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# Understanding, Voicing, and Addressing Women's Issues in a Limited Space during the New Order Era Pre-1998 Reformation

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**Abstract**

This article explains the experience of voicing women's injustices in Indonesia during the New Order before the 1998 Reformation. It begins with the chronology of the author's encounter with women's issues and feminist perspective. The State challenged these efforts during the New Order. The State challenged those in several forms, such as interrogation, terror, and threats. This article analyses women's struggles using Walby's concept of patriarchy and Young's politics of differentiation. It also explains why the failure to fulfil one form of injustice for women, namely reproductive rights in the family planning program in Indonesia, became a point of contention between women's issue activists and the State. Even though they faced challenges from the State, as long as the sense of injustice remains real, women activists will continue to work to overcome the problem.

Keywords: feminism, women's reproductive rights, New Order in Indonesia, patriarchy, politics of differentiation

## Introduction

The year 2025 marks several anniversaries for women's organisations in Indonesia. For example, *Kalyanamitra* Foundation is celebrating its 40th anniversary of supporting women; LBH APIK Association is marking 30 years of fighting for women's justice; and the Women Research Institute is celebrating 23 years of researching issues affecting women and building their capacity.

My mind wandered as if entering a time tunnel and facing the reality that I had entered a situation similar to that of the grandmothers who campaigned for women's rights during the Dutch colonial period in Indonesia. This article recounts the challenges I faced during the New Order era in the fight for women's rights.

During the New Order era in Indonesia, the state systematically restricted the political, social, and cultural space of civil society, including women's movements. In this context of centralised, authoritarian development, the critical voices of women highlighting gender inequality, sexual violence, and violations of reproductive rights were often silenced through various forms of repression ranging from censorship to interrogation and terror. In such situations, speaking out against injustice became a meaningful yet risky political act.

This article draws on the author's personal experience within the Indonesian women's movement, which grew and struggled under repressive conditions during the New Order era until the 1998 Reformation. Adopting a feminist autoethnographic approach, the article not only records the author's experiences but also interprets them as reflections of the power relations between the state, women, and their bodies. From her initial encounter with the inequality experienced by domestic workers, through to her involvement in anti-rape campaigns and reproductive rights advocacy, the author reflects profoundly on how women negotiate their space within an oppressive system.

Using the theories of patriarchy (Walby 1991) and the politics of differentiation (Young 1990), the article explains how the state frames reproductive policy not as the fulfilment of individual rights, but as a political instrument of population control. This narrative is part of the collective effort of the women's movement to document and challenge ongoing structural injustice, and is not merely a personal historical account.

## Research Methodology

This article takes a feminist autoethnographic approach, presenting the author's personal experiences as politically engaged narratives rather than mere

individual stories. This method is considered appropriate for understanding and challenging the systemic injustices faced by women under Indonesia's New Order regime. Through feminist autoethnography, the author reflects on her experiences as a women's rights activist and critically examines her role in exposing and overcoming gender-based injustices, particularly regarding reproductive rights and state control over women's bodies.

Drawing on feminist standpoint theory, this approach recognises that marginalised individuals, particularly women experiencing direct oppression, occupy a distinctive epistemic position from which to interrogate dominant power structures (Harding 2004; Smith 1999). Prioritising the body, emotions, and memory as sources of knowledge is consistent with Sarah Ahmed's (2017) assertion that feminism that feminism often begins with the feeling that something is wrong, and that such personal perceptions can evolve into political consciousness.

This autoethnographic narrative is critical and participatory, not merely descriptive. It challenges the state's erasure of dissenting voices and opinions by reaffirming memory as a form of resistance. The author's experiences of interrogation, censorship, and state surveillance are interpreted using Sylvia Walby's theories of patriarchy (1991) and Iris Marion Young's politics of differentiation (1990). This framework enables a feminist interpretation of how state policies on family planning operate as instruments of coercion, thereby reinforcing patriarchal control over women's reproductive choices while serving broader economic and political objectives.

