

# The Process Of Disclosing A Gay's Personal Status To His Surrounding In Medan, North Sumatera Province, Indonesia (A Study On Interpersonal Communication By Using Self-Disclosure Approach)

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**Abstract:** The title of the research was The Process of Disclosing A Gay's Personal Status to His Surroundings in Medan, North Sumatera Province, Indonesia (A Study on Interpersonal Communication by Using Self-Disclosure Approach). The purpose of this research was to find out the process of self-disclosure of gays to family, friends and his surrounding about his status as gay. The method used is descriptive research method qualitative approach. Theories used are Inter-Personal Communication, Self Disclosure, Social Penetration Theory. Data collection technique is done by in depth interview with a gay and added with archives and documentation. Stages of data processing starting from field research and library research. Through this study found that there are differences in the process of gay self-disclosure in the family and friends. Self-disclosure begins with gay acceptance of how he can accept his sexual orientation as a gay. After being able to accept his condition, he then discloses himself in a different way to his family, friends and his surrounding. There are also obstacles experienced in self-disclosure to the family, namely the fear of disappointing the family.

**Index Terms:** Self-Disclosure, Gay, Interpersonal Communication

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Sexual orientation is one of human identity. Man is created in pairs and in his nature men will love women, and vice versa. But there are some people who turned out to have a different sexual orientation or so-called sexual orientation deviation. People with sexual deviations like same-sex, for example men like fellow men, as well as in women. This deviation is called homosexual. In Indonesia, homosexual is a taboo discussion, considering Indonesia is a country that upholds religion and customs - culture. But as the times progressed, and the issue of Human Rights, homosexuals began to open up to voice the differences. Homosexual is divided into two, namely men like men called gay and women who like fellow women called lesbian. Based on research Joni and Pasarani (2013), there are a number of sites that are used as a medium of gay interaction. The number of gay sites is possible continues to grow in line with the growing number of people who fall into the category of gay. These sites become a medium to get to know each other and do not rule out as a medium to find sexual partners. Another uniqueness of the gay this is the use of terms in communicating with the aim to keep the content of the chat.

Some of the terms are ginay (gay), lekong (male), pewong (female), top (pattern of sexual intercourse which is positioned as a man was on top), bot (pattern of sexual intercourse which is positioned as women are under), cekong (beautiful), jelita (ugly), ciptadent (kissing), kucing / beyes / beyong (a paid man), enam Sembilan / esong (oral sex), and other terms. Gay is a term that refers to the sexual orientation of homosexual individuals. Homosexual is derived from the Greek word "homos" which means "the same." So homosexuals are sexual activity of the same sex which means that someone is erotically interested in fellow women or a male (Surbakti, 2009). According to Annida (2003) homosexual is psychologically considered as abnormal acts, mental disorders and even abnormal moral behavior disorders. Discrimination against gay occurs because patriarchal culture is still strong in Indonesia, where men are united (Dharmawan in Veritasia, 2013). As a result, when there are feminine men who like same-sex, it is considered perverted. This patriarchal concept creates a gender identity that will determine the role of each gender. As Munti (2005) argues that the elements of the feminine and masculine personality are created in a patriarchal culture and not of human origin. The constructed social expectation that men should be dominant with their masculinity, and women should be feminine and then become the main reason why homosexuals are perceived as violating existing values in society. In addition to patriarchy, Indonesia also embraces heteronormative cultures. Kitzinger (in Messerschmidt, 2012) describes heteronormative notions as "Themyrriad ways in which heterosexuality is produced as a natural, unproblematic, taken-for-granted, ordinary phenomenon". In other words, heteronormative view that heterosexual is the only normal, normal and normal sexuality. Davy (Wardhana in Veritasia, 2013) also explains in heteronormative rules, men are required to macho and marry women. Gay people in their lives experience many complex problems. Many gay people who are forced to marry women, ostracized from families, are forced to "repent" by entering into pesantren, even in some cases being expelled from work because it is known that they

