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1 Culture Preservation of “China *Benteng*” Tangerang: The Challenges of Urban Development

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Abstract. *Benteng* Chinese culture is one of Tangerang’s heritage. It has extremely valuable historical value for the development of Tangerang region, and the preservation of *Benteng* Chinese culture’s value is a responsibility and obligation imposed not only to the *Benteng* Chinese ethnicity residents but also broadly to all stakeholders. The purpose of this study is to map the perception and preference of the residents of Tangerang Regency towards *Benteng* Chinese culture as one of the developing Tangerang cultures. The primary data are obtained from the results of questionnaires given to the respondents, i.e. Tangerang residents who are of Benteng Chinese and Non-*Benteng* Chinese descendants in Tangerang to 30 (thirty) persons respectively. The secondary data are taken from documents and monographs on the historic development of *Benteng* Chinese in Tangerang obtained from relevant institutions in Tangerang. The perception and preference aspects in this study include the dimensions of social, cultural, uniqueness, and originality values. Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) is used to analyze the data to compare the expectations and interest level in the perception of residents in the forms of graphs. The relationship between Chinese cultures which have added the colors of archipelagic cultures for hundred years should be studied in depth. The research results need to be disseminated and distributed to residents more widely to lessen the gap of perception between Chinese descent and Non-Chinese descent residents.

Keywords: Benteng Chinese, Cultures, Tangerang

1. Introduction

Culture has an important role in human life. “Culture has a complex definition that includes knowledge, belief, art, morality, law, customs, habits, and other intangibles obtained from the cultural community itself [1]. The culture of a community is very much influenced with the historical development of the community so that the cultural community reflects the relations of humans with each other, communal humans with other residents and humans with their environment [2]

Nowadays, when modernization gradually changes human lifestyle, when modern concepts and the flow of globalization begins to erode the wisdom from local cultures, the existence of culture with all the noble values within it will begin to get left behind. Several previous studies state that the globalization process is not processes that begin recently, i.e., because of the great development in communications systems, but from a long time ago all of the Earth's residents are part of the global community [3].

Cultural diversity is similarly realized not because of the isolation of social groups, but on the contrary because of constant contacts between these groups [3]. Such findings teach us that we do not need to face the processes of "globalization" and "cultural change" by extremely keeping ourselves apart. On the contrary, by understanding how culture is constructed through narrative and practice, for example, we can also utilize process globalization as a means to enrich our cultural diversities [4]. Therefore, we need to synergize development with the sustained existence of culture [5].

Indonesia has thousands of islands dispersed from the Eastern to the Western end of the archipelago. It has various tribes with their own authentic cultures. Pluralism in Indonesia is a variable of cultural wealth and social capital that we should be grateful for and preserve. One of the regions with an authentic and interesting culture is Tangerang. The culture of the residents of Tangerang influences the socio-religious lives of the residents of Banten. The culture of the community of Banten is the Sundanese culture, as is the culture that applies in most regions of the Province of West Java.

Indonesians of Chinese descent generally live in areas later known as Kampung Pecinan (China Towns). One of these Chinese descent communities, the Cina *Benteng* (*Benteng* Chinese) is found in Tangerang Regency. They are of Chinese descent, but they have dark skin and large eyes, and they live simply or even in poverty. One of the pockets of poor Chinatowns in Tangerang Regency is Sewan Village, Neglasari sub-district, Tangerang Regency. However, this neighborhood contains many stories of persistent individuals who prefer to work in the informal sector, i.e., by opening their businesses.

The development of Tangerang region is inseparable from the Chinese sub-culture known as the "Benteng Chinese," whose people have black or dark skin and big eyes [6]. In 1740, Chinese descent communities were slaughtered in Batavia, so they escaped to Tangerang. They started to live in Kedaung, Kampung Melayu, and Teluk Naga regions, which are part of Tangerang Regency.

Up to now, *Benteng* Chinese are in the sixth to seventh generation [7]. Most *Benteng* Chinese ethnicity currently lives in the Chinatown in Tangerang, i.e., Sewan Village, Neglasari sub-district, Tangerang Regency [6]. At its current state, *Benteng* Chinese have acculturated itself and married into the local residents. Most of them have even converted into Islam and no longer consume pork [7].

Tangerang Regency is one of the regions that support the Capital (Figure 1). It means that Tangerang is one of the regions affected by urbanization [8]. The rapid development of Tangerang Regency means that it is a region with a high level of cultural interaction and heterogeneous residents. This is the consequence of social change occurring in urban areas [9]. Social change shapes Tangerang into a multi-cultural region containing multi-cultural communities, or it has developed many cultures with various lifestyles and value orientations [10].

The high level of socio-cultural interaction among communities degrades the local cultural values. Universal culture is spread through the ever-increasing types and numbers of global media, which is mostly controlled by and works for the interest of transnational capital.

Therefore, urban communities find it difficult to preserve their own unique local culture, even though it is an important component of community development [11].

Cultural preservation is the responsibility of all stakeholders. These include government, culturalistic, scholars, and the public. Based on that underlying background, the purpose of this study is to map the perception of the residents of Tangerang Regency on *Benteng* Chinese culture, and to map the preference of the residents of Tangerang Regency in the joint effort to preserve *Benteng* Chinese culture as one of the developing cultures in Tangerang.