As a feminist method, autoethnography positions the author as both subject and observer; their memories and reflections form part of the collective history of the Indonesian feminist movement. This approach is rooted in the tradition established by Ellis and Bochner (2000), which highlights the power of storytelling in capturing the intersection of the personal and the political. This enables autoethnography to be regarded as a form of activism where writing becomes an act of liberation.

By combining personal stories, shared memories, and critical insights, this approach breathes life into feminist history from the grassroots up, amplifying the voices of those silenced by authoritarian regimes. It shows that memory is not only a place of trauma, but also a powerful arena for resistance and change.

**Encountering Women's Issues and Feminism**

My first encounter with women's issues began while conducting research for my undergraduate thesis at the Faculty of Psychology at the University of Indonesia in 1983. The thesis focused on the aspirations of teenage female domestic workers in Jakarta. What started as an academic assignment to complete my studies opened my eyes to women's issues. A series of interviews with domestic workers revealed the challenging working conditions they faced. Domestic workers do not have standard working hours. Their working hours depend entirely on their employer. If they have a kind employer, their working hours will be reasonable. They will have enough time to rest after dinner, around 8 p.m. However, if their employer fails to address their situation or working conditions, they can work without any time restrictions.

Through my research, I began to realise that women working as domestic workers often do so to support their families in their home villages. However, their working hours are uncertain, and their welfare is inadequate. They expend a great deal of energy and become exhausted, yet their wages and welfare do not reflect the long hours they work every day. In fact, their working conditions can be unsafe, ranging from harsh treatment to abuse or even death. This research raised questions for me: why do women who work as domestic workers experience such problems?

It was this situation that led me to start asking myself questions about the issues women face. My desire to find out why women face such problems led me to meet several other women who also wanted answers.

These meetings developed into friendships — or, more accurately, a sisterhood — which encouraged us to establish a women's organisation in 1985 called *Kalyanamitra*. It was here that I was first introduced to feminism. My interest in feminism began when I started to become troubled by the issues women face. In an effort to understand this, I was brought together with friends who were also seeking answers to women's issues and feminism. This became the basis for all my future actions and for my perspective on understanding women's issues.

My second encounter with women's issues came when I worked with my friends at *Kalyanamitra* to raise awareness of the importance of understanding and addressing these issues. I chose to focus on raising awareness of rape as a form of violence against women. In 1989, together with my friends at *Kalyanamitra*, I

conducted secondary data research on rape incidents based on media reports.

We concluded from this research that a rape occurs every five hours in Indonesia. In 1990, we published the results of this research and launched an Anti-Rape Campaign, inviting all civil society and women's organisations in Indonesia and ASEAN to support it. I assumed that, by encouraging people to take action against rape, they would also be willing to address other women's issues. However, this was far from the truth.

Rather than supporting the campaign, many parties argued that if women were raped, it was because of mistakes made by the female victims themselves. Almost all of them said it was because the victims were wearing provocative clothing or exposing parts of their bodies that should be covered, such as their breasts. Others said it was because women went out at night and walked in quiet places. While encouraging various parties to collaborate in reducing women's issues is challenging, the anti-rape campaign has united women's activists and organisations in Indonesia and ASEAN. This has enabled them to develop effective and appropriate procedures and mechanisms to address rape.

Iris Young quotes an interesting statement about rape by Simone Weil. *"Rape is a terrible caricature of love from which consent is absent. After rape, oppression is the second horror of human existence. It is a terrible caricature of obedience"* (Young 1990).

Rape is a terrible caricature of love without consent. After rape, oppression is the second horror of human existence. Oppression is a terrible caricature of obedience.

Referring to Weil's statement quoted by Young, it is important for everyone to recognise that rape is not an act of love, but an act of coercion committed under the guise of love.

Furthermore, as Young states in Heldke and O'Connor (2004), violence and rape are the most obvious forms of oppression (Heldke & O'Connor 2004). Violence is an attack that does not necessarily require a motive but is intended to cause harm, humiliation, or destruction. Rape is a violation of a woman's right to her own body. For this reason, we must all oppose rape and put a stop to it.

