

Gender Identity and Cosplayer Stigmatization In Malang City

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine gender identity and the stigma experienced by cosplayers in Malang City. A gender identity that is formed through repeated actions in cosplay life. A cosplayer has a different gender between social life and life when becoming a cosplayer. Gender differences that are owned by cosplayers raise problems in the form of stigma. The stigma that emerges and attaches to cosplayers who cross gender is in the form of sexual deviance. The research method used in the research is descriptive qualitative with the resulting data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior. Data collection used is observation, interview and documentation. The result of this research is that the gender identity of cosplayers is formed through actions that display gender that is repeated in cosplay life and continuously. A cosplayer displays his gender to imitate the character or character he likes. Second, the stigma that appears in cosplayer life is due to gender differences between social life and life as a cosplayer. The existence of gender differences causes cosplayers to get the stigma of sexual deviance.

Keywords: gender identity, cosplayer, stigma

INTRODUCTION

According to [1] Japanese Popular Culture is an element that refers to modern Japanese Culture. In Japanese popular culture, there are cosplay, anime, harajuku-kei fashion style, manga, Japanese fashion, Japanese art and so on. In an ongoing and continuous stage around him, popular culture and cosplay are formed. Cosplay is part of an activity that has no other purpose to express oneself to look like a character in anime or manga. According to [2] Cosplay activities are usually carried out by groups or individuals whose aim is to imitate anime characters in terms of appearance, clothing, speaking style, and grooming. The purpose of this activity is not to appear in public and be photographed.

According to [3] Cosplay is an activity that displays various gender expressions. The appearance of gender expression begins when the cosplayers wear the costumes they wear. In this activity, cosplayers will meet other cosplayers, which this activity can create spaces for creativity and collectivity. When a cosplayer is cosplaying, there are probably two things that can happen. On the first side, a cosplayer can actualize a narrative and its meaning. On the other hand, a cosplayer

actualizes their own identity in the expression of gender in cross-dressing

According to [4], according to [5], according to [6], according to [7], according to [8] Someone who follows cosplay activities starts from the media, games, manga or anime. The existence of cosplay activities raises two things, namely negative and positive things. The positive impact of having people participating in cosplay activities is having experiences in interaction, increasing self-confidence. However, the negative impact is a waste of money. In this case, the media play a role as a source of information for Japanese culture.

In the world of cosplay, there is a cosplay activity that has its own impact on the fans. On the other hand, a cosplayer feels that there is freedom within himself to express and imitate anime characters to be displayed at the Jejepangan event. Based on the phenomenon in Malang City, a cosplayer has two genders who are displayed between their social life and their life when participating in the Jejepangan event.

The formation of identity and self-concept cannot be separated from the influence of technology and the environment. Research conducted by Ardhani, et al in 2017; Setyanto et al

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in 2018; Mulayanah in 2018; Handaningtias in 2017, regarding the formation of a cosplayer's identity and self-concept cannot be separated from environmental factors and is supported by technology. The development of information technology and the entry of western culture indirectly affect changes in people's lifestyle and behavior. One of them is becoming a cosplayer. Based on research conducted by Ranny Rastati in 2018 with the title "Media and Identity: Japanese Cultural Imperialism through Cosplay (Study of Cosplayers who do Crossdressing). The result of Rastati's research is that a cosplayer initially participated in cosplay activities starting from games, manga, or anime. The information he got started from the media, Japanese language tutors or magazines. The reason a person takes part in cosplay is because of the fun or interest in a character. The media has a role, namely as a source of information to see Japanese culture. The media not only has a positive effect, it also has a negative effect. Not a few media reports that men who participate in cosplayer activities are homosexuals.

A cosplayer in Malang City has a gender difference between his social life and his life as a cosplayer. A cosplayer has two genders who are shown according to their situation and social conditions. In everyday life, a cosplayer displays a gender that matches his gender. A male cosplayer will display a masculine gender. However, at the time of cosplay a male cosplayer does not display a masculine gender but displays a feminine gender. In this case, it can be seen that there are gender differences displayed between social life and when cosplaying. The gender differences that are displayed make a cosplayer try to cover up his identity when in social life.