Ethnic and cultural diversity is an empirical reality and becomes a socio-reality in Indonesia, then declared the predicate that Indonesia is made up of multicultural societies in which there are many cultures. The multicultural society is a complex society. That brings many consequences, both opportunities, and challenges, in such development. Therefore, the study of the multicultural society becomes important, especially for the Indonesian nation who are eager to move the development potential [10].

One ethnic that develops and have a default in Indonesia is Ethnic China, as one of the most diverse ethnic groups in Indonesia. With a total of 2,832,510 populations, these numbers indicate the diversity of complex cultural identity [12]. Chinese culture has a significant influence on surrounding area culture development. As an example that "Betawi Pinggiran Utara" being a prime example of acculturation and assimilation of Betawi Chinese with archipelago culture [13]

Chinese culture has a long journey in the diffusion process in the archipelago. In Hou Han Syu's history book that the first official Chinese and Nusantara relation between the Han Dynasty (140-177 BC) and the empire called "Ya Diao" (Sanskrit word "Yavavipa" probably in Java or Sumatra) and the relationship continue to grow up to now on [14]. The ancestors of Indonesians Chinese ethnic originated from Mainland China, especially from Guangdong, Hokkien, and Hainan regions which later settled in Indonesia and married to local people [15].

Based on the data of the Indonesian Population Census in 2010, the majority ethnic in Indonesia is Javanese (40, 22%), while Chinese are minorities ethnic who occupy the 18th position of 2,832,510 people, but according to another survey conducted by organizations abroad, Chinese ethnic in Indonesia numbered about 11 million people [16]. Among Chinese cultural diversity in Indonesia, Chinese society is classified by assimilation level with indigenous cultures, including the half-blood (Peranakan) and full-blood (totok) [17].

2. Method

The primary data are obtained from the results of questionnaires given to respondents, i.e., residents of Tangerang who are of *Benteng* Chinese and Non-*Benteng* Chinese descendants. Meanwhile, the secondary data are taken from documents and monograph on the historical development of *Benteng* Chinese in Tangerang obtained from relevant institutions in Tangerang. Each group of respondents is made up of 30 (thirty) people, or in other words, the total sample is 60. An accidental sampling technique is used to determine the respondents because there is no exact data about the number of *Benteng* Chinese residents in Tangerang.

The data is processed using descriptive statistics. The perception and preference aspects in this study include the dimensions of social, cultural, uniqueness, and originality values. Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) is used to analyze data to compare the expectations and interest level in the perception of residents in graph form. The dimensions used in this study for comparison are "perception" and "preference." These dimensions of "perception" and "preference" are each divided into several indicators, which are then to be the components

of the questions in the questionnaire. The operation of these two dimensions is described in **Table 1** below:

Table 1.Research Operational Dimensions

| No | Indicator | Preference | Oprational Definition |
|----|--|--|---|
| 1 | Perception to the protection of the <i>Benteng</i> Chinese culture | Preference to the protection of the <i>Benteng</i> Chinese culture | This is a joint commitment to protect the heritage of <i>Benteng</i> Chinese culture together, both the tangible and intangible ones. |
| 2 | Perception to the preservation of the <i>Benteng</i> Chinese culture | Preference to the preservation of the <i>Benteng</i> Chinese culture | This is a joint desire to preserve <i>Benteng</i> China culture by maintaining the existence of <i>Benteng</i> Chinese culture elements in daily life |
| 3 | Perception to the utilization of the <i>Benteng</i> Chinese culture | Preference to the utilization of the <i>Benteng</i> Chinese culture | Joint commitment to utilize <i>Benteng</i> Chinese culture elements to improve the economic income derived from the Culture, which would certain be followed by the prosperity of all communities |

3. Result and discussion

3.1 Respondent Profile

The results show that the majority of respondents from *Benteng* Chinese communities are women, while the majority of Non-*Benteng* Chinese residents are men. This result strengthens the assumption that *Benteng* Chinese communities so far have less access to education. This is described in more detail in the following Table 2 :

Table 2. Respondent Profile

| Components | <i>Benteng</i> China Community | Non <i>Benteng</i> Community | China |
|------------|---|---|-------|
| Gender | 21 Female 9 Male | 12 Female 18 Male | |
| Education | 15 High School 5 Under Graduate 0 Graduate and Post Graduate | 9 High School 20 Under Graduate 1 Graduate and Post Graduate | |
| Occupation | 2 Private employee 0 Government Employee/ TNI/Polri 26 Entrepreneur./Farmer 2 Jobless | 14 Private employee 8 Government Employee, TNI/Polri 6 Entrepreneur 2 Jobless | |

| | | |
|--------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Salary | 16 <3.000.000 | 2 <3.000.000 |
| | 11 3.000.001 – 5.000.000 | 10 3.000.001 – 5.000.000 |
| | 3 > 5.000.000 | 18 > 5.000.000 |

