

# Policies and Practices for Promoting Multicultural Awareness of Indigenous Early Childhood Education in Indonesia

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## Policies and Practices for Promoting Multicultural Awareness of Indigenous Early Childhood Education in Indonesia

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Unlike other countries where indigenous people constitute the minority groups, in Indonesia majority of the population (about 95%) are natives (pribumi). There are over 300 ethnic groups in Indonesia who live side by side and in some cases form blurred inter-ethnic boundaries. In addition, Indonesia has unique indigenous Early Childhood Education model that is different from other countries. Indigenous Early Childhood Education in Indonesia is stated in the national laws and government regulations local contents curriculum in education. Local contents defined as educational programs, substances and media transfers, which are related with the natural, social and cultural environments and the needs of regional development being taught to students. The objective of this paper is to describe the implementation Indigenous Early Childhood Education for promoting the physical, intellectual, social, emotional growth of young children aged under three years in Indonesia. The paper also intends to explain the barriers encountered and recommend remedial measures.

Key words : developmental psychology, early childhood education, integral health service, multicultural awareness, policy analysis

### Introduction

Early age is an important period for a child development. In fact, early childhood development starts from prenatal in which brain as the centre of

intelligence develops rapidly. After birth, demyelination of brain cells have occurs and form a complex interwoven or embassy that enables a child to think logically and rationally at later life. Studies on neurology and others revealed that the size of a child brain at the age of 2 has reached 75% and at the age of 5 has reached 90% of the size of an adult brain (Santrock, 2002). Moreover, the sensory organs such as the sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch and balance organs also grow rapidly. Little by little children could absorb information from

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their environment through sensory organs and processes it using their brain.

Appropriate early childhood education is crucial for the growth and development of the child (Bredekamp, 1987). The longitudinal studies in the field of developmental psychology have established that conditions experienced by the child during early life influence later behavior in adulthood. For example, children who live in an intense interaction environment both at home and in playgroup or kindergarten settings learn to listen and pronounce words correctly than those who do not. At the time of entering school, the nature of behavior developed can be positive or negative depending on the environment where the children are brought up (Olsen & Maertin, 1999; Saltaris et al., 2004; Karr-Morse & Wiley, 1997; Young, 2002).

The convergence theory by William Stern (Semiawan, 2002) acknowledges both genetic and environmental influences the multiple abilities development of the child. The other conception on child development reveals an upgraded conventional thinking on early childhood education in which the tabularasa paradigm dominates. This paradigm is informed by Piaget's cognitive developmental theory and Vygotsky contextual theory, Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory, Smilansky play activities theory, and Bronfenbrenner theory subscribe ecological perspective of children socialization. The ecological perspective focuses on the interrelation between human nature and the environment. In the ecological

perspective, four basic structure notions which include the micro, meso, exo and macro system are conceived (Bronfenbrenner, 1997). Microsystem is the family and the relationship between family members. When the child grows and starts to enter school, he or she is in a mesosystem. Exosystem is a setting where a child does not participate actively but is exposed to various influential systems which include parents and other diverse community environment. Macrosystem is about the culture, lifestyle and the community where the child grows up. All of these systems affect each other and impact on the child development. This perspective is in line with the notion that all the components of the system influence nurturance and holistic education of the children (Berns, 1997).

The current paradigm in early childhood education emphasizes on the importance of nurturing by all shared environment conceived to influence the growth and development of a child as a plural, unique and purposeful individual. In line with Maslow's hierarchical needs theory (1978, in Shaver, 1993), the process of child development is influenced by the need to fulfill a range including primary needs. It includes food, clothing, and housing; as well as affection, attention, security, and respect for the child to experience opportunities for self actualization which in turn triggers the needs to develop to the fullest potential. Fulfilling the needs of this development mostly depends on how the environment interacts with the

children. The various interacting cycles between the environment and the individual child provides the affection and the opportunity to actualize according to the prevailing standards of developmental in Developmentally Appropriate Practice (Horowitz, Darling-Hammond, & Bransford, 2005).

In the seminar "*Early Children in Education Multicultural Perspectives: Multicultural Approach in Improving the Quality of Early Childhood Education*", the <sup>5</sup> Director General of Non-formal Education, Ministry of National Education, Hamid Muhammad (2011) commented that early childhood education has a very important role in the effort to prepare optimal child development. As the base for learning, early childhood education must be able to anticipate the children's need of education. In <sup>9</sup> recognition of the importance of early childhood, the government has developed and enacted established various policies and strategies policies for early childhood education direct accomplishment of equitable, the qualified manpower for meeting the relevant requirements and needs of the community. The primary purpose of the government is to ensure availability and accessibility of affordable early childhood services for all levels of society. Furthermore, the government also attempts to ensure that each child in the country gets early childhood services as a ground to prepare them for next higher levels of education.

Hamid stated that the regulation for early childhood education in Indonesia aims to develop the children's intelligence

and potential creativity extensively and to prepare children's enrollment on the next levels of education. To achieve the aims, early childhood development should set up through an integrative holistic approach of curriculum. Early childhood development is not emphasized only on the educational aspect, but also includes aspects on nutrition, health, parenting, and child protection services. Since Indonesia consists of multiethnic tribes, religions, and cultures, policy in early childhood development requires the internalization of cultural knowledge and perception into the process of parenting and child protection services. Further, the author described the definite vision of multicultural children is very important to ensure forming children's character, of whom are more tolerant and have confidence for a superior and dignified nation. His <sup>2</sup> statement emphasised on the policies of Directorate General for Formal and Non Formal Education, Ministry of Indonesia National Education where their first mission is to develop equitable early childhood education, based on quality and local potential.

Meanwhile in the same seminar Wimbari (2011), from the Faculty of Psychology Gadjah Mada University, stated that the development of pluralistic cultural education in early childhood education level needs to develop urgently. The sentiment of self-awareness had already started when the child is still young. As the child grows older, he or she joins in a larger social circle. It is, then, the right time to come in contact



with more diverse cultural education than when they were younger, because this is a critical periods where the basic values of humanity are given/being learned. She stated that the pluralistic culture of education can be given to children in various ways, one example is through artistry. Folklore is one of the media powerful enough to enforce values in the family and society.

Therefore, early childhood education is a phase that cannot be ignored since it determines the development and success of the children in psychological aspects. As knowledge and science developed, the recognition of the importance of early childhood education services tends to increase Indonesia's multi-ethnic condition and policies issued by the Directorate General Formal and Non Formal Education, Ministry of Indonesia National Education to make early childhood education accessible to public, based on quality and local potential, is quite a challenge for the nation and the Indonesian government.

## Research Objectives and Questions

Increased public awareness of the importance of early childhood education, parents, business, and the number of elementary schools that require prospective students to go through kindergarten education has prompted the emergence and development of early childhood education service providers, such as TPA, playgroups, kindergartens and other unit equals to

early childhood education. According to Directorate General of Non Formal Education, there were 56,544 registered institutions, which consists of 523 childcare or garden nursery, 20,143 playgroups, and 35,827 early childhood post institutions (ECE Directorate, 2007 in Fidesrinur, 2008). The type of non-formal education was growing up because of the support of the governments and non-governmental organizations. Most of these agencies were spearheaded by the mother community (PKK), integrated health center posts (posyandu), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and religious institutions (Fidesrinur, 2008). The growing ECE institutions indicated Indonesian parents' increased attention and responsibility towards their children's education at the early stage. However, the government should regulate, monitor and evaluate these institutions to achieve the quality of education provided. Indonesians should be aware of the extent of local multi-cultural wealth which supports or inhibits the growth and development of children. The government should support people to acknowledge the ECE programs and institutions, either formal or informal education. The education itself should regulate the way people require. Government should develop education system that is rooted to the local circumstances.

This paper described how Indonesian government has developed indigenous ECE with multicultural awareness for very young children (0 - 3 years) in accordance with public opinion. A sustainable indigenous ECE programs

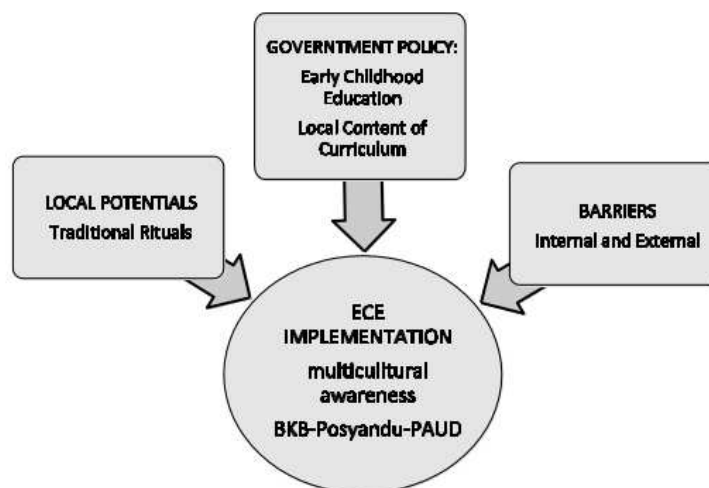


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

supports children's growth and development. Thus, the government policy is very important, indicating the urgency of the programs. This paper will discuss the government policy that supports indigenous development of ECE in Indonesia and how the implementation of these policies. In discussing the implementation of the government policy, it requires to understand the significance of local traditions and traditions. The government also has to consider how the pattern of population interactions might stimulate or inhibit the implementation of early childhood education programs. By analyzing the existing situation, this paper will discuss how effective indigenous ECE programs should develop in Indonesia.