The crossing of gender that occurs in a cosplayer's life causes a cosplayer to close his identity from the social environment. The hidden social identity is only to avoid stigma. However, in reality, in the world of cosplay in Malang, visitors give a stigma to a cosplayer, especially male cosplayers who cross their genders. In other words, a cosplayer whose gender is not masculine but has a feminine gender experience a stigma.

For Butler, gender is a sign of identity as male or female. Gender is seen as an expression so that something is not stable. Therefore, gender is something that is fluid and can change. Certain gender expressions cannot fully be used to define a subject's identity, he explained:

According to [9] said "There is no gender identity behind the expression of gender: That

identity is performatively constituted by the very expressions" that are said to be its gender" .

The important point in this paper is the change in gender from feminine to masculine or vice versa. The gender she displays keeps repeating itself in her life, until it finally forms a gender identity for cosplayers. However, the existence of sex and gender that are not by values and norms in society, often brings bad news in the form of stigma.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative, the resulting data is in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior.

Data Collection

According to [10] Data collection used is observation, interview and documentation. Observation is a systematic descriptive observation of events and behavior in social settings that are chosen to be thorough. When making observations, researchers experienced difficulties, because of Covid-19 which made cosplay activities unable to take place. Therefore, the researcher decided to use non-participant observation, in which the researcher was not fully involved in observing the informant.

According to [11] Interviews can simply be interpreted as a form of communication between two or more people to obtain information by asking questions based on depth interviews with specific objectives. Interviews were conducted with seven informants who defined themselves as cosplayers. All names of informants in this study are not real names to protect the identity of the informants given the discrimination experienced by cosplayers.

The analysis technique used uses the steps proposed by [12]. There are four stages, in the first stage the researcher collects data. In collecting data, researchers used observation, interviews and documentation. Second, researchers performed data reduction. At this stage, the researcher writes keywords when conducting interviews with cosplayers, with the aim of making it easier for researchers to classify data. Third, researchers performed data displays. At this stage, the researcher describes a set of information that provides the possibility of drawing conclusions. Fourth, verify and confirm conclusions, at this stage draw conclusions and set aside information that is not relevant to the researcher's study.

According to [14] The validity of the data used triangulation. Triangulation is a technique of checking the validity of data that uses something else to compare the results of the interview with the object of research. According to [14] Data triangulation can use other methods such as interviews, observation and documentation. Triangulation is used to check the truth or to enrich data. At this stage, the researcher double-checks on someone who has a close relationship with the informant such as friends and family.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the life of a cosplayer, he displays a fairly diverse gender. A cosplayer may display a gender that matches his gender. This means that if a cosplayer is male, then he displays a masculine gender, and vice versa. However, there is a cosplayer whose gender and gender are not in line, meaning that if a cosplayer is male, the gender displayed is feminine gender and vice versa with female cosplayers. The gender identity that he displays when cosplayers can create identity formation. The formation of identity is formed through a series of actions that he does repeatedly and continuously in his life. The gender it displays creates a gender identity for cosplayers. Gender traits for cosplayers are fluid. This means that gender can change at any time. Gender is not something that cannot be changed. For cosplayers, especially crossdressers, gender is a fluid thing that can change at any time.

Previous research has explained how a person could become a cosplayer, starting from the media, games, manga or anime. Having cosplay activities, a cosplayer also has two positive and negative things. For a cosplayer, the negative thing she feels is waste of money, waste of money buying cosplay knick-knacks. However, the positive impact is in the form of experiences in social interactions, increasing self-confidence for cosplayers. However, my findings show that being a cosplayer is not an easy thing. When cosplay activities are used as an arena to increase self-confidence and as a hobby, in fact, a cosplayer is attached to a stigma. A cosplayer cannot be separated from the stigma when his identity as a cosplayer is known by his social circle who is not familiar with the world of cosplay.

The findings in Malang City, the first findings of the researcher found that a cosplayer with male gender displays a gender that is the opposite between social life and life when cosplaying. In this case, a cosplayer displays a masculine gender in his social life. His appearance is like a boy in

general, but when he enters the world of cosplay, a cosplayer changes his gender. The gender that was originally masculine changed to feminine, while the efforts he did to look feminine were wearing women's clothes, wearing women's wigs (wigs), wearing make-up and even creating fake breasts. Not only changing your appearance to show your feminine gender, but also reducing your voice and softening your voice like a girl. On the other hand, male cosplayers who display a feminine gender also when walking with their feet close together, as well as when sitting. It can be seen that the effort made by male cosplayers to look feminine is by copying the gender of feminine women.