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are gay. Departing from the above problems, so many gays are looking for fellow gays and form a community, because they feel that the community is one of the containers that can receive them. Usually gays to get the community or couples more done by communicating with social networks, such as Facebook, Twitter, Blackberry Massengger (Butar-Butar, 2013) In the environment, gays also communicate specifically to convey the difference in sexual orientation. One way of communication used is interpersonal communication. According to Wood interpersonal communication is a formation of meaning through verbal or non verbal messages through exchange by every individual in a relationship. (Supraktiknya, 1995). Effectiveness in relationships and interpersonal communication is determined by the ability of individuals to communicate what they want to communicate well and clearly. In addition to that, the individual must also be able to create an impression on other people, so that others affected by what our will and purpose. Self disclosure is a special type of conversation where we share personal information and feelings with other Canary people (in their Supraktik, 2002).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal communication is a communication that takes place in a face-to-face situation between two or more people, both organized and crowded. Delivery of messages by one person and the recipient of a message to another person or a small group of people with the opportunity to provide immediate feedback. According to Deddy Mulyana (2008), interpersonal communication or interpersonal communication is communication between people face-to-face, allowing each participant to capture the reaction of others directly, both verbally and nonverbally. Onong U. Effendy defines interpersonal communication is communication between two people, where there is direct contact in the form of conversation, communication of this type can be directly face to face (face to face) can also through medium, for example telephone. The process of sending and receiving messages between two people or among a small group of people with multiple effects and some instantaneous two-way or reciprocal feedback (Effendy, 2007). The De Vito in Liliweri (2015) defines interpersonal communication as sending messages from a person and accepted by another person, or group of people with direct and verbal effects and feedback verbally and nonverbally. So interpersonal communication is communication between one person to another, either face to face or using a particular medium to express feeling happy, sad, and happy with verbal and non-verbal and the response or feedback from communications made by language Which is easy to understand and understand. The purpose of interpersonal communication is diverse, such as (Suranto, 2011):

#### a. Express the attention to others

One of the goals of interpersonal communication is to express concern to others. In this case someone communicates by greeting, smiling, waving, bowing, asking about the health news of his or her communication partner, etc.

#### b. Discovering one's self

Someone does interpersonal communication because they want to know and recognize themselves based on information

from others. When someone engages in interpersonal communication with others, then there is the process of learning a lot about yourself and others. By talking to each other about the state of self, interest, and hope then someone gets valuable information to know the identity or in other words find yourself.

#### c. Finding the outside world

With interpersonal communication gained the opportunity to obtain various information from others, including important and actual information. So with interpersonal communication, information is obtained and with that information it can be identified and found in a previously unknown state of the outside world. So communication is a "window of the world" because by communicating can know the various events in the outside world.

#### d. Developing and maintaining harmonious relationship

As a social being, one of the greatest needs of every person is to form and maintain good relationships with others. Man can not live alone, need to cooperate with others. Therefore everyone has spent much time on interpersonal communication with others.

#### e. Influencing attitude and behavior

Interpersonal communication is the process of delivering a message by someone to others to notify or change attitudes, opinions or behavior either directly or indirectly (using the media). In the principle of communication, when the communicant receives a message or information, means the communicant has gained influence from the communication process. Includes giving a certain meaning to the possibility of a change of attitude.

#### f. Searching for pleasure or only spending time

There are times when someone interpersonal communication just looking for fun or entertainment. Talking to friends about birthday celebrations, discussing, exchanging stories is a talk to fill and spend time.

#### g. Avoiding harm as the result of mis-communication

Interpersonal communication can eliminate losses due to miscommunication (mis communication) that occurs between the source and the recipient of the message. Because with interpersonal communication can be done directly approach, explaining the various messages that are prone to misleading interpretation

#### h. Providing help

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### Social Penetration Theory