### Reserach Method

To answer the research questions above, this article explores related

literature followed by interviews and observations with experts in the field. Policy analysis is being done through literature study and analitical content of the Indonesian government law. This analysis was employed to provide insight of the research topic. Meanwhile, to see how these policies are being implemented, field study using observation and interview was conducted in three different tribes by Betawi, Kampung Naga and Baduy (Kaneke) in order to understand the community life and interaction pattern being used in these specific ethnics as a representation of other ethnics in Indonesia. Data collection methods are meant to capture the psychological and social meanings and ordinary activities of people in naturally occurring settings. The observation guidance sheet is being used describes their daily activities accordance with the early childhood education and development. The interview guidance sheet assists when questioning informants'

knowledge on ECE government policies and implementations in their villages. At first, the informants were the head of these three villages, who were well known the activities of the community. The participants were asked to identify other informant who represent the community, using chain sampling, consists of fathers, mothers and local educators. The interview guidance consisted of questions about informants' knowledge on ECE government policies and implementations in their villages. Interviews were taped and transcribed for further analysis. Transcripts were processed to see the similarities and the difference between each informants to see specific patterns of ECE in each villages.

### ECE Policies Analysis

To build and develop early childhood education, various policies have been issued by the Indonesian government. Generally, several regulatory systems are connected to ECE. Primarily, concerning ECE itself and the local content issued by Ministry of National Education. Moreover, the Ministry of Health issued regulation about a family planning activity that are resultant family services for under five years children (*Bina Keluarga Balita* or BKB) and integrated health center post (*Posyandu*). BKB and Posyandu are likely to support the ECE operations in several areas and became BKB-Posyandu-PAUD models, although ECE also can

operate independently.

Various requirements concerning early childhood education are contained in Law Nr. 20/2003 on National Education System, particularly the requirements relating to all level of education, from Early Childhood Education to higher education. Part VII of the Early Childhood Education Article 28 specified that (1) early childhood education is held prior to basic education, (2) early childhood education can be organized through formal education, non formal, and / or informal education. (3) the form of formal education are public kindergarten or *taman kanak-kanak* (TK), Islamic kindergarten or *raudhatul athfal* (RA), and other comparable forms, (4) early childhood education in the line form of non-formal educational are play group and garden nursery, or other equivalent forms. (5) early childhood education in the form of informal education is family education or environmental education. Further stated, the requirements regarding early childhood education are more specific in the government regulation.

Stated from the National Education Law Nr. 20/2003 Article 28 Paragraph 1, that early childhood education in Indonesia is prior to basic education, where we have concluded the span of early childhood in this country is aged 0 - 6 years old. Early childhood education is a structural endeavor, intended for children given as early as possible through the provision of educational stimulation to support their psychical and spiritual growth and development



for further education in formal, non formal and informal ways. Early childhood education is a form of education that focuses on providing the basis towards children's further growth. The function of early childhood is to develop all aspects of child development, including physical development (fine and gross motor coordination), intellectual (academic intelligence, creativity, emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence), socio-emotional (attitude and behavior and religion), cognitive, language-communication, self-reliance and personal health in accordance with their uniqueness and stages of development.

Indonesian Government also approved National Regulation Nr. 19 / 2005 on National Education Standard. The importance of local content in children education emphasized on this regulation, starting from elementary school. The Ministry of National Education regulates the local content of Ministry Regulation Nr 22 / 2006 on the Content of Education Standard. The local content can be derived from traditions and ancient values in those areas. These regulations stated the important of local content in national curriculum, although they have also showed the importance of the local knowledge in national education as a whole.

Addition to the early childhood regulation, the government also concerned in improving the children's welfare in every aspects and stated it in several other regulations, such as the National Regulation Nr. 10 / 1992 on Population Development and Family Welfare

Development, the National Regulation Nr. 23 / 2002 on Child Protection, National Regulation No. 23 / 1992 on Health, and the Government Regulation No 21 of 1994 on the Implementation of Family Welfare Development. These regulations enforce the cooperation between government departments, resulting in the form that involves the Under Five Years Children Family Community in the Integrated Health Center Post (BKB-Posyandu), working together with the Early Childhood Education (PAUD) encompassing BKB-Posyandu-PAUD programs.

Posyandu is a basic health activities organized from, by and for people assisted by health workers. Therefore, Posyandu is a form of self support activities of public health under the responsibility of the head of the village. Posyandu was founded through a joint declaration between the Indonesian Minister of Home Affairs, the Minister of Health, the Head of the National Family Planning Coordination Board (BKKBN), community leaders and Fostering Family Welfare (PKK), launched at the year 1986. The existence of legitimacy the Posyandu is reinforced by Circular Letter of the Minister of Home Affairs and Regional Autonomy, dated June 13, 2001. Posyandu activities are very different from early childhood activities. Posyandu is more directed towards improving the nutrition and the health of the children, specifically under five years old and ECE is more directed to children's intellectual, feelings, beliefs, and social learning process.



However, it does not mean that posyandu cannot support early childhood development. There are 5 - 6 existing activities in Posyandu services each month focusing on children development, which is the Maternal and Child Health care services (pregnant women services, mothers post-partum care, breastfeeding mothers services, and babies as well as toddlers services), family planning services, immunizations, nutrition with weighting infants program (using five tables for registration, weighing, recording, counseling and nutrition assistance package). During its development in Indonesian decentralization period, posyandu also developed a children playground activities or Bina Keluarga Balita (BKB). Children had time to play, whilst mothers waited and discussed the nine facts of the early child care development and the early detection on the children's under five years old growth and development. The nine facts consist of the pregnancy treatment, childbirth and post-partum, children and families nutrition, children health care, care for unhealthy children, cleanliness and health, house, accidents prevention at home, attractive games, supervised games, and set in rules with explanations to the children. Early detection on the children's under five years old by gross movement training, fine movement training, developing observation, developing active speaking, socialization development, and enhancing self-reliance and discipline. Therefore, the position of posyandu during the regional autonomy period is as a health

care provider that also served as a children playground and distribution information services for mothers. But the main responsibility of posyandu main is in health sector rather than education.

### **Ethnic Tradition and Local Potential**

According to the <sup>2</sup>Directorate General for Formal and Non Formal Education Indonesia policy, their first mission is to develop early childhood education equitably, based on local potential and quality. To meet the mission, Indonesia has the potential of local cultural diversity. <sup>2</sup>There is a specific culture associated with the children aged less than three years, including the traditional ceremony for pregnant mother, rituals for the newborn baby, the slinging tradition, traditional food, traditional games and arts, traditional tales and art performance. Each has important significance to the development of children in their tribes.

#### ***Traditional Ceremony of Pregnant Mother***

There are various traditional ceremonies specifically, for pregnant women in Indonesia, which usually appears in the form of pregnant bath ritual or *mandi hamil*. Not all women who get pregnant the first time must undergo this bath ritual. It is said that those who should undergo this ritual are people whose ancestors had done it for generations.

In pregnant bathing ceremony, the expected mother may in fact have this obligation, but not for the due to a newborn baby, depends on his/her father's status in the society and consequently the mother must undergo it as well. Negligent may allegedly caused the mother or one of her close relatives 'seclusion'. As a result of the 'seclusion', it may decelerate the birth process. In recent, many young mothers carry out this ceremony in a very simple form without obligation, but because of the fear. The main purpose of these ceremonies is to ward off evil spirits which may interfere with pregnancy. This kind of ceremonies is varied amid one region to another, but generally can be divided into certain specific periods, which are a period of 3-4 months or 7 months of pregnancy and special natural events.

Period of 3-5 months pregnancy are being carried out to endow peace and respect for the mother in undergoing her new duty, over and above an expression of joy when realizing the meaning of the presence of a new life in the mother's belly and readiness for the family in preparing further stimulation. This ceremony is also usually being carried out to avoid a miscarriage, especially during the first pregnancy. As an example: *Ngaladak Bunting* by the Dayak tribe, *Ngupati* by the Java tribe, *Upacara Bahu* by Aceh tribes, and others. *Ngaladak Bunting* ceremony is being held at the married couple's bedroom, three months after pregnancy. *Ngupati* is a celebration event after 4

months pregnancy, and are usually to invite neighbors and relatives for prayers for mother and baby safety. *Upacara Bahu* in Aceh was first performed when the pregnancy has reached 4-5 months, when parents in law or *maktuan* make a special package of food in a container called *idang* or *kating*, and gave it to a daughter through nearby *kawon* (relatives) or *jiran* (neighbors). The ceremony is usually not as large as the 7 months ceremonies.