My awareness of women's issues first emerged through my research on domestic workers, and I was introduced to feminism through *Kalyanamitra*. Subsequently, campaigning against rape alongside *Kalyanamitra* strengthened my determination to address women's issues and strengthen their position. From then on, my work with *Kalyanamitra* focused more intensively on exploring and voicing the issues experienced by women in Indonesia's development process. In 1991, I started paying serious attention to Indonesia's Family Planning (KB) programme.

Having witnessed the programme's implementation first-hand in a village in Central Java, where one of my brothers-in-law was the village head, I encouraged *Kalyanamitra* and Wardah Hafidz to research how it was implemented in villages in Central and West Java. The data that emerged deeply troubled me. I will never forget it; I can still clearly hear the words:

> "The implementation of the family planning programme is the responsibility of us all, especially the Indonesian Armed Forces. For Indonesia to become a just and prosperous society, this programme must be implemented" (*Kalyanamitra*, 1992).

An Indonesian military officer made this statement during the implementation of the Safari KB programme in *Kalyanamitra's* research locations in Central Java and West Java.

I focused on the implementation of the KB programme from 1991 to 1997. This was a fairly long period, driven by a desire to understand and address the issues faced by women and offer solutions.

**The Marginalisation of the Fulfilment of Women's Reproductive Rights**

From the history of the women's movement, especially in the United States, I learned that the socialisation of the importance of birth control dates back to 1840. For several centuries, women's movements in the Western world have fought for the development of contraceptives so that women could decide for themselves when to exercise their reproductive rights. Nevertheless, the use of contraceptives in the Western world has always been linked to political and economic needs (Gordon 1994).

A statement made by a military officer in the *Kalyanamitra* research in 1991 shows that the use of contraception in Indonesia was not intended to serve women's personal reproductive rights. As demonstrated by the implementation of the KB programme, contraceptives were utilised for political purposes.

Within the development programme, the KB programme was seen as a tool for the state to control

population growth. The state considered itself entitled to determine its citizens' personal choices, including their use of contraception. This contrasts with the Western world, where the use of contraception by citizens is not controlled.

It was at this point that I realised why my interest in understanding women's issues in this regard — namely, the fulfilment of their reproductive rights to choose contraceptive methods (known as KB in Indonesia) — was considered disruptive to development programmes and, therefore, to the government. This was perceived as a challenge to the state's authority. My work began to attract the attention of policymakers and the government when *Kalyanamitra's* research findings on the implementation of the KB programme were published in a paper and circulated at an international conference in Washington, D.C., in 1991 (Hafidz et al. 1991).

At the first meeting, Bappenas asked me to 'account for' the paper based on *Kalyanamitra's* research. It was suggested that we had discredited Indonesia in the international community. I responded that if I had done so, I would have lied. I pointed out that our statements were based on research data and the implementation of KB programmes in two research areas. We demonstrated that coercive practices were used during implementation, specifically during the Safari KB initiative. Women were picked up by the military and forced to receive family planning services. They were not given a choice of contraceptive device; the only option was the contraceptive implant produced by Nordplant, a pharmaceutical company. This implant provides long-term protection against pregnancy for up to five years. The contraceptive implant consists of six needles that are inserted under the skin. Each needle contains hormones that prevent pregnancy. This implant was one of the items included in foreign debt granted for development programmes in Indonesia during the New Order era.

On a second occasion, my friends and I, whose papers had been distributed at a conference in Washington, D.C., were summoned by the Cabinet Secretary at the time, Moerdiono. We were asked to be at his office at 9 a.m., where we were called in one by one and asked to 'account for' our papers and what we had said at the conference.