Social Penetration Theory (social penetration theory) is part of the relationship development theory. The social penetration theory was developed by Irwin Altman and Dalmis Taylor in the year (Budyatna & Leila, 2012). Interpersonal relationships are vibrant and dynamic. This relationship is always evolving (DeVito, 2011). Interpersonal relationships continue to grow

gradually and predictably. Self-disclosure is the primary means used although self-awakening can lead to a more intimate relationship, but it can also cause one or more persons to be in a vulnerable position. Altman and Taylor put forward this theory the point is that in interpersonal relationships there has been a social infiltration. When we first meet other people for the first time then we actually start with an unfamiliarity, then in a process that constantly changes to become more familiar so that the development of relations began to happen. Both of them draw the conclusion that interpersonal relationships go through a process, constantly running, changing in the various behavioral symptoms it exhibits (Liliweri, 1991). Altman and Taylor (in Kusiki 2006) likens humans like red onions. The point is essentially humans have multiple layers or layers of personality. If we peel the onion's outer shell, then we will find another layer of skin. So does the human personality The outermost layer of skin of the human personality is anything open to the public, what we commonly display to others in general, is not covered up. And if we are able to see a slightly deeper layer, then there is a layer that is not open to everyone, a more semiprivate personality layer. This layer is usually only open to certain people only, the nearest person for example. And the deepest layers are the private realm, in which there are values, self-concepts, unresolved conflicts, pent-up emotions, and the like. This layer is invisible to the outside world, by anyone, even from lovers, Parents, or any closest people. But this layer is the most impactful or most instrumental in one's life. Our closeness to others, according to Altman and Taylor, can be seen from the extent to which our penetration of the layers of personality was. By allowing others to penetrate the layers of personality that we have means we allow the person to get closer to us. The degree of proximity of a person's relationship can be seen from here. The stages of the penetration process are as follows:

### 1. Orientation of disclosing gradually

It is an early stage of interaction and occurs at the public level. At this stage the phrases are cliches and the various information disclosed is information that is superficial.

### 2. Exchange of affective exploration emerging from self

In this stage, it is an extension of the public area of the self and occurs when aspects of an individual's personality begin to emerge. At this stage the information is revealed deeper than the first stage of information concerning the personality of a person (personal information).

### 3. Affective exchange: commitment and comfort

At this stage there is a sense of comfort between parties so that the information conveyed more in depth than the information presented in the previous stage. At this stage marked by close friendship and intimate partner. At this stage there is a relaxed impression in the disclosure of information.

### 4. Stable exchange: Total Honesty and Intimacy

This last stage is a stage in which it relates to the open expression of thoughts, feelings and behaviors that lead to the emergence of spontaneity and uniqueness of a high relationship.

Based on these stages, the disclosure of information can be more profound when it has reached the last stage of the fourth

stage. The achievement of the fourth stage means that steps 1-3 have been passed so that all information can be obtained easily because there is no divider (boundary) related to the confidentiality of an information.

### Self-Disclosure

Self disclosure is the process of disclosing one's personal information to another person or vice versa. Self-disclosure is a person's need as a way out of the pressures that happen to him (Bungin, 2013) According to Deddy Mulyana (2005), self-disclosure is to reveal information about yourself. Self-disclosure must be based on honesty and openness in providing information and not lies. Self-disclosure is a process of sharing information and feelings by someone against others honestly to achieve an openness. Revealing the truth about ourselves to others who are also willing to reveal the true about himself, is seen as a measure of the ideal relationship Every human being would want to establish effective communication, so that what is conveyed can be understood by others well. Likewise in terms of self-disclosure (Self Disclosure). However, there are some things that researchers do to achieve self-disclosure is by using Social Penetration theory. One of the innovative models to understand the levels of awareness and self-disclosure in communication is the Johari Window:

<b>Disclosed</b> Known by only one's self and by other people	<b>Blind</b> Unknown by one's self but known by other people
<b>Hidden</b> Known by one's self but unknown by other people	<b>Unknown</b> Unknown by one's self and by other people

*Picture 1: Johari Window*

Joseph Luft and Harrington Ingham developed the Johari Window concept as a manifestation of how one deals with others described as a window. The Johari window consists of four frames each of which serves to explain how each individual expresses and understands oneself in relation to others. The process of interpersonal communication will work well if the individuals involved in the interpersonal communication process have mutual openness or interpersonal communication will not work well if each person involved is closing each other. The four Johari Windows explaining how the interpersonal communication process takes place:

- 1. Open areas:** Open Area is information about ourselves which is known by others such as name, position, rank, marital status, which graduates, etc. Open areas refer to behaviors, feelings, and motivations that are known to ourselves and others. For people who have known their own potentials and abilities, their advantages and disadvantages are very easy to perform activities that benefit both yourself and others so that people with this Type must always meet the success of each step, because others know the ability as well as himself. When starting a relationship, we will inform something light about ourselves. The longer then the information about ourselves will continue to grow vertically so as to reduce the hidden area.