Baths rituals done during the 7 month pregnancy is a critical period which the family prays for the salvation of the baby, drive away evil spirits, give peace to the mother, and is the beginning for the preparation for the life of the new born baby later on. This ceremony is larger than the 4 months pregnancy ceremony, where usually involve with tribal elders and also invite the shaman who helps the delivery process. The rituals consist of taking a walk into a certain place, prayers and asking parents and traditional elders for blessing, baths or *siraman* (squirting water from seven sources), preparing seven kind of flowers, changing clothes seven times, serving seven types of food and others. Apparatus being used is an important variable depending on the local custom, including the traditional house models, fences, dagger or *keris*, dishes offerings and others. Examples of this ritual are *Tingkepan / Mitoni* for Javanese, *Mandi Bunting* for Malay Sanggau in West Kalimantan, *Tian Mandaring* (or *Bapagar Mayang*) in South Kalimantan, *Molonthale*

(*Raba Puru*) in Gorontalo, *Mapassili* by Bugis Bone in Sulawesi, and so on. Acehnese conduct the *Upacara Bahu* again, as a continuation of the *Upacara Bahu* at of 4-5 months ceremony, but with a larger scale inviting tribal elders and shamans of birth or *mablien*, so that the shamans can regularly visit the mother until the birth process completed. Some tribes believe that they could see signs of the birth from this ceremony (for instance it could be a smooth birth) or the character of the baby. Some tribes, such as Bugis Bone in Mapassili, believe that by scrambling and grabbing the ornament ritual being thrown could pass on the blessings to the other mothers who are expecting pregnancy.

Special natural events, such as bathing during lunar eclipse, apparently intended to provide a bond between the fetuses with the natural surroundings. For those whom believe in spirits, the event is also intended to drive away evil spirits that would hamper the pregnancy and babies in the womb. Such as eclipse Sundanese bathing in Buah Batu, and Bandung.

The existence of older or original cultural layers with all its religious elements is acculturated, in which the religious element influence far more than cultural elements. For example, Banjar community is known as a strong Islam believer, but nonetheless most of Banjar people still held on the old belief that the spirits could interfere with their life. Therefore, every traditional ceremony in Banjar life cycle carried out in Islamic way, but still growing

without leaving the old traditional elements. Bathing ceremony is still ongoing, especially in rural areas that still hold tradition strictly in daily life. Meanwhile, people in urban areas left most of the traditional ceremonies since their belief of the ceremony being unworthy. Even if they do, it combines with modern elements. Both in traditional ceremonies and in the implementation of the ceremony, now focuses on the practical elements rather than miraculous elements. For people who still practice traditional ritual, are mainly related to pregnancy and birth without any prohibition, where their traditional ceremonies are always held in a very simple form of ceremony merely undergoing their obligations

#### ***Rituals Tradition for New Born to 3 Years***

Rituals for pregnant women then continued with rituals which are directly related to the baby. This ritual involves the birth ceremony, name initiation, introduction to nature environment, religious rites, gender rituals, and others. Not all tribes in Indonesia carry out those various rituals, because the ritual does not exist in their tradition or there was a change due to modernization. Birth delivery nowadays is generally conducted by midwives or doctors to ensure more safety, so traditional shamans are not involved anymore. However, various rituals after the first treatment generally are still performed.

Traditionally, the birth ceremony is led by a shaman who also assists the



delivery process of the baby. When the mother gives birth, he or she would be welcomed by the shaman, who will bind and cut his umbilical cord. Certain tribes, such as Aceh have a number of particular amount and form of umbilical cord bonds, 7 knots for boys and 5 binds for girls. The umbilical cord is usually cut with a knife made from bamboo or *sembilu*. The Shaman then gives the traditional ingredients for the mother for enabling the baby to relieve the pain and recover wounds besides bathing the baby. In some tribes that live in the waters territory, such as Bajou in Sulawesi and Dayak in Kalimantan, the shaman or *sando* traditionally do the water birth by putting the newborn into the river water. Shaman would bathe the baby with various kinds of perfumes. The bathed baby will be given back to the parents to be prayed, for instance a prayer (*adzan* or *iqamah*) for Muslims. Shamans plants the placenta cord in the yard. In Aceh, for example, the *mablien* plants the placenta in a pot, puts flowers and fragrances on it, and then planting it in the yard in front of the house. In Bali, in *Jatakrama Samskara* ceremony, the placenta is put coconut shell called *kendil*. The *kendil* is then buried in the grave in front of the house. In Java, *brokohan* ceremony is conducted by giving offerings plates of *dhawet*, Java sugar, coconut, and various flowers.

Baby's parents also often have to perform certain restrictions after the birth of their child. In Aceh, this

abstinence (self restraint) is called *du dapu* or *masa madeung* which lasts for 44 days after birth, where the mother must always stay in the room or cannot walk alone and go out, do not drink too much water, prohibited to eat spicy food and variety of food without putting anything except food and dried small fish. In Java, there are certain foods that are taboo, such as chili, coconut oil vegetables, eggs, fresh fish and salted egg during the *Sepasaran* ceremony which held on the fifth day after birth after sunset. When the restricted time ends, the elder or shaman will bath them. Celebration is usually done by giving certain foods to the people living nearby.

The baby's name initiation is also being given in certain traditional rituals. In Aceh, the name initiation is performed on the seventh day after birth with *peucicap* ceremony, smearing honey on the baby's lips and cutting a small amount of the baby's hair which is known as *menyangke rambut budak*. In Java, the name initiation for the newborn baby is called *selapanan* is held on the 35th day after birth. In Kalimantan, the *Dayak Kanayatan* tribe performs the *batatah* ceremony three on seventh day after birth and is preceded by a bathing process of the baby. If the ceremony is performed on the third day after birth, the ceremony must be followed by slaughtering a chicken for salvation. When the ceremony is held on the seventh day, then they slaughter a pig for the feast and rewarding those who helped the delivery. Afterwards there



are also rituals to introduce the baby with the surrounding environment. For those live in territorial waters such as rivers, lakes, beaches, and initiation to the water life called *upacara turun mandi* is performed. On the other hand, those who live in the land, valleys or mountains initiation ceremony to the living ground are called *upacara turun tanah* and are generally performed when the infant is aged 7 months or at a much earlier age.

The goal of the *turun mandi* rituals is to provide a prayer for infants and mothers' survival, as well as to accept a life from waters. The ceremony is being taken by various tribes, such as Padang people living near by Batang Arau River, Pangean in Riau, Dayak in Kalimantan, Bajou in Sulawesi, and others. Basically, this ritual is performed by bathing the baby with the water of the stream, lake or sometimes nourished salty water. Bathing can also be carried out with the bath water materials such as gold rings, coins, stone bidder, flowers, and others. Infants are given certain decoration on the face as in Riau. In some areas *turun mandi* tradition is followed by cutting a few strands of hair similar to what is done in Padang. Babies tongue was also being trickled with a variety of food such as white rice, salt, sugar, chili, and others. The purpose of the *turun mandi* tradition is to make the baby acquaintance with living in the world that filled with various taste of state/condition, such as bitter, sweet, salty and spicy. It is expected that it will educate the baby unconsciously understand various flavors

of life, hence the baby can accept and respond wisely when is grown up during adulthood.

The *turun tanah* rituals is being carried out by various tribes in Indonesia, such as Aceh, Sundanese, Javanese (*tedhak sithen* ceremony), Madura (*sakere kene* ceremony), Sulawesi (*poponaung* ceremony), and others. The key point of this event is to introduce the baby to the ground, by setting the baby's feet on the ground or putting the baby to sleep on the ground. Not only that in Kampung Naga, the babies even have to taste the soil (earth) given by *dukun* at the age of two months. This ceremony can also be combined with bathing the baby (as in *poponaung*) or sprinkling the baby with water from leaves (such as in Kampung Naga). Children are introduced to various environmental stimuli such as taste (honey in Aceh, soil in Kampung Naga), sound (music when descending the stairs, cracking coconuts in Aceh), and taking a journey (going down the stairs in Aceh, Sulawesi and Sunda, horseback riding on the Javanese). In these events, the infants are introduced to their own village people who are allowed in taking turns by holding the babies or cut a small string of hair (the tribe of Aceh Tamiang). When initiating the baby to the ground, there are various rituals that are often considered as a sign of the baby's future life. In Aceh, for example when without much trouble the baby carried down the stairs to symbolize easiness in finding fortune. At the Javanese ceremony *tedhak sithen*, the baby is put inside a

bamboo cage where he/she has to choose the type of toy he/she likes which describes the preferences of his life, while at the ceremony *sakere kene* in Madura, the objects that will be chosen are placed on a tray.

