

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Child marriage is a human rights violation that refers to any marriage involving persons under the age of 18 as a form of gender-based violence that robs children of childhood. Child marriage also disrupts education and drives vulnerability to violence, discrimination, and abuse (Kidman, 2017). Child marriage still occurs in many countries such as Afghanistan, India, Yemen, Afghanistan, Nepal, and Ethiopia, Kenya, and Nigeria. The highest number occurs in Kenya where, 92% of girls are married before the age of 18 (UNICEF, 2022). In Yemen, there are 32% of girls married under 18 years (UNICEF, 2022). In Nigeria, 72% of girls are married before the age of 18 (UNICEF, 2020). In Nepal, there is a 38.4 per cent rate for girls under the age of 18 (UNFPA Nepal, 2019). Meanwhile, in Afghanistan, APEC estimates that 28 percent of Afghan women before they reach the age of 18 (UN News, 2021).

There are several positive impacts of child marriage namely will protect them from rape, illicit sex, unexpected pregnancies, and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV and AIDS (Nour, 2009). On the other hand, the negative impact is that girls who marry young lose their youth. Once married, young girls have little or no access to education or economic possibilities, increasing the likelihood that they and their children will live in poverty. Child brides are also more likely to experience severe and life-threatening pregnancy problems, develop HIV, and experience domestic and sexual violence (Amnesty International, 2015). Child marriage is a destructive practice that robs girls of the right to choose when, whom to marry, and what kind of family they want to raise. It also denies women's rights to education, good health, and a secure life.

Child marriage is motivated by three factors, namely poverty, the urge to strengthen social relations, and the belief that marriage provides a sense of security. It occurs more commonly in poor communities. To ensure the financial stability of their daughters and to reduce the financial burden that daughters place on the family, parents are faced with two economic incentives. Child marriage is largely the result of extreme financial need. Girls eventually leave their homes because their education, clothing and food costs are expensive. Dowry is given to the bride's family at the time of marriage. The greater the dowry and the quicker the financial responsibility of raising a daughter for the parents disappears. In addition to this, according to parents who marry their children at a young age can improve their social status and form social relations across ethnic groups or clans by marrying off their daughters to "good" families (Nour, 2009).

The factors put a child at risk of child marriage, such as poverty, due to the perception that marriage will provide 'protection', family honor, social norms, customary or religious laws that justify the practice, inadequate legislative frameworks, and the circumstances of countries such as the absence of a civil registration system, thus causing the rise of child marriages that are carried out throughout the world (Hosseini, 2021). Therefore, it is important to have advocacy from individuals or groups in overcoming child marriage such as Stephanie Sinclair.

Stephanie Sinclair is known for having unique access to some of the most sensitive gender and human rights issues around the world. She has documented the defining conflicts of the last decade with fearless tenacity. Her widely publicized images of the occupation of Iraq and the war in Afghanistan dispute any characterization of violence in anything but human terms. Although she has covered the dramatic events of the war, much of Ms. Sinclair's most attractive works confronts the daily

brutality young girls around the world face (IWMF, n.d.-b). It is hoped that the photos she takes can influence in changes of policy (National Geographic, 2013).

The continuing capstone of Ms. Stephanie Sinclair's 15-year series, *Too Young to Wed*, explores the deeply troubling practices of forced and child marriage as they emerge in cultures around the world today. The series has won numerous global awards, including three World Press Photo awards and various prestigious exhibitions including the United Nations in 2012 and 2014 (Alessia Glaviano, 2013). Other projects of Stephanie Sinclair have also received numerous accolades, including the 2008 CARE International Award for Humanitarian Reporting; Olivier Rebbot Award from the Overseas Press Club (2009) for her essay, "A Cutting Tradition: Inside An Indonesian Female Circumcision Celebration"; another World Press Photo award for its coverage of the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon; and the Pulitzer Prize (2000) for her work documenting systemic failures in the US aviation industry. Photos of Ms. Sinclair are regularly published worldwide in leading outlets such as National Geographic and The New York Times Magazine (ICP, n.d.).