The larger the open area the more productive and profitable our interpersonal relationships.

2. **Hidden area:** Hidden Area contains information that we know about ourselves but closed to others. This information includes our concerns about employers, employers, finances, family, health, etc. By not sharing about the hidden area, usually will be a barrier in relation. This will make other people miscommunication about us, which if in a working relationship will reduce the level of confidence people. Refers to behaviors, feelings, and motivations known to others, but are not known to ourselves.
3. **Blind area:** Blind Area that determines that others are aware of something but we do not. In this area other people do not know us while we know our ability and potential, if that happens then feedback and communication is a way that we are better known people especially our ability, get rid of the feeling of self-confidence start open. For example how to reduce groggy, how to face faculty A, etc. So by getting input from others, blind area will decrease. The more we understand the strengths and weaknesses of ourselves that other people know, the better in team work. Refers to behaviors, feelings, and motivations that are known to ourselves, but are unknown to others.
4. **Unknown area:** Unknown Area is information that other people and also we do not know it. Until we can experience things or others see something about ourselves how we behave or feel. For example when the first time seneng same people other than our family members. We can never say the feeling of "love". This window will shrink as we grow up, begin to develop themselves or learn from experience.

## Gay

The categorization of human beings based on biological gender ie women and men is not really there. Based on biological genitals socio-cultural constructions are created as women are wives whereas men are husbands, feminine women while men are masculine, women are household representatives while the husband is the head of the household. These constructions are often used as an indicator to examine various human problems, because these constructs are created as if they are natural and can not be changed. In general, men do have a tendency to like women and women like men as their sex partners. This common category is a heterosexual-oriented group. However, it turns out that in any community there is a small part that is oriented homosexual or likes same sex. According to research in the United States it is estimated that there are 10% of the homosexual-oriented population (Sarwono, 2002). Sexual orientation is described as an object of a person's sexual impulse: heterosexual (opposite sex), homosexual (same sex) or bisexual (both sexes) (Kaplan, 1997). According to the Classification and Diagnosis Guide for Mental Disorders in Indonesia, homoseskual is a feeling of interest in feelings (affection, emotional connection), both predominantly (more prominently) and exclusively (solely) with or without physical connection to same-sex. Briefly homosexuality can be defined as one of sexual identity that refers to people who have impulse impulses, preferences, sexual behavior and physical,

emotional and sexual attraction of the same sex as well as those who identify themselves as homosexual. Homosexuality itself is further classified into two major parts of the term gay and lesbian. Gay is a man who is attracted to men. Meanwhile, Lesbian is a woman who is interested in women. The gay and lesbian differences in term only lie in the subject alone drawn from the sex or biological genitals it possesses. In fact, in radical studies of sexuality gay and lesbian definitions are also drawn not only from biological sex but from the social sex (Butar-butur, 2013). The prevailing thought in society which says that only men (masculine) and women (feminine), heterosexual (opposite sex partners) have closed the space to know more about the differences in sexual orientation and gender identity that exist in the environment Respectively, whereas in fact sexual orientation and gender identity are diverse. Acceptance of the diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity is a problem. Lesbians, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) are regarded as illness, abnormal, heretical, deviant behavior, dos and are forbidden by religion. This then makes the LGBT experience stigma, violence and discrimination with different forms. The justification for the stigma then led people to think that the LGBT deserve to be healed in various ways such as being admitted to the house of prayer, being treated in a mental hospital and even being forced to use various acts of violence. This then leads one to Homophobia. Homophobia is an attitude or action that frightens or negatively labeling individuals and groups on the basis of a person's sexual orientation and gender identity such as "gay and lesbian", bisexual or transgender homosexuals. Homophobia action can also be poured in the form of words, sentences, media and way of thinking (Butar-butur, 2013). Some Indonesians still consider homosexuals, bisexuals and other sex behaviors that are incompatible with religious and cultural norms as deviant behavior. Homosexual is still considered to be distorted because sexual behavior like this belim is generally accepted and acceptable to society. Such deviations can occur due to psychological or psychiatric abnormalities, can be through social environmental factors in other words gay or homosexual diseases can be contagious, can also occur due to genetic or hereditary factors, and can be just because the individual wishes itself to try something new Which they had never felt before. Environmental factors can also cause a person to be gay because of their parents' upbringing since broken childhood "broken home", have experienced sexual harassment, has a gay majority environment and have a weak psychological side or easily affected and have trauma. Symbols or sentences are often conveyed a gay to other gay yaitutop and bottom. Top shows gays who act as men in intimate relationships, while bottom refers to gays in relationships that act as women. Silently escape the attention of the public, information technology has become part of everyday gay life in Indonesia. One of the momentum is the presence of android-based gadgets at affordable prices. Gay can download a variety of chat applications that allow each other to connect, foster friendships and establish love, either just overnight or sustainable. The slang language often used by gays is largely unlike the slang language used by people in general. The language of celebrities hang out is similar to the slang of gay and also the slang of the transvestites or transvestites (Mulyana, 2007). Through slang television entertainment is also increasingly introduced. For example, when a celebrity dialogue speaks the word, "ember" (pail) as the abbreviation of