The gender identity of male cosplayers when cosplaying feminine. A male cosplayer admits that his gender identity is a feminine gender identity. The efforts she made to make herself recognized as a woman were indirect. A male cosplayer tries to cover up his identity and tries to show and convince himself that he is a woman in a male body or in other words looks feminine. In several times cosplaying, the man always displays a feminine character. Feminine character is considered a comfort for him, this is because it cannot be displayed in her social life.

The findings of the two researchers are much different from the first findings. The second finding is a female cosplayer who also displays a gender that is opposite to her gender at the time of cosplay. There are gender and gender differences that are displayed between social life and life during cosplay. In this case, female cosplayers who in their lives look as graceful and feminine as women generally become masculine when they cosplay. When cosplay, her femininity disappears to become a visible masculine side. Efforts made by female cosplayers to look masculine include wearing male haircuts, wearing male costumes and even covering her breasts with a cloth to make them look breasts less.

For female cosplayers, having a masculine gender identity is a challenge. On the other hand, the masculine gender identity he uses is to stay away from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment that is often experienced by female cosplayers when performing feminine roles. Therefore, female cosplayers choose to cross gender between their social life and their life when participating in cosplay. The masculine gender identity is formed by the existence of a series of actions performed in cosplay activities. On the other hand, female cosplayers also try to cover up

their identity as a woman and try to show that they are a man.

A cosplayer conceals his identity as a cosplayer in an attempt to avoid stigma. Stigma is attached to the activities of cosplayers. This is due to the gender displayed by cosplayers between their social life and their daily lives. In the findings of cosplayer researchers in Malang City, there is a male gender who crosses his gender between his cosplay life and his daily life. The male cosplayer act in displaying a feminine gender, he tries to change his appearance. Changes in appearance include changing the original name using a more feminine name, wearing feminine clothes such as wearing skirts, women's clothes in general. On the other hand, male cosplayers also wear wigs to make them look feminine with hairstyles like girls. Not only does his appearance change when he presents himself as feminine but, this male cosplayer also changes the way he walks and talks. This is an attempt to look "like a woman" in general.

The actions of this male cosplayer made him admit that he has two genders in his life. There are gender differences and gender changes in a short time. When becoming a cosplayer, male cosplayers only want to be recognized as "feminine" but in everyday life, he changes the gender he has displayed in the world of cosplay. He changes his gender to be masculine according to the sex he has. When in his daily life he just wants to be recognized as a "masculine" man. In this case, it can be seen that there are gender changes that take place in the lives of male cosplayers. Before male cosplayers mention masculine or feminine gender, they change their appearance first.

What female cosplayers do is very different. Gender changes also took place in her life. However, for female cosplayers, changing their gender in cosplay life is an effort to minimize sexual harassment. Sexual harassment often occurs because the costumes are worn slightly open. The costumes worn by female cosplayers sometimes have misunderstandings for visitors. Therefore, female cosplayers prefer to cover their identities as feminine women. Before female cosplayers claim to be masculine or admit that they are male, a female cosplayer changes her appearance so that she does not know that she is a woman.

Efforts made to look masculine include changing the way you walk a little more stiffly, wearing male costumes and wearing a male hairstyle wig. In fact, it is not uncommon for

female cosplayers to cover their breasts so as not to find out that they are a woman. The action she did was an attempt to make herself look like a man and look masculine. Gender differences also occur in female cosplayers. Female cosplayers separate the gender that she displays in her daily life and during cosplay. In her daily life, the gender she displays is feminine gender. This is also not much different from male cosplayers, female cosplayers do not want to be stigmatized and then excluded from their environment because sometimes their gender is not compatible with their sex.

The existence of sex and gender inconsistencies in cosplayers' lives, they often worry that their social environment will not accept it. This is because society still believes that when a person has female sex, she must be feminine, and vice versa if a person is born with male sex, he must be masculine. This dominant discourse makes cosplayers close their identities so that they can display the gender they want regardless of the sex they have. Not a few cosplayers who cross their genders do not recognize their identity. This is because they are worried about accusations that they have experienced sexual orientation disorders. In fact, this is not the case.