The root of the initiative for the formation of the *Too Young to Wed* organization was in 2003 when the founder of this organization, Stephanie Sinclair, came to Herat, Afghanistan, where the founder was a visual journalist working on a story about girls and women who set themselves on fire. At that time, Stephanie Sinclair discovered a disturbing pattern among burn patients where most of them were forced into marriage as children by their families. After Stephanie Sinclair found out that child marriage was commonplace at the international level, the founder dedicated the next fifteen years of her life to document this practice in hopes of bringing about a change (Almond, 2017). *Too Young to Wed* was founded on 11 October 2012 to coincide with the first international girls'

day. Too Young to Wed is a Non-Profit Organization based in Peekskill New York (Too Young to Wed, n.d.). In this case, Stephanie Sinclair carries out transnational advocacy through organizations and photography which is disseminated in various countries.

Outside of photography, Ms. Sinclair has brought Too Young to Wed into a non-profit organization whose mission is to empower girls and end child marriage globally (Too Young to Wed, n.d.). As the Founding Executive Director of Too Young to Wed, Ms. Sinclair has sought to use the power of visual storytelling to provide visual evidence of the human rights challenges faced by girls and women around the world. This organization amplifies the voices of courageous girls and women to generate attention, passion, and resources and inspire the global community to act to end child marriage. However, Sinclair was not content with simply drawing attention to this matter. Too Young to Wed also turns impactful advocacy into action on the ground through partnerships with international and local NGOs and by supporting initiatives in the communities where the girls in the story live (Stephanie Sinclair Studio, n.d.). Therefore, with the interesting things from some of the activities carried out by Stephanie Sinclair, the author wants to do further research regarding the advocacy process carried out by Stephanie Sinclair in overcoming the problem of child marriage where it is hoped that it can be emulated and adopted by groups or individuals who participate in handling child marriage cases. This research will focus on the discussion on Stephanie Sinclair as an individual who is an important actor in the study of international relations, the focus on individuals needs to be done to show that individuals can play a major role in the study of international relations (transnationalism) because so far there is an assumption that the most important relation actor is country.

## **1.2 Research Question**

"How is the transnational advocacy carried out by Stephanie Sinclair in overcoming child marriage?"

## **1.3 Purpose of Research**

The purpose of this study is to find out about the process advocacy by Stephanie Sinclair in overcoming child marriage.

## **1.4 Theoretical Framework**

To answer this research question, the author uses the concept of Advocacy, Transnationalism, and Transnationalism Advocacy Networks (TANs). These concepts are used to explain Stephanie Sinclair's advocacy process in overcoming child marriage.

### **1. Advocacy**

According to Nur Azizah in her book entitled "*Advokasi Kuota Perempuan di Indonesia*", advocacy is an effort to improve or change public policy to suit the wishes or interests of those who insist on these changes. The word advocacy comes from the English word 'to advocate' which can mean 'to defend' (defense cases in court - to defend), promote or suggest 'to promote', trying to create something new - that has never existed (to create), or it can also mean 'to carry out "change" in an organized and systematic manner (to change)'. Thus, the main goal of advocacy is the occurrence of changes in public policy (Azizah, 2013).

According to Laswell, the policy process can be divided into four stages, namely agenda setting, policy formulation and legitimation, implementation, and evaluation (the stages of the policy process in this model). Advocacy is a process in which there are several activities aimed at influencing decision-making. Advocacy is the pursuit of influencing outcomes including public policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic,

and social systems and institutions that directly affect people's current lives (Azizah, 2013).

The strategy to improve or change public policy to be in accordance with the will and interests that push for a change to occur, Stephanie Sinclair takes several ways, namely:

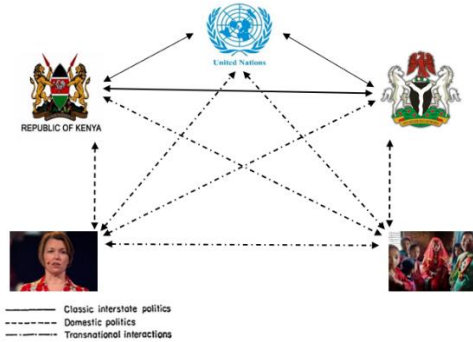
- a. Conducting photo exhibitions of his work in various countries such as the United States, Switzerland, France, and Denmark. The photos are stories of child brides from Nepal, India, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Yemen, Afghanistan, and even the United States.
- b. Creating several videos and articles in mass media such as National Geography, The New York Times, and so on. In this mass media, Stephanie provides various information to the public so that people can be educated about the dangers of child marriage(Pulitzer Center, 2011a). Apart from this, Stephanie also makes videos in the form of short films such as Nepal: A Fragile State, Child Bride Mother: Guatemala, Child Bride Mother: Nigeria, and so on. These films were made so that the international community knows about the dangers of child marriage which are rife (Too Young to Wed, n.d.).
- c. Exercising influence in making government policies such as in Kenya, namely by bringing Samburu Kenya's five daughters namely Monicah, Eunice, Modestar, Rosilla, and Nachaki attended the Nairobi Summit to tell stories of her past when she experienced child marriage to get support from the country and various countries around the world(UNFPA, 2020). In Nigeria, namely by bringing the two daughters to this country namely Hauwa and Ya Kaka to meet the United States Senate and UN officials to increase support and strength in overcoming child marriage in that country (Jacewicz, 2018). In Afghanistan, namely collaborating with several local organizations such as

the Afghan Women Network (AWN), and the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA)(Too Young to Wed, n.d.). The local organization carried out a campaign on Human Rights Day to demand women's rights to pursue education and work, protesting the terrible food crisis that led to an increase in forced marriages and child marriages under the Taliban rule to increase support in overcoming child marriage in the country (RAWA, 2021). In Yemen, Sinclair cooperates with an international organization named Solidarios Sin Fronteras with the organization's team in Yemen in overcome child marriage in that country with educational programs and necessities of life(Too Young to Wed, 2018).

## **2. Transnationalism**

Transnationalism is an interaction involving non-governmental actors, individuals, or organizations. Thus, transnational interaction can involve the government, but not only the government, non-government actors can also play an important role. Transnational interaction is the movement of tangible or intangible objects across national borders, and at least one actor is not from a government or intergovernmental organization. Transnational relations can increase people's sensitivity to one another, thereby changing intergovernmental relations. Individual actors or organizations are somewhat autonomous in that they can control substantial resources and participate in political relations with other actors that cross national lines (Nye & Keohane, 1971).

**Figure 1. 1 Transnational interaction and interstate politics**



The additional line drawn in Figure 2 shows what transnational interaction means. For each interaction represented by these lines at least one of the actors is not a government or an intergovernmental organization. According to J. David Singer, there are two ways in which individuals and organizations in society can play a role in world politics, namely:

- 1) They may participate as members of a coalition that controls or influences their government.
- 2) They can play a direct role vis-a-vis a foreign government or foreign society and thereby bypass their government.

In this case, according to Nye and Keohane, only the second type of behavior is transnational (Nye & Keohane, 1971).



Based on the figure above, it can be explained that there are several steps of transnational advocacy carried out by Sinclair:

1. The first step, on the horizontal line, shows that Stephanie Sinclair carried out transnational advocacy by providing child marriage information to the public.

In this case, Stephanie Sinclair provides information to the public by making videos in the form of education, short films, and writings in several mass media such as The New York Times, National Geographic, etc. stories of child brides from Nepal, India, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Yemen, Afghanistan, the United States to various countries. The exhibition was held in several countries such as France (at the Grande Arche de la Defense, Paris), Denmark (Copenhagen), United Nations Headquarters New York, and United Nations Geneva (Palais des Nations).

2. The second step, on the vertical line, shows that Stephanie Sinclair carried out transnational advocacy by influencing government policy making, such as in Kenya, Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Yemen.

In this regard, there are several transnational advocacy activities carried out by Stephanie Sinclair, such as:

- a) Transnational advocacy in Nigeria

In March 2018, Too Young to Wed brought two young Boko Haram survivors, Hauwa and Ya Kaka, to share stories of the trauma they experienced after being arrested by Boko Haram in Nigeria in 2014. On this occasion, the two told stories in front of 32 members of the US Congress and UN officials.