Muslims prefer *aqiqah* as a ritual performed on children. The event is done by cutting the baby's hair, giving him a good name and slaughtering a livestock. The ceremony is performed in multiplied seven days or months. According to Islamic belief, a lot of benefits would be obtained by undergoing *aqiqah*, including liberating a child from being pawned, being able to protect and defend his/her parent in the afterlife, prevent the child from a bad life and destruction, as debt payments of the parents to their children, expression of joy for preserving Islam and the emergence of the future children whose later life will expand to the people of Islam, strengthening friendship among members of the community by welcoming the arrival of a newborn child, the source of social security and eliminate poverty from the community, releasing the baby from the Satan's lure in the afterworld.

In addition, there are rituals that associated with gender. *Dayak Kanayatn* tribes performed *Batenek* rituals by pricking the girl's ear at the age two or three years. For the men, they hold a *Babalak* ceremony which is the circumcision ceremony of boys under the age of ten years. This ceremony is still being done even though the *Dayak* is still hold strongly on their traditions and beliefs. In

this ceremony, they slaughter three pigs and twelve roosters. For families who cannot afford it, celebrations can be combined with other families. However, they are obliged to contribute a chicken, three kilograms of plain rice (or *sungguh rice*), and three kilograms of sticky rice (or *beras pulut ketan*).

### ***Slinging Tradition***

Slinging tradition (*Tradisi Gendong*) gives a deep impact on parent's closeness and warmth toward their child. It symbolizes the entire affection of a mother to her child. The impression illustrated by Hildred Geertz in his book entitled *Families of Java* (1983). In his description about the Javanese community in Modjokuto and Geertz explains that in the first few months after birth, infant usually cling to her/his mother hips. The baby is held by using a slender piece of long-narrow-cloth called *selendang* or scarf. The *Selendang* is tied on the shoulder; goes pass down the hips, and the baby is comfortably held on his/her mother cradle. This position is also very comfortable for sitting of the baby and for facilitating breast feeding from the mother. Alternatively, the babies are held on their mother's back particularly during longer journey/walk. By holding the child in front or on the side, it makes the mother at all times watch the baby without a difficulty, giving the baby food, or cradling him/her when restless. In the same way, when the baby sleeps the *selendang* will support the baby perfectly. It is clearly show

from Geertz's depiction concerning the holding/embracing activity symbolize the complete love of a mother toward her child, because most children under 3 years seem happy/content being carried with the scarves (*selendang*) rather than being left alone. It is not surprising if they asked the mother to do so (Geertz, 1983).

Shiraishi (2001) specifically connects the activity of carrying a child as a deep meaning of warmth. "Warm" is used to describe the atmosphere of happiness of a family. The word is meant as a psychological and emotional feeling of comfort: calm, sheltered, intimate, and close relationships in family life. By holding/carrying the child, parents can take their children to other fascinating places. Shiraishi also see that the home environment, with the garden as its outer boundary, as an extension of the sling, where love and (of course) the control of the child development can evolve (Shiraishi, 2001). Shiraishi said that mothers hold their babies with *selendang* because long ago they were too were held in the same way with a *selendang*.

Indonesian children in traditional tribes, at least shown by their slinging custom, always placed as a vulnerable individual, where he/she must always be protected in a cradle of his/her parents. Children, besides as a source of grace and happiness of the family, often also raised a feeling of worrisome. Therefore, an act of protection not only could be seen in the psychical holding activity, but it also appears on the

symbols shown of a cradle itself as mentioned before. The symbols not only show the status of the wearer, it also shows the child's hoped and request of having good health. Tribes in the Indonesian archipelago have a rich cultural heritage related with this sling tradition. As an instrument, it functions as an arm carrying the baby by supporting it in the back or the hip. There are a various kind of cradle that can be found, some are made of clothes as it is generally known as *selendang* as well as slings made of fiber, rattan and wood.

Communities in Java, Sumatra, Bali and Lesser Islands have been long known for their textile for cloth production. For example, rectangular cloth was already been used by the Javanese community long before the influence of Islam into the archipelago. The use of the rectangular cloth was influenced by the Hindu beliefs. The rectangular cloth is to cut and sewn connoting a symbol of purity (Taylor, in Nordholt, 2005). The sacred meaning of this rectangle cloth is inherited until now and is still being used by the Javanese community in a variety of cultural events by wrapping the cloth round the body, especially on the lower part of the body. During its development, rectangular cloth, either woven or batik, not only used as a material for clothing, but also as media to carry goods or babies with cloth slung over his/her back and tied at the shoulder. The shape of this elongated braid cloth allows the users to stretch or pull the cloth if necessary.



In Java, Madura, and some other areas, the most popular traditional sling is the coastal batik scarf with a width of between 60-90 centimeters, length between 200-300 centimeters, with a pattern of brightly colored birds, dragons, flowers, and etc. In Tapanuli, baby slings are called *parompa*, a rectangular cloth with decorations on the wide side (*pakan*). *Parompa* are given by the maternal parent (mother) to the couple so that their (to be born) children grow healthy. Besides *parompa*, there's also *ulos ragi hotang* cloth that symbolizes the strong ties between families as strong as the rattan wood (Tim Pameran Himpunan Wastaprema, 2010). In the East Lesser Islands, the cloth used to hold and carry the baby is the *sarong*, a cylinder shape cloth that tied together through weaving or stitching. The babies being carried hold closed to the mother's body, then the *sarong* covered round the mother and a child, leaving a small part of the sarong to strap it on the mother's shoulder.

Besides the cloth, other kinds of slings are made of fiber, rattan, or wood. Dayak people in Borneo use a sling called *beringaban* or *ba* or *ambinan*. *Beringaban*, made of a woven rattan or wood with a semicircle shape, being equipped with straps on both sides like a backpack. This media is used to carry out goods or equipment, and is also often used as baby carriers. *Beringaban* is decorated with a certain motif, such as the motif of human, animal, and motif of abstract shapes. The human motif symbolizes the Dayak's tribe ancestors, while the motif of certain animals, such as the

combination between a dog and a dragon shows the status of the person wearing it. In Papua, the local community had sling bags called *noken* made of fiber as the basic material. Fibers as a basic component were processed from the roots of orchids, the roots of *pandanus* tree, or fibers of *melinjo* tree. The *noken* is a knitted bag-shaped bags with straps that are placed on the forehead of the wearer. From birth to death, *noken* has a significance meaning for the people of Papua (Tim Pameran Himpunan Wastaprema, 2010).

### Traditional Food

<sup>5</sup> Nutrition experts state that the formation of intelligence starts at the time <sup>5</sup> of pregnancy and early childhood. The higher quality of nutrition he/she receives the higher health status of the child becomes. The health status of the children will affect their growth and learning ability. As well as a source of energy, foods are the supportive factor for the child's physical. This is particularly important for infants since the baby's growth cycle is. Therefore, parents need to pay more attention to their infants' food intake.

Traditional food usually is natural. Traditionally, the first food given by the child's mother is breastfeeding. Breast milk, containing all the nutrients needed for growth and development of an infant. It also contains various anti-infection substances that can protect infants against various infections. After several months, mothers give soft foods in the form of porridge, mixed with



smoothened vegetables and thin cut meat. Rice usually being pounded (*beras tumbuk*) before cooking. Various tribes, such as Baduy, have several kinds of soft rice for their baby. In addition to porridge, the food given may include soft fruits like banana, papaya, avocado and tomato. Fruits are the source of vitamins and minerals, and also a good source of fiber. In an important thing, babies need feeding step by step in phases. At the first phase, the baby is given liquids, semisolid, and solid food. When they grow older, they resume with a normal consumption of rice and side dishes. Water, vitamins, and minerals intakes for the baby should be given sufficiently. Nevertheless, the baby's condition affects the readiness to receive food intake, because the feeding process is individual.

#### **Traditional Game and Arts**

Game is a learning medium to explore an environment where children develop physical, cognitive, and social-emotional ability. Game is also a media to develop an individual having good habits, such as helping one another, sharing, discipline, and courage to make decisions and to take responsibilities. By playing games, a child develops an ability to imagine and explore. Therefore, it is necessary to prepare a meaningful environment, safe, and comfortable environments which attract children to learn naturally. When the child involves in a variety of games and uses an array of media, participating and interacting it enhances his/her ability to think, besides providing

reinforcement in various forms. For this reason, educational game media is one main component in early childhood education programs. It is important for the parent's involvement in facilitating an appropriate media or environment with the children's age, besides providing various stimulations in the daily activities, will foretell the development of the child's IQ (Shaver, 1993).

