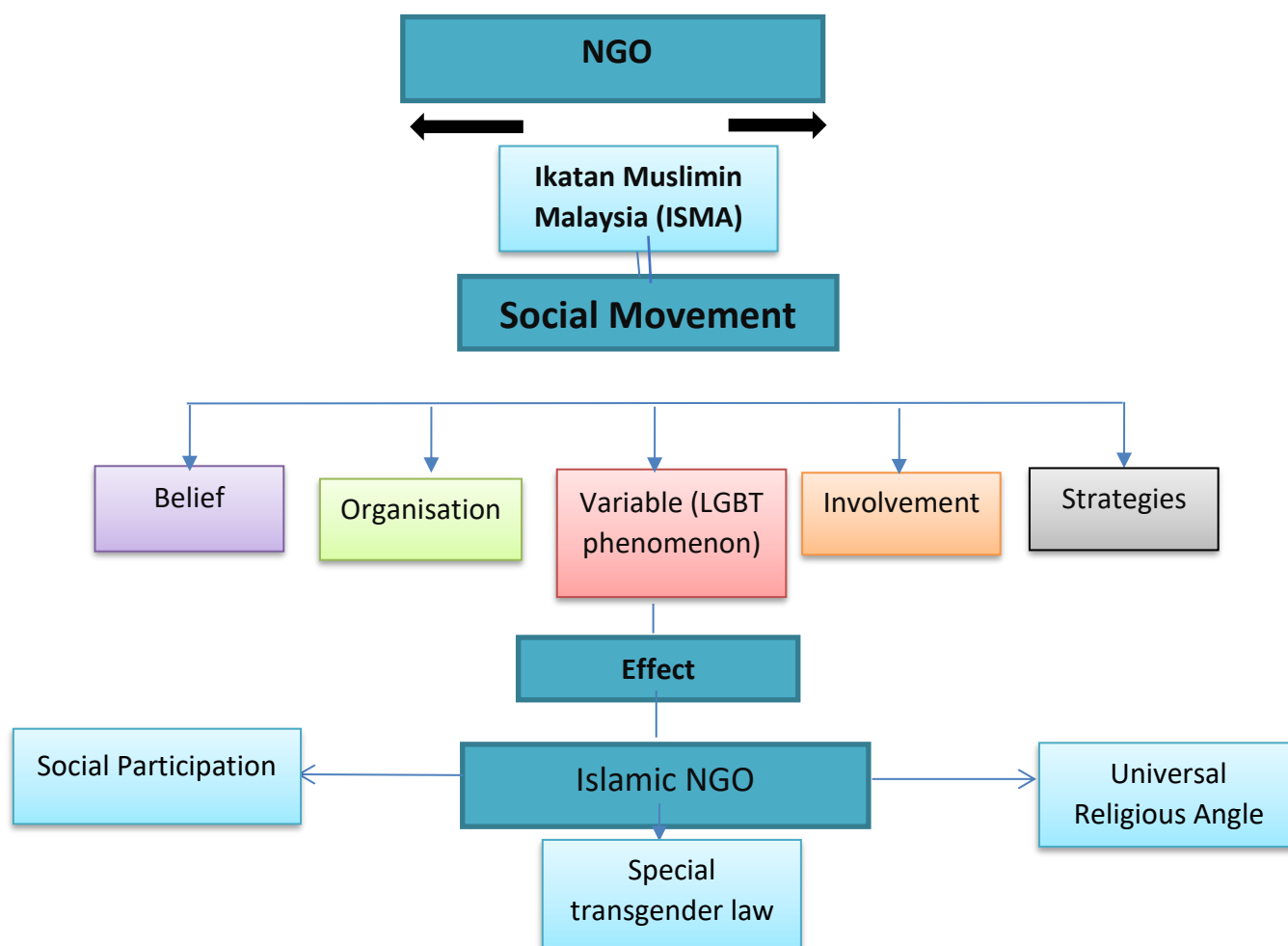


Figure 2: ISMA Social Movement Concept Framework

Source: Sa'dan, 2024

Based on Figure 1 above, the researcher would test the conceptual framework as above. The social change in ISMA was influenced by the Organisation of Jamaah Islah Malaysia, known as JIM, established on 20 July 1990. The Ikhwan Muslimin was inspired by the *establishment* of JIM in Egypt. The founder of this organisation is Saari Sungib. Jim's motto is "Together, Islam Builds Society". The objective of the establishment of JIM focuses more on producing good people and educating them towards goodness, cultivating the approach of harmony, and distinguishing and mobilising the community towards the enforcement of truth and justice. Over 22 years, JIM has been led by three figures as President, namely Saari Sungib, Professor Dr Mohamed Hatta Shaharom and Zaid Kamaruddin. Later, JIM dissolved its organisation and established two new organisations, IKRAM Malaysia (IKRAM) and ISMA. A series of social changes and differences in trends in an organisation, followed by the establishment of two organisations, ISMA (2005); IKRAM (2009), happened. This is because ISMA is a continuation of the endeavours of the Malaysian Muslim Graduate Association, which was established in 1997. After JIM was dissolved, IKRAM was established by the Registrar of Organization on 22 October 2009. According to the IKRAM Organisation of Malaysia's Constitution, IKRAM is a preaching, welfare organisation, and education organisation that cares about the affairs of the general public's life in line with the way of life and Islamic teachings.