When it was my turn (I was the last one), it was 7 p.m. The minister asked me questions similar to those asked by the Bappenas officials. 'Why did you discredit Indonesia in the international community?' I answered as I had told the Bappenas officials. This question was repeated several times, as if to confirm my answer, and I gave the same answer each time. It seemed that he wanted to test the consistency of my answers. This went on until 9 p.m., with all those who had been summoned waiting in another room while one of us was questioned. I do not know whether this 'saved' me, but the questioning stopped when the minister noticed my wet shirt. He asked, 'Do you have a baby at the moment?' I replied, 'Yes, sir.' 'In that case, that will suffice.' We all returned to our respective homes.

Some time later, my friends from YLBHI told me that everyone who had been summoned by the Minister of State Secretary that day had been banned from travelling abroad for a year — except Sita Aripurnami. This remains a mystery to me to this day. Perhaps it was because the question was whether or not I had a baby and was still breastfeeding. Maybe that was what distinguished the treatment I received. Maybe.

Thirdly, after receiving two summonses from the government, I received a third summons to attend the TNI Headquarters in Cilangkap. I went with Asmara Nababan, then the director of INFID, and Abdul Hakim G. Nusantara, then the chairman of YLBHI. They said that I should only answer the questions asked. They asked my permission to explain why my paper had been distributed at the conference in Washington, D.C.

In Cilangkap, Harsudiono Hartas and Agum Gumelar were waiting for me. Harsudiono Hartas was the Chairperson of the ABRI Faction in the Indonesian People's Consultative Assembly at that time, and Agum Gumelar was the Assistant Intelligence Officer of the Jayakarta Military Command. Once again, I was asked to 'account for' the paper that had been distributed at the conference in Washington, D.C. My colleagues and I were asked why we had stated that the KB programme in Indonesia was coercive and violated human rights.

I clearly remember Harsudiono Hartas telling me that there was nothing wrong with coercion. He likened it to teaching our children to brush their teeth for the first time, saying that we have to force them. Coercion for the greater good is acceptable, he said. Meanwhile, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Agum Gumelar persistently asked me why I was disparaging the government's programme to the international community. I consistently replied that the paper was not directed at the KB programme in Indonesia. Rather, it was about how the programme is politically controlled by the state and used to coerce women.

Once again, I felt 'saved' by the fact that I was still breastfeeding my second child. At 7 p.m., Harsudiono Hartas noticed that my top was wet around my chest. He asked me if I was breastfeeding. When I replied that I was, the meeting was closed and declared over.

I realised that women's reproductive rights were not considered part of their individual rights, but rather a means for the authorities to control them. I realised that what I was 'fighting for' was considered 'disruptive' to the implementation of the government's development programme.

However, being summoned three times by the authorities prompted me to decide to learn more about the coercive practices used by the state to fulfil women's rights. I began to ask myself a disturbing question: What is the relationship between power and the use of contraceptives? How does the state take over women's reproductive rights?

**Understanding, Voicing, and Addressing Women's Issues**

Driven by a desire to better understand women's issues, I became more deeply involved in voicing them.

Working to strengthen women's rights has made me realise that the issues Indonesian women face in relation to reproductive rights are not due to a lack of access to contraceptives. The state, in this case, the New Order government, provided these tools to women. However, the state's policy on the provision of contraceptives or KB programmes did not meet welfare criteria or respect individual women. Instead, the KB policy served the state's political and economic objectives. For the state, women's reproductive rights were a variable in development that could be disregarded at will for political and economic purposes.

On a personal level, KB is a method created to help women decide when to have children. It enables them to use their reproductive functions when they want to conceive, give birth, and care for children. Therefore, KB is a means of controlling pregnancy and childbirth. In English, the term 'KB' is more commonly used to refer to birth control. However, examining the state's response to research findings on the implementation of KB in various regions of Indonesia suggests that it can be used to control population growth. In this context, the state views family planning as a form of population control.

When defined as birth control, KB is the fulfillment of an individual's right to manage their reproductive health and rights. However, when it is defined as population control, it becomes the state's right to control the population by intervening in women's reproductive functions on a collective basis. The above research findings show that the state has taken over women's individual reproductive rights and now has the right to carry out population control. In my view, the state's hijacking of women's reproductive rights constitutes a violation of their individual rights. Women become KB acceptors not to fulfil their reproductive rights and interests.