Source: Processed Data 2017

The data resulted from the collected questionnaires completed by the respondents are processed using modified IPA (Important Performance Analysis) method. The modification is made by using the X axis to describe the “Perception” dimension and the Y-axis to describe the “Preference” dimension. The following are the result of data tabulation resulted from the Questionnaires on Perception and Preference towards *Benteng* Chinese Communities:

Table 3. Perception and Preference towards *Benteng* Chinese Communities

| | Perception | Preference | GAP (Pe-Pr) |
|---------------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Protection (P1) | 5 | 3 | 2 |
| Sustainability (P2) | 5 | 3 | 2 |
| Utilization (P3) | 5 | 5 | 0 |
| Sum | 15 | 12 | 4 |
| C-Line | 3,75 | 2,75 | 1 |

Source: Processed Data 2017

In general, *Benteng* Chinese residents give a high perception score whether in terms of protection, preservation, or utilization of culture. However, the preference score is not as high as the perception score. It shows that *Benteng* Chinese residents are currently less desirous of protecting and preserving their culture, but if it can improve their economic condition and welfare, they would join in the preservation and utilization of *Benteng* Chinese culture. This is known from the score of 5 given to preference of utilization, a score of 4 to the preference of protection, and score of 3 to the preference of preservation. The data are interpreted in **Figure 1** as follows:

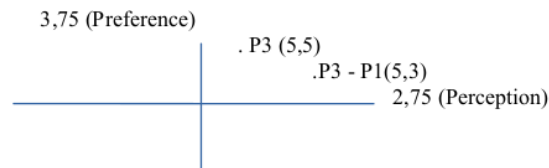


Figure 1. IPA of *Benteng* Chinese Residents

Source: Processed Data 2017

Based on the above IPA diagram, three indicators are in “B” position. Thus, we may say that the perception and preference of *Benteng* Chinese residents towards cultural preservation is very good and the culture is considered very important and should be preserved.

The Researcher involved Non-*Benteng* Chinese residents because, besides as comparison material, Non-*Benteng* Chinese residents are also one of the stakeholders in the further development of *Benteng* Chinese culture. The following are the results of data tabulated from

the questionnaire results on the perception and preference of Non-*Benteng* Chinese residents (Table 4)

Table 4. Perception and Preference of Non-*Benteng* Chinese Residents

| | Perception | Preference | GAP (Pe-Pr) |
|---------------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Protection (P1) | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Sustainability (P2) | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Utilization (P3) | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| Sum | 15 | 12 | 5 |
| C-Line | 3 | 2,4 | 0,6 |

Source: Processed Data 2017

The results show that in general, Non-*Benteng* Chinese resident respondents positively view the protection, preservation, and utilization of culture, specifically *Benteng* Chinese culture. However, they do not wish to be directly involved in the protection and preservations of *Benteng* Chinese culture. But if the utilization is considered to be able to contribute positively to economic or social conditions, the Non-*Benteng* Chinese resident respondents agree that the utilization of the *Benteng* Chinese cultural values needs to be optimized. The data is then interpreted in Figure 2 below:

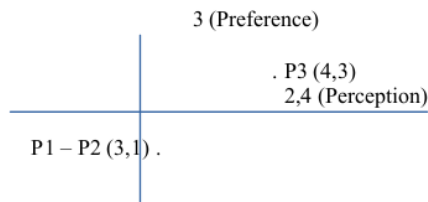


Figure 2. IPA Non-*Benteng* Chinese residents

Source : Processed Data 2017

The results show that Non-*Benteng* Chinese residents are less concerned with the protection and preservation of *Benteng* Chinese culture. In terms of the utilization aspect, Non-*Benteng* Chinese residents give high scores. This can be seen from the IPA output, wherein the perception and preference of Non-*Benteng* Chinese residents are in “A” position (very important). Empirically, the existence of *klenteng* (temples) as the heritage of *Benteng* Chinese culture with all the *darma* (community charity) it does, generate a positive impact to the surrounding residents. Otherwise, *barongsai* (lion dance) in the Tangerang region also frequently involve Non-*Benteng* Chinese residents. They have included in the festival held once a year and the show during each celebration of *Imlek* (Chinese New Year).

4. Conclusion

Benteng Chinese culture is inseparable from the historic culture of Tangerang. *Benteng* Chinese communities currently mingle with Non-*Benteng* Chinese residents. In fact, in its development, the residents of Tangerang are not only natives of *Banten*: they have also mingled with residents from other places and ethnicities in the Archipelago. This makes Tangerang into a region with a high level of socio-cultural interaction.

In general, there are still stereotypes which separate Chinese descent residents from the natives which may cause GAP of Perception and Preference between *Benteng* Chinese and Non-*Benteng* Chinese communities. Non-*Benteng* Chinese residents tend to be lazy to preserve and protect *Benteng* Chinese cultural heritage because they consider that the culture is not the cultural heritage they got from their ancestors.

Thus, the relationship between Chinese cultures which have added the colors of archipelagic cultures for hundred years should be studied in depth. The research results need to be disseminated and distributed to residents more widely to lessen the gap of perception between Chinese descent and Non-Chinese descent residents, especially in Tangerang.

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