Nonetheless, ISMA was established in 2005 due to social organisational changes and focused on Malay affairs. The social changes occur due to ISMA's vision of dealing with the transgender phenomenon in Malaysia. The majority of the transgender community in Malaysia is made up of ethnics: Malay (50.7%), Chinese (27.5%), Indian (7.8%), and others (14%) (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 1995). Based on the data above, ISMA has been established, and the objective of the establishment is to focus more on Malay affairs. Social changes from the establishment of JIM and IKRAM also caused the establishment of ISMA.

The first element is the trust that ISMA was established based on Islamic and Malay interests in Malaysia, managed by Media Isma Sdn Bhd, located in Bandar Baru Bangi, Selangor. These two NGOs have substantial differences in background when dealing with the transgender phenomenon in Malaysia. This is apparent through excerpts from articles on the website and the stance of an organisation that caused this NGO to be entrusted to deal with the transgender phenomenon in Malaysia.

The second element is an organisation focusing on behind-the-scenes activities within NGO, namely ISMA. After a social change in this organisation, a movement must consist of an organisational chart with a leader and followers. In this study, the researcher identified the leaders and followers in ISMA who is dealing with the transgender phenomenon in Malaysia. The establishment of an organisation is evident in how its members have the same views and goals in dealing with the phenomenon. In such an organisation, the researcher analysed how work moves and the ways tasks are performed as agents of change.

The third element is a variable that means the reasons for the formation of movements from ISMA. In this study, the transgender phenomenon is the reason for social change in the NGO against the transgender phenomenon. It can be explained that the transgender phenomenon has been in Malaysia for a long time, but this phenomenon has become a controversial issue after being shared on social media by the public. It has been proved that the variable transgender phenomenon received various criticisms and ridicule from multiple levels of society, organisations, and government departments. Accordingly, the transgender phenomenon is a variable that ISMA will analyse in social movements.

The fourth element is the involvement of ISMA after experiencing social changes in dealing with the transgender phenomenon in Malaysia. The intended involvement is the extent to which this movement perceives this transgender phenomenon as having to be addressed. ISMA is involved in dealing with the transgender phenomenon, and the question that arises is why the public should be involved or participate in this movement. The involvement of NGO and any parties involved would also be examined. Finally, in this study, the researcher identified who supports this social movement, whether it involves NGOs locally or internationally.

The fifth element is strategy, which is achieving a movement objective. In an attempt to achieve these objectives, efforts are carried out to accomplish the goals of their movement. In general, ISMA has implemented many strategies to deal with the transgender phenomenon. However, this study evaluated and analysed the strategies used, whether overt or covert. Furthermore, the strategy brought by the movement may also express their stance on the transgender phenomenon.

The sixth element is the impact of the social movement brought about by ISMA. The effects brought by the movement would get a reaction from the authorities such as JAKIM, JMFK, KPWKM and SUHAKAM. Then, the media's reaction is also substantial as they play an imperative role in conveying a message using print media and social media. The final response is the reaction of fellow social movements. It observed whether the response by ISMA in

outdoing with the transgender phenomenon despite having different criticism and arguments.

The last element is the impact that affects the concept of gender equality for the transgender community. In this research, the researcher concentrated on three critical problems in gender equality. After the occurrence of social changes in the ISMA movements, social movements were brought by this organisation to deal with the transgender phenomenon. The results of this study looked at the extent to which social changes and movements affect the concept of gender equality from the perspective of social participation, universal religious angle, and special transgender laws.

Conclusion

Hence, the conclusions present the extent to which the NGO can influence the thinking of the Muslim community in Malaysia after experiencing social change and forming a social movement. This study also analysed the relationship between social change and social movement by examining the concept of gender equality in the transgender community. In this research, the researcher underscored gender equality through social participation, a universal religious angle, and special transgender laws. This study succeeded in analysing the school of thought brought by ISMA and confirmed the contrast between the legal system in Malaysia. Ergo, authorities such as *Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia* (JAKIM), *Jawatankuasa Fatwa Majlis Kebangsaan* (JFMK), *Kementerian Pembangunan Wanita, Keluarga Dan Masyarakat* (KPWKM), and *Suruhanjaya Hak Asasi Manusia* (SUHAKAM) must take reasonable actions to curb the school of thought, whether relevant in Malaysia's context or not.

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