In my opinion, KB should be an option that enables women to choose when and how to use KB methods, in order to fulfil their reproductive rights in a healthy and informed manner. During the New Order era, the majority of women in Indonesia became KB users not because they had made a conscious choice to fulfil their reproductive needs, but because the state required them to do so. This is where the problem lies. KB should empower women, not control them.

In order to fulfil women's reproductive rights, proper and accurate information about the advantages and disadvantages of each contraceptive method must be provided. What side effects will women experience when using certain KB methods? I am fortunate to have sufficient access to information to help me choose the best contraceptive method for me. Contraception helps me, as a woman, to obtain my reproductive rights and health.

For women who choose to fulfil their maternal functions, motherhood is one way to fulfil their reproductive rights. A lack of accurate and adequate information on reproductive rights was a dominant issue during the New Order era. This is why the Women's Health Forum was established, comprising various organisations and women's rights activists. Coordinated by the Indonesian Consumers Foundation, the forum has published an Indonesian adaptation of the 1992 edition of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, written by the Boston Women's Health Book Collective. The Indonesian adaptation was written by activists from the Women's Health Forum, including myself and several friends from *Kalyanamitra*. This book has become a valuable resource for people outside Jakarta, helping to raise awareness of the importance of maintaining reproductive health and fulfilling reproductive rights. This includes breastfeeding.

During the New Order era, breastfeeding was more challenging for affluent working women. There were no lactation rooms or breast milk storage facilities at that time, so there was a lot of tension between the desire

to breastfeed and the necessity to work in the public sphere. Women from less affluent backgrounds were more fortunate, as they could breastfeed while working in the fields or selling goods at the market. However, when women from these social classes had to work outside their villages, for example, as domestic workers in cities or abroad, they had to stop breastfeeding in order to earn money for their families. *Kalyanamitra*, a member of the Women's Health Forum, campaigns for the construction of lactation rooms and breast milk storage facilities so that women from all social classes can breastfeed. In addition, stored breast milk can be used to feed babies who, for some reason, cannot obtain breast milk from their biological mothers.

In light of this, there appear to be two key issues regarding reproductive rights in Indonesia. The first is patriarchy, and the second is class. As Walby mentions, patriarchy is a system of structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women. Furthermore, Walby states that the state is the most important factor in the existence of conditions of subordination for women (Walby 1991). This appears to be the case in Indonesia. How does the state perpetuate these patriarchal conditions? Walby asserts that patriarchal relationships can be understood through the concept of class: there are two class systems, one based on patriarchy and the other on capitalism.

These two systems are not mutually exclusive, as evidenced by the fact that KB practices in Indonesia are shaped and reinforced within a capitalist society based on patriarchy. This means that women as housewives constitute one class, while men as husbands constitute another. Consequently, women are required to engage in economic relationships within a social inequality that differs from that experienced by their husbands. It is in this process that the nature of the family, KB policies, and women's reproductive rights emerge. The patriarchal influence of the state is evident throughout this process, extending from the family to individual women.

At this point, it is important to highlight access to power within the existing stratification system. KB regulations in Indonesia are certainly more negotiable for women with greater access to economic and political resources than for those lower down the social hierarchy. This is why low-income women, who make up the largest segment of Indonesia's population, have no choice but to participate in the state-run KB programme.

**Working in a Limited Space in the Pre-1998 Reformation Era**

This experience shows that the struggle did not end during the New Order era, but continued in a different form after the Reformation. My efforts to understand and raise awareness of women's issues also made me realise the extent of the misunderstandings surrounding them. This gap stems from the difference in interests between decision-makers and those fighting for women's welfare. This often results in various forms of control and restriction, and even attacks on women's movements.