There are many traditional games in Indonesia, whether it is solitary, parallel, cooperative, and role playing. Especially, for children under three years old, there are many toys to explore specific movements and to create unique sounds simultaneously, whether in the form of a doll, rolled chainsaw, small wind propeller, percussion and others. As well, children can play *petak umpet* (hide and seek), jump rope or pole vault, *petak lari* or run in squares, and others. Also, there's a marching game that used specific songs such as *ular naga*, and others. In Batavia itself, there are at least five games that can be played by children under three years which uses songs, sung by their parents such as: (1) *Klung Neng Nang*, (2) *Laa ilaaha illallah*, (3) *Gong Anggong*, (4) *Cang Uncang Angge dan*, (5) *Jeg Ujeg Gantil*

Children learn to play traditional arts, such as music, songs and dances. Music, songs and dances are a way of expressing one's feelings, from the perspective of the composer, performer or listener. There are various types of traditional music in Indonesia, namely (1) shakes instruments such as *angklung* of Sunda,

(2) wind instruments such as *saluang* and *bansi* of Minang, *triton* from Papua (3) percussion instruments such as *tambo* of Aceh, *talempong* and *tabuik* of Minang, *calung* of Sundanese, Javanese *gamelan*, *kolintang* from Minahasa, *rebana* from Lombok, *kendang* from Moluccas, (4) string instruments such as *rabab* from Minang, *kacapi* of Sunda, *sasando* of Lesser Islands. Besides, there are a lot of traditional dances from every provinces in Indonesia, such as *Tari Seudati* and *Saman Meusekat* form Aceh, *Tor-tor* from Batak, *Tari Piring* from Minang, *Reog Ponorogo* from Java, *Legong* and *Kecak* from Bali, *Zapin Tembung* from West Kalimantan, *Balumpa* from Sulawesi, *Lenso* and *Cakalele* from Moluccas, *Musyoh* from Papua, etc. There are also hundreds of traditional songs throughout Indonesia. In making the musical lyric, rhythm and melody may reveal an event and a collective character of the community, besides the acculturation process behind them. The children, including those at the age of less than five years old, sometimes play traditional arts in festivals. Each tribes and their collective identity as part of the Indonesia archipelago have their own particular songs resultant from their social interaction and ethnic backgrounds. Music, songs and dances can be a media to educate and stimulate the children's development.

Children also see and start involving in various kinds of traditional sports. One type of traditional sports which a lot of children often participate is *pencak silat*, a kind of martial arts. In

Indonesia, many regions have their unique style of *pencak silat*, such as the Minangkabau, Riau, Betawi, Sunda and others. *Pencak silat* is a martial art that was born and being recognized for generations by their predecessors. Martial art movements are known as a gentle and graceful movement, yet deadly. The reputation of this martial art is known at home and also abroad (other countries). Generally, martial arts such as *silat Pangean*, can be grouped into (1) *Silek Tangan* or empty handed martial arts, (2) *Silek Podang* or sword martial arts, (3) *Silek Parisai* or martial arts that uses weapons swords and shields as a weapon. Sports, at the early age, are by and large just for fun, to build their body strengths and reflexes.

#### **Traditional Tales and Art Show**

Folklore is disseminated orally from generations to generations, which being done by traditional elders or children's parents from early childhood. Nevertheless, not little does this traditional heritage, even being measured by today's standards of civilization, are considered to present ideas and a high level of goodness. Oral tradition or folklore can be in the form of oral stories, riddles, folk poetry, folk stories, and folk songs. The forms that are widely being used are stories and fables, for example, the story of *Manusia Kodok* or *Si Itik Buruk Rupa* from Aceh, *Ular Ndaung* from Bengkulu, *Lutung Kasarung* from Sunda, *Pangeran Katak* from Bali, *Kaya dan Ayam* from Sulawesi Tenggara, *Tupai dan Ikan Gabus* from West Kalimantan, *Si Rusa dan Si Kulomang*

from Moluccas, *Buaya Ajaib* from Papua, and others. Also, there are legends about the occurrence of certain areas, such as *Legenda Danau Toba* and *Legenda Lau Kawar* from North Sumatera, *Talaga Warna* and *Tangkuban Perahu* from Jawa Barat, *Legenda Ikan Patin*, *Legenda Putri Mambang Linau* from North Sulawesi, *Legenda Candi Prambanan* from Yogyakarta, *Asal Usul Danau Lipan* from Kalimantan Timur, and others.

Oral tradition or folklore reflects an aspect of a culture, either directly or indirectly, and the fundamental themes of life, such as birth, family life, illness, death, burial and misfortune or natural disaster, as found in the story of *Malin Kundang* from Minang, *Lancang Kuning* from Riau, *Sangkuriang* from Sunda, *Nyai Roro Kidul* from Java, and other stories. Oral tradition or stories that comes from a variety of different islands in Indonesia contains norms that should be applied on their behavior and daily life, not only in a particular social environment, but also on the wider community in general. It controls the interaction of the community.

There are a lot of oral traditions in Indonesia. *Dayak Kanayatan*, for example, has a variety of stories, likes (1) *Singara* or type of common folklore associated with life situations in the community, such as jokes, animal stories and romances, (2) *Gesah* or stories related to old or ancient religion and the origins of life, like epics, legends of the world, life, mankind, the origin of rice and rice paddies, etc., (3) *Osolan*, the story of descendants (jujuhatn) or about the

lineage of a families that can be tracked through the story, such as *Osolatn Bukit Talaga*, (4) *Batimang*, the entertainment activities or inducement of parents to children, usually done at their spare time or when going to bed, as the proverb, rhyme or lullaby, (5) *Pantun*, messages in poem of advice, warnings, and affection. This poem is usually being sung through *Jonggan* songs, (6) *Sungkalatn* or *sungkaatn*, the parable or saying about warnings, explanations and advice, (7) *Salong*, the satire about habit or bad social interaction in a society. Oral tradition in the Kanayatn Dayak community is part of the myths associated with belief. These myths are sacred and explain events experienced by the ancestors. The ancient period is a sacred period, where at that time they still able to meet with the Divine. Generally, this myth became the basis of behavior to support social stability in a society. This Society is honoring the myth, because tradition is born from a myth. Through this tradition, all forms of music in ceremonies and rituals can be maintained sustainability.

Many of the Indonesian folklore are presented in the form of performance art. From Betawi, there are *Lenong*, *Topeng*, *Jinong*, *Jipeng*, *Ondel-ondel*. From Sundanese, there are *Wayang Golek Giri Harja* and *Rampak Gendang*. From Central Java, there is *Wayang Kulit Begawan Ciptoning*. From Yogyakarta, there is *Langen Mandra Vanara*. From East Java, there is *Ojung - Bondowoso*. From Bali, there are *Gambuh*, *Wayang Wong*, *Sendratari Calonarang*, *Drama*



*Gong*, and others. Performing arts can be presented in any celebrations or important events in the area.

### Multicultural Interaction

The implementation of government policies in ECE cannot be separated from the ecological context. Indonesia inherited a very unique environment as the result of a long struggle history for freedom. Having the same colonial system and experience the different tribes and cultures are united in the legacy of the “*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*” which is a postcolonial slogan for uniting diverse societies.

Every island in Indonesia had several different native classifications. In the most populous Java Island, beside the Javanese himself, there are also Betawi, Sundanese, Bantenese, Baduy, Tengger, Osing and etc. Nearby to the Java Island is Madura Island with Madurese people. In Sumatra island, there are people of Malays, Batak, Minangkabau, Acehese, Lampung, Kubu and etc. In Borneo or Kalimantan Island, there are Dayak and Banjar tribes. In Sulawesi Island, there are Makassarese, Buginese, Mandar, Minahasa, Gorontalo, Toraja and Bajou. In Lesser Sunda Islands, there are Balinese, Sasak and etc. In the Moluccas Island, there are Nuaulu, Manusela and Wemale. In Papua, there are hundreds of tribes, where among them are the Dani, Bauzi and Asmat.

With its cultural diversity, the people of Indonesia have a special interaction

patterns. In general, there are two models of interaction, the open society pattern and the closed society pattern. The characteristic of the open society is being liberal to foreign cultures resulting in assimilation and accommodation, while the closed society pattern tend to reject and isolate the people from foreign culture or even denying the presence of foreign culture. Each of the interaction patterns shape a different lifestyle and habits for its own native communities.

### *Open Pattern Societies*

Majority of the Indonesian tribes have an open pattern society. They accept the presence of foreigners resulting in the mixture between one culture and another. Communities with this pattern have modern and wide world interactions, thus growing rapidly and become metro or mega-politan societies. The government proposals in education were openly accepted by this community, in the form of formal, informal or non formal education. These communities also are opened to international education provided that they are able to afford it. The indigenous people are scattered in various places in the central region and sometimes even pushed to the suburbs area, although they can accept this condition as a result of assimilation that also give benefit to them.