They urged the US to apply pressure to help free thousands of girls and boys kidnapped by militant groups (Jacewicz, 2018). As a result, bipartisan resolutions condemning Boko Haram and calling for increased resources to end the conflict and support survivors were introduced in the House and Senate in Washington DC. Their visit was covered by world-class media such as PBS Newshour, National Geographic, NPR, Reuters, The Washington Post, Now This News, and Amy Poehler's Smart Girls educate hundreds of millions of people globally. The Too Young also supports Hauwa and Ya Kaka's education to Wed scholarship (Too Young to Wed, n.d.).

In this case, it can be said that Stephanie Sinclair's transnational advocacy can be done because it was able to influence the Nigerian government by seeking donors to support it by asking the US to be able to put pressure on helping free the thousands of girls and boys whom the militant group kidnaped, the pressure The US endorsed a bipartisan resolution condemning Boko Haram and calling for increased resources to end the conflict and support survivors of child marriage.

b) Transnational advocacy in Kenya

Stephanie Sinclair has been helping Kenya since 2014 by engaging decision-makers in better protecting girls. She facilitated several delegates from Kenya, including Monicah, Eunice, Modestar, Rosilla, and Nachaki, who were victims of child marriage. Samburu, the recipient of the Too Young to Wed scholarship, attended the Nairobi Summit at ICPD25 to address urgent

human rights and mental health issues (UNFPA, 2020). The Nairobi Summit was held in November 2019 and was created by UNFPA and the governments of Kenya and Denmark. This event aims to reduce maternal and child mortality, unmet family planning needs, and eliminate violence and harmful practices against women and girls, such as child marriage and female circumcision. (Sihombing, 2019). The Kenya government made 17 commitments to address this problem, one of which was to eliminate female genital mutilation (FGM) in Kenya by 2022, faster than the global target of 2030. With the support of UNFPA, the government has made progress on this commitment through a multi-stakeholder approach, including training more than 4,000 law enforcement officials and community leaders on FGM prevention (NCPD, 2021).

Therefore, Stephanie Sinclair's advocacy against the Kenya government can be done due to the activities and participation of the Kenya government as the host country in the event in collaboration with UNFPA and Denmark. The Nairobi Summit discussed how to overcome some harmful practices for girls such as child marriage.

c) Transnational advocacy in Afghanistan

Too Young to Wed seeks to influence public policy in the Taliban to suit their wishes or interests (women's rights in Afghanistan) which urge changes to occur in Afghanistan, by collaborating with local organizations namely the Afghan Women Network (AWN), the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA) with several

programs brought by Too Young to Wed(Too Young to Wed, n.d.). In addition, the local organization launched a campaign on Human Rights Day to demand women's rights to pursue education and work, protesting the dire food crisis that led to an increase in forced marriages and child marriages under the Taliban rule(RAWA, 2021). The Taliban has issued a decree banning forced marriages in Afghanistan, saying women should not be considered "property" and must consent to marriage. The decree was announced by reclusive Taliban leader Hibatullah Akhunzada, who is believed to be in Kandahar. It states that both women and men must be equal and no one can force a woman to marry by force or pressure(Aljazeera, 2021). However, until now there has been no certainty from the Taliban regarding some women's rights related to this matter (Coren & Yeung, 2021). Therefore, it can be said that the advocacy carried out by Stephanie Sinclair has not been successful, due to the difficulty in influencing the policies of the Afghan government under the leadership of the Taliban.

d) Transnational advocacy in Yemen

Stephanie Sinclair is collaborating with Solidarios Sin Fronteras to influence policy in Yemen, which focuses on overcoming humanitarian crises such as child marriage(Solidarios Sin Fronteras, n.d.). Stephanie Sinclair together with Too Young to Wed made the basis that education and the necessities of life are the only way to stop child marriage in various countries, especially in Yemen(Too Young to Wed, 2018). The

Yemeni government co-sponsored a resolution to make child marriage a violation of human rights punishable under international law in 2015(Harlan, 2015). The Yemeni government has not taken firm action in its policies, such as not passing an effective civil agreement to curb child marriage. On 11 February 2009, the DPR agreed to set the minimum age for marriage at 17 years, but the Sharia Council rejected the attempt. In March 2010, Parliament re-drafted the bill, but the Sharia Legislative Committee rejected it again. Twelve years later, in 2022, there is still no minimum age for marriage in Yemen. This shows that Yemen is a country that is having difficulty changing its policies due to its use of the Sharia system by Islamic law(The Borgen Project, n.d.). Therefore, it can be said that Stephanie Sinclair has not been successful in influencing policies in the country, due to the uncertain political situation, moreover, there are threats from rebels in the form of banning NGOs from participating in overcoming the humanitarian crisis, especially child marriage in Yemen(Solidarios Sin Fronteras, 2022).