In my opinion, these differences in interests are rooted in ignorance and a refusal to understand the essence of women's rights. Some time after the organisation received three summonses from the authorities, the publication of the Mitra Media newsletter by *Kalyanamitra* was banned. Interestingly, this ban coincided with the banning of Tempo magazine. In 1993, Mitra Media was banned for publishing an article entitled "The Destruction of the Women's Movement in Indonesia", which explained how women's roles had been domesticated during the New Order era (Suryakusuma 1996). This once again shows that if an opinion different from the dominant one is voiced, it becomes legitimate to control and immediately ban its publication. At this point, the strategy adopted to raise women's issues was to disseminate ideas through discussion forums and training sessions with civil society organisations in areas outside Jakarta, including Sumatra and West Nusa Tenggara.

However, it appears that attacks continued during the post-Reformation era, even after the New Order regime ended. In 2006, the office of my organisation, *Kalyanamitra*, the Women Research Institute, was broken into, with all the organisation's computer hard drives taken and money from the petty cash scattered on the floor. It was as if the burglars wanted to convey the message that they did not want the money, but would take all our data. Interestingly, the burglars sent a threatening fax to several friends who already had children, and me. They said that if we did not stop voicing our demands for justice for women's rights, they would harm our children. They even mentioned the names of our children's schools. This was to show that they knew where our children spent most of their time. The letter was written as if it came from an Islamic mass organisation. While the form of terror was different, the message remained the same: 'If you women activists

dare to have opinions that differ from those of the authorities, we will continue to harass you.'

The period of terror I mentioned above occurred again after the Reformation of 1998. However, I have included it here for comparison purposes. Whenever women activists voice opinions about women's issues that differ from the dominant view, those in power will resort to harassment, summonses, interrogations, threats, and terror in an attempt to silence them.

My own experiences, and those of many other female activists, especially during the New Order era, reflect Young's critique of traditional concepts of justice and her emphasis on recognising differences to achieve more equitable justice. Young proposes examining the relationship between the oppression of women and the oppressive social structures that sustain it. She states that "justice is not a matter of individual distribution, but rather how to understand the dominant and oppressive social structures" (Young 1990).

The most interesting aspect of Young's thinking for me is the "participatory challenge to the state" (Ferguson & Nagel 2009), and her recommendation for a politics of differentiation that recognises and respects differences in opinion among social groups. She argues that different groups have different needs and experiences, and that justice must take this into account.

She quotes Simone Weil, who agrees that oppression is a terrible caricature of human obedience. Her thinking stems from her understanding that the term 'oppression' refers to a set of concepts and conditions which she divides into five categories: exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence (Young 1990). These categories are not mutually exclusive, and an oppressed group may experience more than one form of oppression simultaneously. In summary, the five faces of oppression, according to Young, are as follows:

*Oppression*. Oppression occurs when people reduce the potential of others to become fully human. In other words, oppression occurs when people treat others inhumanely. This can mean treating them inhumanely. However, it can also mean depriving them of language, education, and other opportunities that could help them to reach their full potential, both mentally and physically.

*Exploitation*. In capitalist societies, the "rich" usually exploit the "poor" for their hard work. This creates a system that perpetuates class differences, making the rich richer and the poor poorer.

*Marginalisation*: This is the act of demeaning or limiting a group of people, reducing their social status, or pushing them to the margins of society. Overall, it is a process of exclusion. In some ways, marginalisation is worse than exploitation because society has decided that it cannot or will not utilise these people, even for labour. People are generally marginalised based on race.

*Powerlessness*. Those who are powerless are dominated by the ruling class and are in a position to receive orders, rarely having the right to give them. Some fundamental injustices associated with powerlessness include barriers to developing self-capacity, a lack of power in decision-making, and exposure to disrespectful treatment due to a lower status (Young 1990).

Heldke & O'Connor link Young's concept of powerlessness to what Freire refers to as a culture of silence and conscientisation, or awareness (Heldke and O'Connor 2004). Powerlessness tends to silence those who are oppressed. In order to speak up, those who are silenced must undergo a process of becoming aware through education, literacy, and self-reflection.