It is worth to note that in Indonesia the division and classification of ethnic groups are not rigid and in some case are unclear as the result of migrations, besides cultural and linguistic influence; for example, some may agree that



**Tabel 1**  
*The proportional major populations of native Indonesians according to the 2009 census*

Ethnic groups	Population (million)	Percentage	Main Regions
Javanese	86.012	41.7	East Java, Central Java, Lampung
Sundanese	31.765	15.4	West Java, Banten, Lampung
Malay	8.789	4.1	Sumatra Eastern Coast, West Kalimantan
Madurese	6.807	3.3	Madura Island, East Java
Batak	6.188	3.0	North Sumatra
Bugis	6.000	2.9	South Sulawesi, East Kalimantan
Minangkabau	5.569	2.7	West Sumatra, Riau
Betawi	5.157	2.5	Jakarta, Banten, West Java
Banjarese	4.800	2.3	South Kalimantan, East Kalimantan
Bantenese	4.331	2.1	Banten, West Java
Acehnese	4.000	1.9	Aceh, Jakarta, West Java
Balinese	3.094	1.5	Bali
Sasak	3.000	1.4	West Nusa Tenggara
Makassarese	2.063	1.0	South Sulawesi
Cirebonese	1.856	0.9	West Java, Central Java

<sup>1</sup> *Bantenese and Cirebonese belongs to different ethnic group with their own distinct dialect, however another might consider them as sub-ethnic Javanese, part of the Javanese people. The same case is also with Baduy people who share a lot of similarities with the Sundanese people who can be considered to belong to the same ethnic group. The example of multi ethnicity is the Betawi people, the indigenous tribes in Jakarta since the era of colonial, are results of mixture of different ethnicities.*

The *Betawi* famously known as <sup>19</sup> 'people of Batavia' are the descendants of the people living around Jakarta from around the 17th century. Their population

is less than one third of the whole total of about 9,580,000 people in Jakarta. They have distinct culture and language which is different from its neighbors such as Javanese and Sundanese. Jakarta nowadays is the capital and the largest city in Indonesia. The origin Jakarta goes back in the fourth century when it became an important trading port for the Kingdom of Sunda. It became a de facto capital of the Dutch East Indies colonial and continued being the capital city of Indonesia, after its independence in 1945. Located at the <sup>18</sup> northwest coast of Java, it has <sup>4</sup> an area of 661 square kilometer and is the country's economic, cultural and political centre. It is the most populous city in Indonesia and in

Southeast Asia, and is the tenth-largest city in the world. The urban area, *Jabodetabek* is the second largest in the world. Jakarta is listed as a global city in the 2008 Globalization and World Cities Study Group and Network (GaWC) research. The *Betawis* are known for their indigenous traditions as well as their personal characters such as short temper, directness and openness to others.

Previous research indicates that the *Betawi* people are spread in different ethnic groups in Jakarta and the surrounding nearby. Although the *Betawi* are united they differ much in terms of socio-economic status and their geographical distribution because of historical factors. According to lifestyle, the *Betawi* can be classified into the *Betawi Tengah*, *Betawi Pinggir* and *Betawi Udik* ethnic groups. The *Betawi Tengah* people who live in the center of the city are also called *Betawi Kota*, where they still referred themselves as natives Jakarta. The life of the *Betawi Kota* is influenced much by other/ outside tradition which makes different from the other *Berawi*. The *Betawi* people who live in the suburbs of Jakarta are called *Betawi Pinggir* who are conservative consistently conforming to the religious traditions of the *Betawi*. The *Betawi Udik* lives around Jakarta where they are much influenced by the indigenous *Sundanese* and *Chinese*.

The *Betawi Tengah* are those who in the history of the *Betawi* people began settling in the center section of Jakarta, which was called the *Batavia* residence and now are named Central Jakarta. Most of them live in groups of one

family groups or relatives, and surrounded by other residents of Jakarta who are not *Betawi* people. Currently they are still seen live clustered in the Sawah Besar area, a small part in <sup>24</sup> *Taman Sari*, *Gang Ketapang*, *Kebon Jeruk*, *Krukut* and *Pekojan* area. This location is part of the city of Jakarta, where has the most urban character. Based on their economic level, the *Betawi Tengah* people can be divided into the *Betawi Gedong* (having a good and big housing) or *Betawi Kampung* (villagers), based on where they live. *Betawi* people, who live in a good and big housing, often are not accepted as *Betawi* by the *Betawi Kampung* (villagers). But not so the villagers, because of their lifestyle their existence as the *Betawi* people are perceived as part of the *Betawi* tradition.

At the preliminary stage during urbanization and modernization, this part of the area was hit/affected the most. Having the result, the *Betawi Tengah* is the highest mix marriage compared to those who live at the suburb of Jakarta or even compare to other ethnics in Jakarta. Part of the *Betawi Tengah* still adhered some of their past lifestyle. We can see it at the events of marriage, eid celebration, circumcision rituals, or in the community lifestyle. Although there is a cultural shift in the younger generation of *Batavia*, both men and women still hold firm as in this case the religion of Islam, as the Quran reading groups for children, majilis ta'lim groups for mothers and tadarusan for men. The language often used is the

*Betawi Tengah* dialect. Another result of modernization and urbanization process in the center of Jakarta, the *Betawi* people frequently sell their houses and lands and moved to the suburb where the prices of the land are cheaper. This is actually the *Betawi Pinggir* area. Therefore, nowadays many of *Betawi Tengah* people live in the *Betawi Pinggir* area, or even moved to *Betawi Udik* area. Many of the *Betawi Pinggir* and *Betawi Udik* don't know if that their new neighbors are also *Betawi* people, because they bear different patterns of lifestyles, much differ from the the *Betawi* culture. The people of *Betawi Tengah* usually are more highly educated.

*Betawi Udik* is the natives living in the suburb of Jakarta, especially in *Bota-bek* area. Formerly, this area included the local administration of *Batavia*, but now they are included in administrative regions of *West Java*. Therefore, culturally they are *Betawi* people, but because of the changing administrative boundary now they live in the administrative area of *West Java*. There are two types of *Betawi Udik*, namely those who live in the northern part of Jakarta and western part of Jakarta and *Tangerang*, who are greatly influenced by the Chinese culture. And others are those who were living in the eastern and southern part of Jakarta, *Bekasi* and *Bogor*, who are strongly influenced by the *Sundanese* culture. They generally come from lower economic classes, who commonly more reliant on agriculture. Their educational level is very low compared with the *Betawi Tengah* and *Betawi Pinggir*. The

role of Islam in the daily life of the *Betawi Udik* people are quite different from the role of Islam among the people of *Betawi Tengah* and *Betawi Pinggir*, where the last two *Betawi* groups, Islam holds as an extremely important role and determine their pattern of behavior on their daily lives. It should be noted that now there has been a change in occupation and education pattern among the *Betawi Udik*, where gradually their occupation become similar to the occupation and education pattern of the *Betawi Tengah* and *Betawi Pinggir*.

The emphasis of cultural values which were given by the parents to their children is slightly different between groups of the *Betawi* people. While the *Betawi Tengah* people are more superior in economic background compared to other groups of *Betawi*, the *Betawi Pinggir* are more superior in their religious education. *Betawi Tengah* people tend to send their children to public school as their formal education, but the *Betawi Pinggir* sends their children to Islamic boarding schools or *pesantren* as their formal education. However, although the *Betawi Tengah* people took formal education in public schools, they still perceive religious education very important in their social life. The socialization process of the *Betawi Tengah* people cannot be separated from the system of the religious life. In other words, religious values had an important role in the majority of the *Betawi* socialization process in their daily lives.



### *Close Pattern Societies*

Not all indigenous people in Indonesia are open to foreigners. Some tribes deliberately reject the influence of the foreign cultures even though are not located in remote areas. Historically, they are generally people who tried to avoid conflict with other parties such as war or colonialism. They moved as a group to a specific area to avoid conflict, established a regular life with a particular native culture. Their descendants then hold this isolation as part of their customs and identity. However, these communities usually can be divided into inner communities who isolate themselves from foreigner influences and outer communities who are more open though maintain their customs. Examples of this kind of societies are Kampung Naga, Baduy (Kaneques), and others.