"emang bener" (of course you're right) or "akika" which means "aku" (I or me). Another example is when Olga Syahputra as the moderator in the program, "On Line" in one of the private television station uses funky language, "hampina" for telephone and "sapos" for who. The slang is not only found on television but also in radio. The slang language is used as a social language, because it is unique, strange when heard, whose meaning can contradict the usual meaning. This slang language is not only a communication tool but also an identification tool. Gay people use this slang language to be able to identify themselves as gay. Slang language users can also be useful for growing self-existence. To be able to observe the gay can be seen from the language of the term used in everyday communication. This language is only used among their communities to keep their identity confidential. Gay is one part of homosexuality. Gay as can be explained that a man who is interested in men. In society people usually can not distinguish between gay and transvestites, but both are two different things. If gay refers to an interest in fellow men while transvestites are people who look and behave differently from what people have already constructed against them based on their biological gender. So it is not surprising that gays are often called "bencong or transvestites" (Butarbutar 2013)

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a qualitative descriptive research, as Bungin (2004) argues that qualitative research is a study directed not to test a research hypothesis, but the research is focused on extracting deep information from the subjects studied. This study is directed to reveal a gay self disclosure to family and friends about their sexual orientation. The subject of this research was a gay informant. The selection of research informants is based on the fulfillment of the requirements to become informants, namely: male sex, having same-sex sexual attraction, has revealed himself about his sexual orientation to family and friends, and 24 years old. The second requirement is to have a willingness to be a research informant. Data analysis technique used is descriptive analysis with qualitative approach. The data analysis is based on the interview result and the analysis method is done by describing the interview result. Based on the results of interviews identified the way of self-disclosure about a gay sexual self disclosure to family and friends. The selection of this descriptive technique because the purpose of the study is to explain the self disclosure of a gay about his sexual orientation. Through the selection of descriptive techniques, then the various information obtained from the interview can be described clearly and in detail.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Social penetration theory there are four stages:

- 1. Orientation:** Dika at first did not understand her condition. Dika also can not accept the difference of sexual orientation. Once he began to understand, Dika still dare not reveal the difference to anyone. Dika decides to tell her what she feels on Friendster's social media. Then Dika meets with people who have the same sexual orientation with her. Dika gets a positive response and people in social media say there's nothing wrong with her.
- 2. Exchanging Affective Exploration:** After being able to

accept her condition, Dika began trying to tell her sister, who was living at home with her in a boardinghouse, while her mother and three older siblings lived in her hometown, Bagan Batu. Initially his sister saw many books about LGBT in their boardinghouses. Her sister asked about the book and Dika said to read it. Incidentally, her sister loves to read. Then her sister often see Dika doing video call with fellow men. Dika did not cover it from her sister. In contrast to the family, to his contemporaries on campus. It was in Social Anthropology class. There is one group that presents the topic of personality. Over time, they begin to discuss homosexuality and declare it as an aberration. Feeling unacceptable, 2 friends familiar Dika who knows the true life commented. They reveal facts. Do not stay silent, he also commented homosexual is something natural and is an option.