*Culture of Silence*. This powerlessness creates what Freire calls a culture of silence. According to Freire, the oppressed become so powerless that they do not even talk about the oppression they experience. By the time they reach this stage, they are forbidden to talk about the injustices taking place. The oppressed are silenced. They are voiceless and powerless.

*Conscientisation*. The only way to combat powerlessness and the culture of silence is to raise awareness. Throughout history, oppressed people have gained a better understanding of themselves and others through education, literacy, and self-reflection. By using their voices and gaining a critical perspective on their oppressors, the oppressed can free themselves from indoctrination and (ultimately) liberate themselves from oppression. Freire refers to this process of acquiring critical awareness as conscientisation.

The dominant culture of those in power also prevents the oppressed from speaking out and is used to control those under their authority. Young refers to this as cultural imperialism (Young 1990).

*Cultural Imperialism*. It involves making the ruling class's culture the norm. Powerful groups in society control how people interpret and communicate.

*Violence*. Perhaps the most obvious form of oppression is violence. Some groups live with the constant fear of random and unprovoked attacks on themselves or their property. These attacks do not always require a motive and are intended to cause damage, humiliation, or destruction.

In my opinion, this is what happens with the activities of women activists in society. There should be education and socialisation about the importance of respecting the body and the right to control one's health and reproductive rights. Family planning is a fundamental right of women. The state does not have the right to interfere with women's individual rights to control their health and reproductive rights.

Furthermore, violence against women, including rape, is not a form of love. Rather, it is an attack on a woman's body without her permission or consent. Therefore, it must be stopped.

In my opinion, Young's concept above encapsulates the experiences of female activists who strive to raise awareness of the injustices women face at the hands of those in power. I experienced this first-hand when I was summoned three times by those in power. Efforts to demonstrate that women's reproductive rights in Indonesia were taken over by the state during a certain period of time as a means of population control show the existence of oppression and coercion. Therefore, it shows women's inability to reject these conditions. The state either cannot or will not accept differing opinions on social issues. Rather than engaging in dialogue, those in power dominate through one-way communication practices and the initiation of violence.

Interestingly, women's activists and organisations consistently find ways to raise awareness of women's issues, ensuring that the injustices they face receive attention from all parties. As a feminist, I agree with Sarah Ahmed's argument in her book *Living a Feminist Life* that we all become feminists because we are moved by something (Ahmed 2017). This could be a sense of injustice that makes us realise that something is wrong. Presumably, as long as women's rights activists, whether women or men, feel that women are experiencing injustice, the issue will always be raised until a way to overcome it is found.

Even though our freedom of movement is limited by repressive actions such as interrogations, terror, and threats, I believe that the injustice experienced by women is even greater. This feeling fuels me and my fellow women's rights activists, encouraging us to continue working until justice is achieved for women and humanity. At the very least, it encourages various parties in society to collaborate to achieve justice for all.

## Conclusion

Drawing on her experience of voicing injustices against women during the New Order era, the author illustrates how the state exploited public policies, including the Family Planning (KB) programme, to control women's bodies and lives. Through its apparatus of power and development ideology, the state positioned women as objects of political and economic interests, rather than as subjects with the right to determine their own destiny.

Adopting a feminist autoethnographic approach, the article demonstrates that personal experiences are inextricably linked to social structures and offer valuable insights into the dynamics of oppression. Through recounting experiences of interrogation, terror, and silencing, the author reveals the presence of structural violence in the daily lives of women activists and demonstrates that resistance continues despite the extremely limited space for action.

As Iris Marion Young states, justice demands the recognition of differences, not the standardisation of experiences. Sarah Ahmed reminds us that feminism emerged from a sense that something was wrong. As long as women continue to experience injustice in their personal lives, families, and state policies, their voices will continue to demand to be heard and taken into account.

Despite repeated repression and threats, the author believes that the courage to speak out and network remains a major strength in the women's movement. This story serves as a reminder that the struggle for gender justice is ongoing. Through memory, narrative, and solidarity, the history of marginalised women will continue to be rewritten to portray them as agents of change rather than victims.

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