Kampung Naga is a village inhabited by a group of people who are strong in holding the relics of their ancestral customs, in this case is the Sundanese traditions. Kampung Naga became an object of an anthropological study of the life in rural communities in the transition from the Sundanese Hindu influence to the influence of Islam in West Java. The village is administratively located in the Neglasari, Salawu District, Tasikmalaya Territory and the Province of West Java. Kampung Naga is located not far from the highway that connects Garut with the city of Tasikmalaya. The village is located in a fertile valley, with the sacred forest as the west border where the Kampung Naga ancestral

graves lie. The south side is bordered by the people's rice fields, and the north and east are bordered by the river of Ciwulan that starts from the Mount Cikuray in Garut. From the Garut-Tasikmalaya highway, people had to go down through the stone made stairway with a slope of about 45 degrees with a distance of approximately 500 meters, then through footpath along the river of Ciwulan to get to the Kampung Naga. The shape of Kampung Naga surfaces is like a hill with fertile and productive soil. Kampung Naga area is about one and half hectare, mostly used for housing, yards, ponds, and the rest are used for agriculture fields which can be harvested twice a year.

All the people of Kampung Naga claimed to be Muslims, but as other indigenous people they are also very submissive holding on to their customs and beliefs of their ancestors. Their Islamic laws/norm is a bit different from other Muslims. The religion ritual of the people of Kampung Naga is being carried out in line with to ancestor's inheritance. For example, they do prayers five times in a day: Subh, Duhur, 'Asr, Mahrib, and Isya are only done on Fridays. During other days they do not have to perform prayers five times in a day. Teaching the Quran to children in Kampung Naga is held every Monday and Thursday night and teaching for parents is held on Friday night. In performing the fifth pillar of Islam, or the Hajj, they assume doesn't have to go far to the Holy Land of Mecca, but simply by undergoing the

Sasih Ceremony which coincided with the Eid al-Adha every 10<sup>th</sup> of Rayagung (Dhulhijjah). The ceremony of Sasih for the Kampung Naga villagers is the same as celebrating the Eid al-Adha and Eid al-Fitr.

According to the belief of the Kampung Naga's villagers, the structure of space embodied in the belief that spaces or places had controlled by certain extent of unseen forces. Places had borders with different categories such as the boundary by river, the boundary between the front yard to the road, the boundary between field rice with ditches, *huluwotan* or path where water goes through, the hillsides, a place between the village and the forest, and so on, are inhabited by certain forces. Areas that have a certain restrictions are usually inhabited by spirits and is considered *sanget* or haunted. They believe that the spirits that vacate the water or river or *jurig cai*, especially in the deep river or *leuwi*. Then *ririwa* is known as ethereal being who likes to disturb or scare people at night, *Kuntilanak* is an ethereal being derived from pregnant women who died, she likes to hamper woman who is going to give birth. While a place is being used as a haven by the spirits, the Kampung Naga says it as a haunted place or *sanget*. Similarly, places like the tomb of *Eyang Singaparna*, *Bumi Ageung* and the mosque is a place considered sacred to the Kampung Naga society. Kampung Naga belief in the spirits is still held strictly. That is the reason why Kampung Naga villagers prefer to keep *sasajen* or

offerings.

The Kampung Naga belief systems of time, is manifested in several *palintangan* or taboos. Certain moments is considered bad or taboo to for instance carrying out a very important works such as building a house, marriage, circumcision ceremonies, and other traditional ceremonies, which is on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. Kampung Naga villagers are prohibited to talk about their customs and their origin. In public arts, Kampung Naga villagers are taboo performing art from outside the village, such as songs, puppet show, martial arts, and others that used percussion. They only play the hereditary art such as *terbangan*, *angklung*, *belut*, and *rengkong* in the village, although now several are rarely performed or not recognized anymore. If they want to see or perform other art, they should do it outside the village.

Taboo or *pamali* for the Kampung Naga villagers still held strictly especially in everyday life with regard to everyday activities as an unwritten law that should be uphold and obeyed by everyone, such as the building procedures, shapes, location, and direction of the house, ceremonial clothing, arts, etc. The structure of the house should be like a platform, with bamboo and wood as materials. Roofs should use palm leaves, palm fibers, or reeds. Floors should be made of bamboo or wood boards. The house should face North or South with elongated towards the West-East. The wall of the chamber should use woven bamboo with *sasag*

matting. Houses should not be painted, but washed white or *dimeni*. Cement walls are not allowed. Houses should not be equipped with furniture, such as chairs, tables, and beds. The house should not have doors on two opposite directions, because according to Kampung Naga belief, and gift taken into the house through the front door will not come out through the back door, therefore they always avoid installing doors in a straight line. According to Kampung Naga beliefs, by running a custom to honor the heritage means that they respect their ancestors. Everything that comes not from Kampung Naga ancestors teaching and not done by their ancestors is considered a taboo. If the Kampung Naga villagers did something against the custom/beliefs, it means that they didn't respect the ancestor and it will inevitably lead them to catastrophe.

In the Kampung Naga, there are no public education facilities, although there is a religious education. For children who want to go to formal school, they should walk out of the village and attended school there. As a result, the Kampung Naga people can still read and write Latin script and generally still had a good basic education.

In addition to Kampung Naga, another example of a closed society is the people of *Baduy* (also called the *Kanekes*). The *Baduy* are a traditional community live in the western part of the Indonesian province of Banten, near Rangkasbitung. Their population of 11,700 is centered in the Kendeng

Mountains at an elevation of 300-500 meters (975'-1,625') above sea level. Their homeland in Banten contained in just 50 km<sup>2</sup> (20 square miles) of a hilly forest area 120 km (75 miles) from Jakarta, Indonesia's capital city. Ethnically the *Baduys* belong to the *Sundanese* ethnic group. Their racial, physical and linguistic traits bear much resemblance to the rest of the *Sundanese* people; however, the difference is in their way of life. *Baduy* people resist foreign influences and vigorously preserve their ancient way of life (Garna, 1993; Permana, 2001).

The people believe that the *Baduy* is the descendants of the aristocrate of the Sunda Kingdom of Pajajaran who lived near Batutulis in the hills around Bogor. There is yet no strong evidence to support this belief; although their domestic architecture utilizes most closely the traditional *Sundanese* architecture. Pakuwan Pajajaran port known as Sunda Kelapa, was destroyed through the invasion of the Faletahan Muslims soldier in 1579, Dayeuh Pakuan the capital of Pajajaran, was invaded by Banten Sultanate sometimes later. However, the *Baduy* today is increasingly losing touch with their Hindu culture and increasingly getting closer to nature both in their own religion and their life, as they use no electricity, fertilizer or irrigation techniques in their farming. Another theory suggests that they originate from northern Banten; where a pouch of people in the northern hills still speaks the archaic dialect of *Sundanese* that the *Baduy* uses today.



<sup>1</sup> The religion of the *Baduy* is known as *Agama Sunda Wiwitan*, a combination of traditional beliefs and Hinduism. However, due to the lack of interaction with the outside world, their religion is more related to *Kejawen Animism*, though they still retain many elements of Hindu-Buddhist religion influences, like the terms they use to define things and objects, and the rituals in their religious activities. According to *kokolot* (elder) of Cikeusik village, Kanekes people do not adhere to Hinduism or Buddhism, they follow animism, and the belief that venerated and worshiped the spirit of ancestors. However, in its development this faith is influenced and incorporated with the Hindu, and to some extent, Islamic elements. A certain amount of Islamic influence has also penetrated into the religion of a few of the *Baduy Luar* in recent years (especially in Cicakal Girang village), with some original ideas thrown in for good measure. The ultimate authority is vested in *Gusti Nu Maha Suci*, who according to the *Baduy* sent Adam into the world to lead the life of the *Baduy* (Adimihardja, 2000; Iskandar, 1992; Ekadjati, 1995).

<sup>1</sup> The *Baduy* also respect many mystical taboos. They are forbidden to kill, steal, lie, commit adultery, get drunk, eat food at night, take any form of conveyance, wear flowers, perfumes or soap, accept gold or silver, they do not use fertilizer when making the *nyawah* (wet rice), produce commercial crops, use modern tools for transportation or working on *ladang* soil, or keep large

domestic animals, using nail for building house or bridge, using electronics. Villages as communities are considered as *mandalas*, a Hindu/Buddhist concept referring to places where religion is the central aspect of life. The *Baduy* is divided into two sub-groups; the *Baduy Dalam* (Inner *Baduy*) and the *Baduy Luar* (Outer *Baduy*). No foreigners are allowed to meet the *Inner Baduy*, though the *Outer Baduy* does some limited contacts with the outside world.

<sup>7</sup> The population of about 400 *Baduy Dalam* consists of 40 families *Kajeroan* who live in the three villages of Cibeo, Cikertawana, and Cikeusik in Tanah Larangan (forbidden territory) where no stranger is permitted to spend the night. They are probably the purest *Baduy*. The *Dalam* follow the rigid buyut taboo system very strictly, and therefore they have only made very few contacts with the outside world as they are considered as "People of the sacred inner circle". The *Dalam* are the only one of these two major clans that have the *Pu'un*, the spiritual priest of the *Baduy*. The *Pu'un* is the only people who are allowed to visit the most hallowed and sacred ground of the *Baduy* which lies on Gunung Kendeng, in Arca Domas area. Unlike the *Luar*, the *Dalams* are hardly influenced by Islam. Formal education for the children of *Baduy* is perceived as something which is against their traditional customs. They reject government proposal to build an educational facilities in the villages. Up to now, despite the efforts of the Indonesian government to

change their lives including building of modern schools in the territory, the *Baduy* still strongly oppose the government. As a result, very few *Baduy* know how to read or write (Adimihardja, 2000; Gana, 1993; Permana, 2001).