3. The third step, on the diagonal line, shows that Stephanie Sinclair carried out transnational advocacy by influencing UN policy making.

There have been several transnational advocacies conducted by Stephanie Sinclair in influencing UN policymaking, as follows.

- a. Following the photo exhibition taken by Stephanie Sinclair held at the United Nations on 11 October 2012, the UN Commission on 7 March 2013 held a special UN session on the Status of Women (CSW) whose discussion focused on child marriage, namely the

problems it causes and ways to prevent it (UN Women, 2013b). In this case, there are several recommendations, namely increasing education for girls, carrying out marketing campaigns, and social awareness of the dangers of violence against women in the form of child marriage(UN Economic and Social Council, 2013).

- b. On 18 December 2013, there were several resolutions in the report (A/RES/68/148), which contained decisions to hold panel discussions at sessions 68 and 69 regarding child marriage and forced marriage(General Assembly, 2014).
- c. On 18 December 2014, in the report (A/RES/69/156) there were several resolutions, namely regarding calls, encouragement, and pressure on countries, governments, the international community, and UN entities to end child marriage in various parts of the world(General Assembly, 2015).
- d. In 2018, Stephanie Sinclair brought two Nigerian girls, namely Hauwa and Ya Kaka, to the United States to meet with the United States Senate and UN officials. In this meeting, they told about the trauma they experienced in sexual violence by Boko Haram. The aim of the meeting they want the United States and UN officials provide support and pressure to help free thousands of girls. and the boy kidnapped by the militant group(Jacewicz, 2018).

Stephanie Sinclair is an individual actor who plays an important role in transnational relations to generate sensitivity between communities. She has participated in several exhibitions by displaying her

photographs at the UN Headquarters and influencing the United States and UN officials. This suggests that Sinclair's advocacy is transnational, as she is an individual actor who becomes transnational through her interactions.

#### **4. Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANs)**

Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANs) is a communication arrangement in which members are primarily motivated by similar ideas or values, and in this case, they exchange information and services voluntarily, reciprocally, and horizontally (Keck & Sikkink, 1999). These transnational advocacy networks can involve various actors from various circles, such as NGOs, intellectuals, mass media, social movements, politicians, and usually from several officials, both outside the country and within the country. Given this, it makes a difference with transnational corporations forming a network because of business similarities. The Transnational Advocacy Network usually does advocacy on issues of human rights, women's rights, and the environment (Azizah, 2013).

Efforts to influence international policies and agendas can be done by:

- Conducting campaigns all over the world, conducting research by collecting data or evidence related to discrimination against women, violence against women, advocating for troubled women, petitions, and lobbying against the government. Build consensus and form networks by holding women's movement meetings.
- Preparing documents or studies on policies, and preparing legal drafting agreements, conventions, resolutions, and protocols.

- Influencing conference participants, sometimes even participating in selecting/determining who will be conference participants.
- Bridging communication between grassroots women's movements, and national and international gender machines by forming a caucus.

Keck and Sikkink classify this advocacy strategy into four parts, namely information politics, symbolic politics, leverage politics, and accountability politics. First, the information politics strategy is a strategy that is carried out by collecting and providing information to the public and dramatizing facts through victim statements and so on to attract attention. Second, the symbolic politics strategy is a strategy that is carried out by holding ceremonies, commemorating events, or special days related to the issues being fought for so that people pay attention to these issues. Third, the strategy of leverage politics is a strategy carried out to leverage or link the issues being fought for with issues of state prestige, the smooth flow of foreign aid or foreign debt, or the smooth running of trade. Fourth, the accountability politics strategy is a strategy to remind the government to be accountable for its policies according to agreed values. In this case, the Transnational Advocacy Network is very effective in disseminating information (transmitting information), introducing new norms (invoking norms), and moving the location of political events (shifting political venues) (Keck & Sikkink, 1999).