- 3. Affective Exchange:** Dika's sister then asks why Dika video call with fellow men. Dika then tells that the man is his girlfriend. Her younger brother who had read the books on LGBT could accept Dika's condition and assume there is nothing different from Dika. But Dika can not be honest about the difference in sexual orientation to his mother and three older siblings. To his contemporaries, when the class of Anthropology, Dika collects all the courage, he reveals that he is a homosexual or gay to the entire class. They are shocked even there is a whisper. Finally they asked:

*"Why are you homosexual?"*

*"Yes, why are you heterosexual?" He asked back*

*"Because I like women,"*

*"I am also the same. Because I like men, "said Dika for sure*

- 4. Stable Exchange:** After expressing the difference of his sexual orientation, Dika has been comfortable telling her sister anything. Even her sister has become her friend. After that, unexpectedly, there was no excessive discrimination. In fact, he is more compact with a woman friend who used to be far away. It's just that there is still a friend who keeps his distance. Not a close friend indeed. But according to Dika, as long as he does not bother them and vice versa, let's leave it alone. Dika has also told her mother and three older siblings, though not directly. Dika only says if she is active in LGBT organization. But over time her mother and three older siblings know the real condition of Dika. Initially they are difficult to accept, but eventually they can accept but the mother forbade him to join the organization.

Based on the results of the interview can be seen that at the orientation stage, gays who choose to silence and cover sexual identity including informants in this study, namely Dika. He who initially did not have the courage to reveal his identity as a gay to the family, due to various considerations both negative and positive. Just as Dika chooses to delay telling her sexual orientation as a gay person to her family, especially a mother, for fear of disturbing her mother's health. This is supported by the theory put forward by Savin-Williams in Willoughby, et al quoted in the journal Maliza and Chusairi (2013) which states that the disclosure of sexual orientation to parents is marked as one of the hardest things done by gay. But to friends, Dika tends to more easily disclose the difference in sexual orientation. Based on the results of the interview can be seen that at the stage of affective exploratory

exchanges show Dika began to have the desire to express his sexual orientation as a gay to family and friends. Dika felt there was nothing wrong with her, she was the same as other people. Dika does not want her friends to discriminate against LGBT people. Dika also wants her family to know about her different sexual orientations. This is supported by the theory put forward by Savin-William and Ream in the journal Maliza and Chusairi (2013) which explains that the reason gay disclose to his parents is because of the desire to share about his life, do not want to hide again his sexual orientation, want to feel free, Wants to live honestly by no longer hiding or living in lies and being himself. At the affective exchange stage there is more relaxed and no-load interaction, in accordance with the theory of social penetration process by West and Turner (2004) which states that in exchange for affective assessment, what was previously a private area, is now a public domain, where one begins to use choice of words or phrases that are more personal. It also happened to Dika who began to feel comfortable with her sister who is one house with her and open minded. Dika also has two close friends who make her comfortable and helps her explain about homosexuals to her fellow classmates in Anthropology class. In the stable exchange stage shows that the informant Dika tried to build a personal communication system that will produce efficient communication that can be interpreted clearly and without a doubt. Like Dika who let her sister read LGBT books, showed that she was video calling with her male friend and told her mother if she joined the LGBT organization. On his friends, Dika explains in advance what it is homosexual and gives back questions about his friend's sexual orientation, to prove he is the same as them. Despite the rejection of some male friends and early rejection from Dika's mother.

## CONCLUSIONS

The informan of this research, Dika used social media, Friendster to revealed his sexual orientation for the first time and as his first stage of self-disclosure. Similar to a person with a sexual orientation in general, a gay person also goes through the stage of self-disclosure through 4 social penetration stages of orientation, an affective explanation exchange, an affective exchange, a stable exchange. The stage starts from the orientation stage, where a person in this case gay, still shut down. Then end up in a stable exchange stage, where someone already feel familiar and comfortable so willing to tell his secret to the nearest person. In this last stage, a gay is able to accept himself and tell people about his different sexual orientations. Thus it can be concluded that self disclosure can be done through four stages of social penetration. Where the last stage is a condition where a person is able to reveal information about himse If easily.

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