The *Baduy Luar* makes up the remainder of the *Baduy* population, living in 22 villages and acting as a barrier to stop visitors from entering the Sacred Inner circle. They follow the rigid taboo system but not as strictly as the *Dalam*, and they are more willing to accept modern influence into their daily lives. For example, some *Luar* people now proudly wear colorful sarongs and shirts favored by their *Sundanese* neighbors. In the past, the *Baduy Luar* wore only their homespun blue-black cloth, and was forbidden to wear trousers. Other elements of civilization (such as toys, money, batteries, and cellular phones) are rapidly infiltrating especially in the northern villages, and it is no longer unusual for a *Baduy Luar* making a journey to Jakarta, or even working outside their community as a hired hand during the rice planting and reaping seasons. Some even work in towns and cities like Jakarta, Bogor and Bandung. Animal meat is eaten in some of the outer villages where dogs are trained for hunting even though animal husbandry is still forbidden. Unlike *Baduy Dalam* that rejects outside influences, *Baduy Dalam* are more and more open to science and development of technology.

The *Baduy* tribes learned autodidact from their environment or informally from their parents. Throughout the

days, their village is empty. All of the people go to the fields both adults and children. Usually, only 3-8 young men are left in the village for safety purposes of their village. They learn to read on their own, for example by observing the food and beverage brand packages. They compare the letters on one brand to another, and they remember the form of letters. Learning requires self-motivation. Reading autodidact is just one of their many self-abilities. *Baduy* people build their houses, streets and settlements without outside help, except if they faced disasters such fire accidents.

*Baduy's* community living concepts is different from the others. They have their own ways of social organization, social systems, leadership, customary institutions, ceremonies, religious systems and social interaction. Although some of them use ancient alphabets *Hanacaraka*, but in general the *Baduys* do not have the culture of writing. Therefore, most of the things including their traditional laws and their general way of living is passed through oral traditions. The *Baduy* leaders (Kurnia, 2010) consist of eight categories of proverbial which include law-abiding, law enforcement, maintenance of nature, respect to the leader, mutual assistance/cooperation, work/life, togetherness, and accountable saying are observed. The verbal concepts that grow in the life of *Baduys* cause changes in the structure of the proverbs.

Nature is the main character of the *Baduy* community's life which can be seen from their everyday life. They are not allowed to use chemicals such as

soaps, deodorants and cosmetics. When they are going to build a house, especially in *Baduy Dalam*, they do not use nails to hold the wood. Simplicity and being one with nature is their way of life. The philosophy of their lives is considered as a must and should not be altered. The *Baduy* tribes always maintain the balance with the nature. The genuineness and natural of life is a must for avoiding or minimising things that could destroy nature in their communal life.

### **Government Roles in ECE for Children Under 3 Years**

Government policies on early childhood, as it have been described above, aim to promote provision of early childhood education to a good standard level. Indeed, there has been substantive progress in the provision of early childhood education for under three years children in Indonesia at community level. The growing number of kindergartens and family planning owned by the community indicates a growing interest and commitment of the public in provision of early childhood education. The government should not substitute the role of the existing society. Instead, the government will facilitate, encourage, and equip a variety of activities that already exist; therefore, the variations and quality of services will increase continuously. Efforts to integrate the management and programs of early childhood education services that already exist were necessary (Jalal, 2004).

At this time, the government has

been giving more attention to the various efforts in the content and organization of ECE programs to include appropriate parenting, health care and the provision of nutritional food. The aspiration is to ensure optimal child development for future healthier, intelligent, noble and moral human resources. Commitment is reflected by its initiatives to empower individuals, groups, and organizations interested in ECE activities. The joint cooperation was resulting in BKB-Posyandu-PAUD model.

In principle the sustaining, the ECE programs requires matching the ECE services address and meet the needs of the community (Fidesrinur, 2008). Overall, government commitment has received positive response from the communities. Along with the growing awareness, early care and education influences child's future adult life. However, in Indonesia, the response from open pattern societies might be different from closed pattern societies.

In open pattern societies which are liberal at accepting the foreign influences, government had more flexibility in implementing ECE policies and designing programs to achieve the goals. One of the challenges is to reach all remote areas. Cooperation with religious institutions might be beneficial, but it can be rejected if the communities' belief is different with the religious institutions. The joint corporation in BKB-Posyandu-PAUD models might be more accepted in decentralization era, because the BKB and Posyandu programs reaches more



diverse and rural areas in Indonesia, and there are some similarities in BKB-Posyandu and PAUD or ECE goals, to improve Indonesian children welfare.

Unfortunately, the BKB-Posyandu and ECE had been impressed walk alone. There is a growing perception the community that these activities continue independently with unconnected ultimate goal that has nothing to do with each others (Dipo, Wicaksana, Mardiya, Haryana, & Paryanta, 2007). However, if explored further, all of these activities can be integrated and complemented each for a holistic approach in the provision of ECE. Currently, the BKB activities sensitise to raise the awareness, knowledge, skills, and attitudes of parents and other family members in fostering growth and development of baby and toddlers. Posyandu is a program within the health care framework for monitoring nutritional status of children to grow up healthy and happy. The BKB target the parents and other family members while Posyandu is for parents and children, adults including older people. In the future, it is hoped that BKB-Posyandu-PAUD activities will be more integrated, complemented and synergized in terms of time and place, administration, financial and infrastructure usage.

In open pattern society, government needs to consider local wisdoms in implementing ECE programs. Considering the local wisdom will facilitate acceptance and sustainability of the local communities (Fidesrinur, 2008). Besides, the ECE program will be more holistic, in terms

of developing the children in line with their cultural contexts. There are several rituals, such as traditional ceremonies for pregnant mother, rituals for newborn and baby, slinging tradition, traditional foods, traditional games and arts, traditional tales and art shows. However, government should encourage scientific researches on these rituals and traditions, to analyze the impact of these rituals in this era of science and technology development to determine whether the rituals foster or inhibit children growth and development.

In closed pattern society, the implementation of government policies is more difficult than open pattern society. They are not only rejecting government proposals in formal education, but also in health programs. Most of these indigenous communities still refuse to learn literacy until now (Prihantoro, 2006), especially the Latin script, although literacy is important for the acquisition of life skills, both for children, youth, and adults, to overcome the challenges in their lives and as the basic steps in education, which is an essential enabling factor to participate actively in society and economy of the 21st century. However, indigenous communities usually have the old tradition of knowledge which was inherited from generation to generation orally that regulates their community.

Working with the indigenous people, the government should conduct more research and consider re-positioning of this community. The communities have their own culture, and even civilization in terms of values and norms which are

influential in their lives. Therefore, the government needs to acknowledge and considers the local wisdom implanting the ECE programs. For example, the government can use oral tradition or ancient alphabet, such as *hanacaraka* for indigenous Sunda and Java people. The villagers themselves should take active role in education process. Government should built ECE facilities, not in the villages if it not possible, but nearby villages which still reachable by villagers - that had open pattern society which more open to science and technology development. In this case, BKB-Posyandu-PAUD integrated models had more beneficial than ECE only, because they offer more wide approaches.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The focus of this study is the implementation of indigenous early childhood education, explaining how the government can cover the minority groups to promote equal opportunities for young children. The following are recommendations of how the government needs to support indigenous groups of children to an extent where the government develops its own unique ECEC policy in a more contextual approach.

1. While the government had showed their commitment to provision of ECE programs by setting policies and enacting guiding regulations, the ECE policies need to be in

harmony with other government policies, etc. ECE for very young adulthood in Indonesia was ultimately the task of parents, while government only stimulate this by particular educational and health programs.

2. There are several traditional rituals concerning children under 3 years in Indonesia, including the traditional ceremony for pregnant mother, rituals for newborn and baby, slinging tradition, traditional food, traditional games and arts, traditional tales and art shows. Government should encourage research to scientifically determine which rituals are good and which one are still relevant for children development.
3. There are two type of multicultural interaction in Indonesia, the open pattern and the close pattern. Each pattern influences children education, whether formal, informal or nonformal. In each pattern, parents' role is very significant for child under 3 years. Therefore, government should encourage integrative approaches that prioritize parents' involvement in inculcating appropriate values for their children based on their culture.
4. Government need to implement different strategy in different multicultural interaction pattern. However, a multisectoral approach for enabling the government achieves comprehensive provision of ECE in the country.

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