Gender is divided into two, namely masculine and feminine. Masculine and feminine have a close relationship with a person's sexual identity. There is a necessity that occurs in society when a person who is born female, she has to behave according to his gender, namely feminine, as well as a person who is born male, then he must be masculine. So far, there is an assumption that sex is something neutral which is not independent from human history.

According to Butler (1990), Butler sees the body as having an aspect of morality. This means that the existence of the body has an association with the values that exist in society. For Butler, that the body actually has its own space. In this case Butler refuses if a person's sex is a determinant of gender. In Butler's view, he believes that sex has no relation to a person's gender or sexual desire. Gender is a social product which ultimately becomes determinism for the subject.

Based on Butler's concept, gender identity and one's sex are not an interrelated unit. This means that it is okay if someone has a masculine gender identity and the next day their gender identity is feminine, as well as masculine female or male feminine. It is not a problem if a woman in her daily life does not display a feminine gender or

instead displays a masculine gender, as well as a man who displays a feminine gender. The mention of gender identity is formed through actions taken by someone that takes place continuously in their daily lives.

If you look at the case regarding cosplayers with Judith Butler's theory, a cosplayer who crosses their gender is not a mistake that ends up getting stigma. That is, cosplayer from Judith Butler's point of view is not an abnormality, but a freedom to express gender. However, the existing values and norms that when a person is male must be masculine and vice versa that causes a cosplayer to get stigma in his social environment. For Butler, a cosplayer is a form of freedom in expressing his gender, because gender is fluid and can change at any time and regardless of sexual orientation or gender. Therefore, using Butler's theory to explain that what cosplayers do in expressing their gender is not an abnormality that is ultimately associated with homosexuals.

On the other hand, according to Butler, gender identity can be formed through a series of actions carried out by a person continuously and taking place in his life. In this case, it can be seen that the emergence of a gender identity does not appear by itself, but rather a gender identity is formed because there are actions that are carried out repeatedly and continuously. For cosplayers in the social world, sex and gender are not separate things. However, when becoming a cosplayer, gender identity can change, but cosplayers do not change their sexual orientation, cosplayer sexual orientation is still heterosexual.

When cosplayers cross their genders, not only does their gender change but they also change their identity by changing their name. Change of name as a determinant of gender. For Butler, gender identity has nothing to do with sex or a person's sexual orientation. Therefore, it is okay if someone is female but masculine, and vice versa. In addition, gender traits are also fluid which can change at any time. According to Butler, gender identity results in a person's performativity.

A cosplayer before calling herself a "feminine or masculine" in the world of cosplay she changes her appearance in such a way. Changes starting from name, appearance, voice and so on, changes made to call herself "my identity is feminine or my identity is masculine". So, before cosplayers mention their gender identity, a cosplayer takes a series of actions so that they can admit that their identity is feminine or masculine.

For Butler, gender identity has nothing to do with sex or a person's gender. Therefore, it is fine

if you are female, but masculine, and vice versa if you are male but feminine. On the other hand, gender traits are also fluid which can change at any time. According to Butler, gender identity results from the existence of a person's performativity.

The gender identity of a cosplayer is formed through a series of actions that they perform on a daily basis. The existence of differences in gender identities displayed by a cosplayer can be seen that gender is fluid and can change at any time. However, in reality not everyone can tolerate changing gender in someone. The gender that is displayed as not according to gender often has problems. The problems that arise are stigma and discrimination. It is not uncommon for cosplayers to experience stigma in social life.

The negative assumption of a cosplayer is a social phenomenon that is considered unusual for non-anime lovers. Therefore, cosplayers often get stigma from the world outside of cosplay. Erving Goffman provides a basic definition of stigma, namely attributes that discredit a person as being "not completely" with a normal human being and usually leading to negative things. For example, it is characterized by differences in skin color (ethnicity), body size (obesity), appearance (economy), physiology (gender), which are given stigma by the general public (in Larson and Corrigan, 2008). Stigma is a form of distortion of the assessment of a community group against wrong individuals in social interactions (Elliott in Brohan, Slade, Clement and Thornicroft, 2010). It is not uncommon for a cosplayer to be alienated from their social life because they are considered an abnormal human being. For male cosplayers, the stigma of homosexuality is more often attached to him. Not a few male cosplayers are labeled as homosexuals, even though this is not the case. The existence of this incorrect stigma makes a cosplayer isolate himself from social life. When cosplayers withdraw from their social environment, it actually creates a new stigma. Cosplayers feel closed off from being in a social environment as "odd or abnormal".