Hereafter, the relation to the information politics strategy is that Stephanie Sinclair carried out this strategy by gathering and providing information to the public and dramatizing facts through victims' statements and so on to attract



attention. In this case, Stephanie Sinclair collected some of the photographs she took from several countries she visited, and these photos are a collection of photos of girls who experience child marriage. These photos can be found on Too Young to Wed's official website and the photos taken have been exhibited at several events in various countries(Alessia Glaviano, 2013).

In addition, Stephanie provides information for the public through several mass media such as National Geography, The New York Times, and so on. On this platform, Stephanie provides various information to the public so that people can be educated about the dangers of child marriage. Apart from this, Stephanie also makes videos in the form of short films such as Nepal: A Fragile State, Child Bride Mother: Guatemala, Child Bride Mother: Nigeria, and so on. These films were made so that the international community knows about the dangers of child marriage which are rife (Too Young to Wed, n.d.). From these several things, it can be said that Stephanie uses the information politics strategy in advocating for the community.

After that, dramatize facts through victim statements and so on to attract attention. In this case, Stephanie Sinclair dramatized the facts with victim statements through interviews conducted by Stephanie, thereby attracting the local community's attention on the international stage, which in turn received a lot of support in dealing with child marriages in various countries. With these several things, it can be said that Stephanie carries out transnational advocacy networks.

The connection with the Transnational Advocacy Networks is that Stephanie Sinclair involves various actors from various backgrounds, such as NGOs, intellectuals, mass media, and social movements. This is following what Stephanie Sinclair has done, namely involving NGO actors such as Too Young to Wed an organization she founded that collaborates with local organizations in various countries such as; Nigeria: in collaboration with the Intercommunity Development Social Organization (IDS), in Afghanistan: in collaboration with the Open Society Foundation, Afghan Women Network (AWN), the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA), Khadijah Project, LEARN Afghanistan, in Kenya: Samburu Girls Foundation and main sponsor of World of Women with managing partner I\_Rep Foundation, in Yemen: in cooperation with Solidarity Sin Fronteras (Too Young to Wed, n.d.). Through the mass media, Stephanie Sinclair writes and distributes her photographs from various countries on the New York Times, BBC, and National Geography websites (Too Young to Wed, n.d.).

**Actors:**

In this study, the authors used two actors, namely individual actor Stephanie Sinclair and group actor Too Young to Wed. In this case, the individual actor is Stephanie Sinclair and the group actor are Too Young to Wed.

## **1.5 Hypothesis**

Stephanie Sinclair's transnational advocacy in overcoming child marriage is conducted by:

1. Providing information on child marriage to the public by publishing videos, writing, creating websites, and photo exhibitions of her work.
2. Influencing government policymaking in Kenya, Nigeria, Afghanistan, and Yemen regarding child protection.
3. Influencing UN policymaking on child marriage.

## **1.6 Research Method**

The method that will be used in this research is qualitative. In this qualitative research method, researchers will collect data through secondary data, which is obtained by finding sources of information that support research such as books related to the author's research, official journals of government reports, internet-based research, websites, reports, document-based research, and other supporting data that may be relevant or have a relationship with this author's research. The research process will be carried out systematically, starting with managing data, researching, and analyzing the sources that have been collected so that it will produce a conclusion from the formulation of the problem that the author examines. Considering that the method used by the author is descriptive qualitative, the research obtained is only sourced from the literature or literature studies that can support the research.

## **1.7 Writing Systematic**

The writing of this thesis is arranged systematically based on the rules that apply in scientific writing and is divided into chapters, with discussions in their own but interconnected areas. The aim is to make it easier to interpret the topic of the problem, thus this thesis is divided into three chapters.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will describe the reasons for choosing the title, research objectives, background of the problem, research question, theoretical framework, hypotheses, research methods, and writing systematics.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **STEPHANIE SINCLAIR ADVOCACY FOR OVERCOMING CHILD MARRIAGE**

This chapter will describe how Stephanie Sinclair's advocacy for overcoming child marriage, then followed by Stephanie Sinclair's biography and awards for carried out advocacy and the implementation of the hypothesis

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **CONCLUSION**

This chapter concludes the discussion from the previous chapters.