The stigma that a male cosplayer accepts in the social world when he finds out that his gender and sex are not in line, he is considered to have a sexual deviation. In this case, if a cosplayer is male but displays a feminine gender, he will be labeled as sexual deviation and will be considered to be gay. Therefore, not a few of the cosplayers cover their gender identity or display a gender identity that matches their gender when in social settings. However, even though in the world of cosplayers,

cosplayers often experience stigmatization. Stigmatization in the form of sexual deviance, even a cosplayer who crosses gender has ever received unfavorable treatment in the form of "an invitation to have a relationship with the same sex".

It's not just male cosplayers who experience stigma. However, a woman who becomes a cosplayer often experiences sexual harassment. Sexual harassment obtained from visitors. Female cosplayers often feel sexual harassment, especially when they become feminine cosplayers. Therefore, female cosplayers in an effort to avoid sexual harassment use male costumes. This means that female cosplayers also have two different genders, a masculine gender and a feminine gender. Gender changes in the life of female cosplayers are often seen as a form of dissatisfaction with them. On the other hand, cosplayers who have a cosplay partner and when cosplaying play male and female roles will experience the stigma of being "lesbian" women. Not infrequently, female cosplayers are asked whether they are into the same sex. This is what makes some female cosplayers choose not to pair up or play characters with other women.

According to [15] the emergence of a stigma for cosplayers based on the existence of a gender identity attached to their bodies and the existence of gender roles that are being played. For Goffman, identity is divided into two, namely a virtual social identity which is a social identity that is formed from the characters we assume or are thinking about. The next identity, namely actual social identity, is a social identity that has been formed through proven characters in social life. When someone has a gap, both identities will experience or get stigma. In this case, the stigma that appears is the gap between the two identities experienced by cosplayers, both male cosplayers and female cosplayers. The impact of the stigma that cosplayers experience is social exclusion. This is because cosplayers who cross their genders are often seen as an abnormality.

For Goffman, why does someone get stigmatized? This is because the attributes that a person has are different from others (such as worse, weird, dangerous, weak, etc.), then it will be considered as a tarnished person. The term stigma refers to labels that have the effect of making a person worse or worse. Stigma is all forms of physical and social attributes that can reduce social identity, disqualify people from accepting their environment [16]. Goffman himself divides stigma into three types, namely

abnormalities of the body (physical inequality). This stigma refers to a person's physical problems such as lame, deaf, or mute. The second stigma is Blemishes of individual character. This stigma is linked to the damage to the character of individuals such as homosexuals, drunks, addicts and rapists. The third stigma is tribal stigma, namely stigma related to ethnicity, religion and nation.

In this case the stigma that appears or is experienced by cosplayers is classified as the stigma of blemishes of individual. A cosplayer has gender differences and there is a tendency for gender to change over time. On the other hand, gender changes between sex and sex are not in line with their own effects. The existence of gender inconsistencies between sex and gender, cosplayers are often considered homosexual or lesbian perpetrators. In reality this is not the case. On the other hand, the emergence of stigma also comes from habits that are not the same as society in general. Differences in clothing styles, characters and roles performed by cosplayers are considered abnormalities by society in general. Not a few of the cosplayers when their identities are exposed as cosplayers who cross their genders, in other words, between their gender and their unequal sex, they will get excluded from their social groups. This is because of the stigma that arises in the form of sexual deviance.

CONCLUSION

From the research entitled "Gender Identity and Cosplayer Stigmatization in Malang City" it can be concluded as follows:

1. Cosplayer's gender identity is formed through a series of actions performed by cosplayers in their lives when participating in the Jejepangan event. Identity is formed based on gender which is displayed repeatedly and continuously. The gradual repetition of gender can create a gender identity for cosplayers.
2. The stigma that appears in cosplayers is that a cosplayer who displays his gender is not in line with his sex is considered to have a sexual deviation. In this case, cosplayers have two genders that are displayed in their lives. In their social life, cosplayers display a gender that matches their sex, but when cosplay shows a gender that doesn't match their sex. Because of this, cosplayers are often stigmatized as sexual deviants.

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